



MAIN EVENT

Fawzia Mirza.
Photo by Lisa Donato

Chicago's Fawzia Mirza on her 'Signature Move'

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

For audiences of her critically hailed appearances on stages throughout Chicago, the United States and South Asia as well as globally via a burgeoning and award-winning television and film career, Chicago-based actor, writer and producer Fawzia Mirza has already beaten down linear preconceptions of identity, delivered a series of mercilessly enlightened haymakers to cultural and racial stereotypes and provided five moves

of doom to the neatly ordered file cabinets in which society and its clammy nests of bickering politicians wish to lock away minorities.

Now Mirza has just wrapped filming on her signature move—also the name of the project in which she stars and co-wrote with award-winning director, writer and producer Lisa Donato.

The recent casting announcement of cisgender male actor Matt Bomer as a transgender woman in the Timothy McNeil

Turn to page 20



'WORKING' IT OUT

Project& updates Studs Terkel work.
Photo of Project&'s Jane Saks by Emma Ruby-Sachs

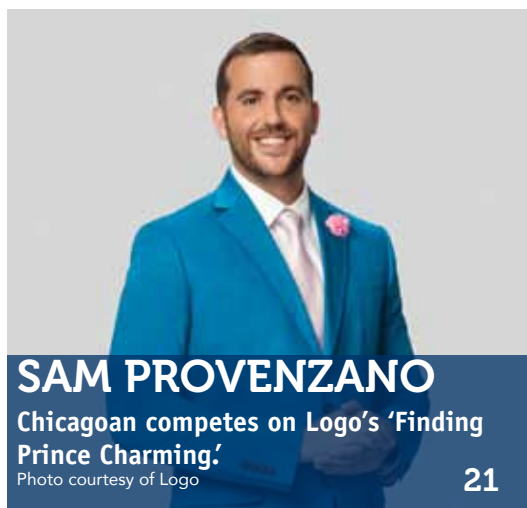
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IFCON 2016

Conference brings together LGBTQ Asians/Pacific Islanders.
Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

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SAM PROVENZANO

Chicagoan competes on Logo's 'Finding Prince Charming.'
Photo courtesy of Logo

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MISS CONTINENTAL

Contest crowns new champion.
Photo by Kat Fitzgerald (www.MysticImagesPhotography.com)

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CHICAGO

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WERQ! CHICAGO

Windy City Times LGBTQ JOB FAIR: Friday, Sept. 16, 2016

**11 a.m.-4 p.m., Center on Halsted,
3656 N. Halsted, Chicago**

Confirmed exhibitors, in addition to the sponsors, include:

- AARP
- About Face Theatre
- AON Hewitt
- AT&T
- Aunt Martha's Health & Wellness
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma & Texas
- BMO Harris Bank
- Chicago Commission on Human Relations
- Chicago Marriott
- Chicago Women in Trades
- Christy Webber Landscapes
- Dept. of Children and Family Services
- Elevate Energy
- Experis/Manpower Group
- Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago
- Gap Inc. and Old Navy
- Google
- Groupon
- Heartland Alliance
- Hilton Worldwide
- Howard Brown Health
- Hyatt Corporation
- The John Marshall Law School
- KPMG
- Lyric Opera
- Mariano's
- MB Financial Bank
- Metropolitan Family Services
- Morningstar
- Navy Pier
- Northern Trust PLC
- Northwestern Department of Medical Social Sciences
- Pace Suburban Bus Company
- Paul Mitchell The School
- Planned Parenthood of Illinois
- Redbox
- Renewal Care
- The Ritz-Carlton, Chicago
- Senior Helpers
- Speciality's Cafe & Bakery
- State of IL Dept. of Rehab.
- Takeda Pharmaceuticals
- Test Positive Aware Network
- Thresholds
- TransUnion
- Trunk Club
- Uber
- United Airlines
- Uptake
- Vienna Beef
- Walgreens
- WBEZ
- Zurich North America

Workshops

Noon-1 p.m.:

Getting Started (or Starting Again):

Job Searching for "First" Timers

- Kara Rosser, One Summer Chicago
- One Summer Chicago youth participant
- Sean Bush, Silver Fork Coordinator
- Silver Fork Alumni

1-2 p.m.:

Stronger and Wiser: Job Searching For LGBTQ Older Adults

- Dan O'Donnell, AARP
- Jonathan Tague, Senior Helpers
- Britta Larson, Center on Halsted
- Nora O'Malley, Lyric Opera

2-3 p.m.:

Transgender and the Workplace

Moderator: Alexis Paige, Lambda Legal

- Owen Daniel-McCarter, Illinois Safe Schools Alliance
- Sandra Wagner, Northern Trust
- Alexis Martinez, activist
- Channyn Lynn Parker, TransLife Center, Chicago House

From Resumes to Interviews: Making a Good First Impression

Moderator: Michael Erwin, Director, Global Corporate Communications and Social Media CareerBuilder

- Julie West, CG Consulting
- Justin Thompson, Consumer Marketing, CareerBuilder
- Anthony Balderrama, CareerBuilder
- Sarah Frank, Experis/ManpowerGroup
- Mike Madura, Associate Director National Recruiting, KPMG
- Ally Zauner, Senior Corporate Recruiter, United

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**RESUME ASSISTANCE from Chicago House these dates at Center on Halsted:
Wednesday, Sept. 14, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and Thursday, Sept. 15, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**

The Illinois Secretary of State Mobile Services Unit will be on-site to assist attendees with acquiring or renewing state identifications, driver's licenses, and other state registrations from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Youth Space.

For details on exhibiting, contact: editor@windycitymediagroup.com

Sponsored by:



Plus Lambda Legal, Northalsted Business Alliance and the
LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois

WINDY CITY TIMES

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YOU BETTE
 Caitlin Jackson (left) portrays Bette Midler in Stage 773 production.
 PR photo

SEAL LOVE



Bent Nights critiques shows by Seal (above) and Linda Clifford.
 Photo courtesy of I.T.L.

'FAMILY' TIES



WCT chats with Kathy Garver, who played Cissy on the classic TV show Family Affair.
 PR photo

BUGGING OUT

The latest Fairy Gardener column discusses bees and wasps in addition to flowers.

'FAIR'-SIGHTED

WCT reviews Cyd Ziegler's book Fair Play.

THAT'S SHOW BIZ

Find out the latest about Sam Smith, Mary J. Blige and Matt Bomer.

plus
DAILY BREAKING NEWS

MAKE AN IMPACT
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WERQ! LGBTQ job fair Sept. 16 in Chicago

More than 60 major corporations, small businesses, government agencies and nonprofits will participate in the Windy City Times WERQ! LGBTQ job fair Friday, Sept. 16, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, Chicago.

The event, which is free and open to the public, is hosted by Windy City Times with Center on Halsted, Pride Action Tank, Chicago House, Association of Latino/as Motivating Action, Affinity Community Services, TransTech Social Enterprises, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Out & Equal Chicagoland, Lambda Legal, LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois and the Northalsted Business Alliance.

Confirmed exhibitors, in addition to the sponsors, include:

- AARP
- About Face Theatre
- AON Hewitt
- AT&T
- Aunt Martha's Health & Wellness
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma & Texas
- BMO Harris Bank
- Chicago Commission on Human Relations
- Chicago Marriott
- Chicago Women in Trades
- Christy Webber Landscapes
- Department of Children and Family Services
- Elevate Energy
- Experis/Manpower Group
- Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago
- Gap Inc. and Old Navy
- Google
- Groupon
- Heartland Alliance
- Hilton Worldwide
- Howard Brown Health
- Hyatt Corporation
- The John Marshall Law School
- KPMG
- Lyric Opera
- Mariano's
- MB Financial Bank
- Metropolitan Family Services
- Morningstar
- Navy Pier
- Northern Trust PLC
- Northwestern Department of Medical Social Sciences
- Pace Suburban Bus Company
- Paul Mitchell The School
- Planned Parenthood of Illinois
- Redbox
- Renewal Care
- The Ritz-Carlton, Chicago
- Senior Helpers
- Speciality's Cafe & Bakery
- State of Illinois Department of Rehabilitation
- Takeda Pharmaceuticals U.S.A.
- Test Positive Aware Network
- Thresholds
- TransUnion
- Trunk Club
- Uber

- United Airlines
- Uptake
- Vienna Beef
- Walgreens
- WBEZ
- Zurich North America

This is the second WERQ! LGBTQ Job Fair. The first focused primarily on youth experiencing homelessness. This fair is open to all, and will have special workshops focused on youth, transgender employment, and seniors.

Chicago House will conduct free resume assistance Sept. 14 and 15, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Center on Halsted.

The workshops are:

Non-1 p.m.:

Getting Started (or Starting Again): Job Searching for "First" Timers

- Kara Rosser, One Summer Chicago
- One Summer Chicago youth participant
- Sean Bush, Silver Fork Coordinator
- Silver Fork Alumna

1-2 p.m.:

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- Anthony Balderrama, CareerBuilder

- Sarah Frank, Experis/ManpowerGroup

- Mike Madura, Associate Director National Recruiting, KPMG

- Ally Zauner, Senior Corporate Recruiter, United Airlines

The Illinois Secretary of State Mobile Services Unit will be on-site to assist attendees with acquiring or renewing state identifications, driver's licenses, and other state registrations from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Youth Space.

Booths at the job fair are \$95 for businesses, \$50 for nonprofits. Deadline is Sept. 8. Email Tracy Baim for details: editor@windycitymediagroup.com, or call 773-871-7610.

See <https://www.facebook.com/LGBTQJobFair/?fref=ts>.

Open To Thinking

BY NICK PATRICCA



Gays and Justice in the Catholic Church

Why do so many gay people remain loyal to the Catholic Church?

A dear friend of mine who is a Catholic priest brought this question up during dinner when I was trying to decide upon a topic for my September op-ed in WCT. I

29, 2016, a federal judge in Chicago rejected this procedural motion and allowed the case to proceed. (<https://newwaysministryblog.wordpress.com/tag/colin-collette/>).

Let us take a closer look at the Collette

case. After 17 years of praiseworthy service as music director—attested to by the vigorous support of many members of the Holy Family Community—J. Colin Collette was fired from his position in the summer of 2014 because he announced on Facebook his intention to marry his same-sex partner William Nifong.

"After 17 years of praiseworthy service as music director—attested to by the vigorous support of many members of the Holy Family Community—J. Colin Collette was fired from his position in the summer of 2014 because he announced on Facebook his intention to marry his same-sex partner William Nifong."

have worked with and in Catholic organizations my whole life and it is stunningly obvious that LGBTQ persons have always been involved in the life, work and mission of these Catholic communities. Yet, I had never thought through the why's and why-not's of this fact.

My priest friend honed this question to a sharp point to prod my interest. I paraphrase him: 'Without the gays and women and other groups routinely abused by the institutional Church—such as divorced people and couples who practice birth control and partners in non-church sanctioned marriages—our pews would be empty!'

I remembered how my mother had to suffer several bouts of cancer before the 'Church' would permit a hysterectomy, and how one of my aunts would not go to communion because she practiced birth control to protect her health and the well-being of her family. I remembered their steadfast work for their parish throughout their lives.

[Aside: I had another aunt who loudly scolded women who complied with destructive church rules: "Those are laws made by *men* not by God." She also terrorized the pastor—a really good man—by sitting in the front pew directly under the pulpit with an old-fashioned alarm clock with large bells on either side which she boldly wound up and set to 10 minutes.]

My priest friend was not finished with me. Again I paraphrase him: 'What about the arbitrary firing of gay people who have worked for years and years openly and successfully for Catholic institutions only to be told that they are no longer welcome and that they are not 'good' Catholics or worse?' He cited the case of J. Colin Collette who is suing on civil-rights grounds the Archdiocese of Chicago and Holy Family Catholic Community in Inverness for 'wrongful and unlawful dismissal' from his position as music director at Holy Family. The archdiocese sought to have the case dismissed on 'ministerial exception' grounds. On July

As I understand the matter, Holy Family dismissed Collette for 'publicly planning to enter into a non-sacramental or non-church sanctioned marriage' because as director of music Collette is in a 'ministerial position' and must 'as such' represent the teachings of the Catholic Church. The 'public' part of this reason is noteworthy since it seems the Holy Family parishioners were well aware of Collette's sexual identity.

Throughout this dispute, Collette has resolutely affirmed his strong commitment to the Catholic faith and to the Catholic community he has served for 17 years. In an interview published in a Chicago Tribune blog post (March 8, 2016) Collette described his protest against his firing as a call for justice within the Catholic Church for the many LGBTQ people who faithfully serve their communities—a call for justice not unlike the call for justice for those who suffered sexual abuse by Catholic clergy.

And, let us not forget the many gay Catholics who serve as nuns, priests, brothers, and other types of ministers—an issue for another day and another column.

In reading several of Collette's discussions of his commitment to the Catholic faith, I was reminded of the excellent work Garry Wills has performed for us Catholics through his intellectually rigorous investigations of our history, which bring to light a 'Catholic Church' so wondrously rich with diverse spiritual traditions and politics and yet so profoundly simple in its obedience to the universal message of Jesus. (See, for example, *Why I Am a Catholic*, Garry Wills, 2002.)

The Catholic Church has a strong, effective social-justice tradition respected worldwide by governments and peoples of all faiths and intellectual persuasions. It is long past the time for the Catholic Church to implement the principles of its social-justice policies to its own institutional structures in our contemporary world.

© nicholas.patricca@gmail.com

Nick Patricca is professor emeritus at Loyola University Chicago, president of Chicago Network and playwright emeritus at Victory Gardens Theater.

Final regulations issued for contractors, LGBTQ protections

The U.S. Department of Labor (DoL) has issued final regulations implementing President Obama's executive order on Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces.

Signed by President Obama in July 2014, the order requires prospective federal contractors to disclose labor law violations and gives agencies more guidance on how to consider labor violations when awarding federal contracts. It directs the department and the council to issue regulations and guidance to implement the new requirements.

Among its provisions, the regulations will help to ensure companies contracting with the federal government comply with non-discrimination protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The final regulations will be effective Oct. 25, and will be implemented in phases to

give contractors time to understand their responsibilities.

"With these regulations, the Department of Labor is implementing President Obama's executive order that helps provide crucial non-discrimination protections to employees of companies contracting with the federal government," said Human Rights Campaign Government Affairs Director David Stacy in a statement. "All workers, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, deserve to be able to go to work and make a living free from unfair and unjust discrimination.

As of the night of July 25, protesters were on day four of a takeover of the Homan Square area, tweeting with the has tag #FreedomSquare, saying they won't leave until the City Council cancels plans for 4878.

Community welcomes Daniel-McCarter to Alliance helm

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Owen Daniel-McCarter, who is now the first transgender man to lead an LGBT organization, was welcomed by community members at an Aug. 25 reception at the downtown headquarters of Access Living Chicago.

Daniel-McCarter was named executive director of Illinois Safe Schools Alliance (the Alliance) in June, replacing Anthony Papini, who left to take a new position in his native Washington state. He was introduced by Alliance board member Mary Morten as well as Avery Kaplan, an Evanston student who came out as trans while in the eighth grade.

Kaplan praised Daniel-McCarter's understanding of youth issues, noting that, "He doesn't talk down. He just talks to you. You never leave him in a bad mood, and he's always fun and loving."

Daniel-McCarter was previously the Alliance's policy/advocacy director and said that he was first impressed by the organization because he

"saw the Alliance doing things differently than other mainstream organizations were doing at the time." He particularly praised the Alliance's efforts to think critically about the individual needs of young people and reach out to other organizations with overlapping missions.

He noted that he hoped to see the Alliance strengthen its role serving the entire state, not just the Chicago region, as well as working for school curriculums that don't prioritize hetero- and cis-normativity. He also said schools need to be encouraged to include LGBT histories in those curriculums.

"We know that young people are not learning our history," he said.

Among those in attendance at the reception were state Rep. Greg Harris, Equality Illinois CEO Brian Johnson and Daniel-McCarter's mother.

"I feel like all my favorite people in the world are here in the room with me right now," said Daniel-McCarter.



Owen Daniel-McCarter.
Photo by Matt Simonette

La Casa holding groundbreaking

La Casa Norte, a provider of services to homeless youth and families, will hold a groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, Sept. 9, at 10 a.m., for its new Pierce House and Community, 3533 W. North Ave.

The new facility will become an anchor of redevelopment on the North Avenue corridor in Chicago's Humboldt Park community.

In the new facility, La Casa Norte will establish the Pierce House, providing 25 supportive housing units (studios as well as one- and two-bedroom units) for youth and families who are homeless. The new community center will provide integrated and comprehensive, wraparound services from a holistic perspective, including a:

- homeless youth drop-in center
- community healthcare center
- cafe and food pantry
- housing location and prevention services
- emergency toiletries and clothing

There is a fundraising goal of \$18 million. There are still opportunities to donate and earn tax credits for this project. For more information, contact Executive Director Sol Flores at 773-269-4900, ext. 208, or sol@lacasanorte.org.



Mel Platzke.
Facebook photo

Illinois HIV+ people urged to take quiz

Illinois HIV Care Connect has introduced the HIV #StayinCare Quiz to raise awareness of the topic of staying in care, also known as "retention in care," Business Wire noted.

By taking this quiz, people living with HIV in Illinois can measure their offhand awareness and knowledge of why staying in HIV care is important. At the end of the quiz, they are informed of the correct answers and directed to educational resources.

This autumn, Illinois HIV Care Connect will publish educational content about the importance of staying in HIV care on its website. People living with HIV in Illinois will be asked to retake the quiz after reviewing the campaign information, so that Illinois HIV Care Connect can compare the pre- and post-campaign quiz results.

The quiz can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/jz7g6re>.

The Business Wire item is at <http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20160824005209/en>.

Platzke cause of death revealed

The Cook County medical examiner's office revealed to Windy City Times that bronchopneumonia and hypertensive cardiovascular disease led to the death of model/entrepreneur Mel Platzke.

Platzke III, 48, died July 29 at the home of Kip Helverson and Trey Gonzales with Helverson by his side. Platzke split his time between Chicago and Miami.

Platzke was born March 10, 1968, in Oak Harbor, Ohio, and spent his childhood there before moving to Chicago to attend the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), where he received a bachelor's degree in residential planning and design. While at SAIC, Platzke also studied performing arts and theater production.



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Cook County clerk issues 10,000th marriage license

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

On the morning of Wed., Aug. 31, Cook County Clerk David Orr's office issued the 10,000th marriage license to a same-sex couple.

The men, who've been together 18 years, are Terry Beauchamp, 49, and Anthony Aranda, 50. Beauchamp is a manager at That's Our Bag in the Loop and Aranda is a flight attendant for United Airlines, where he has worked for 25 years. They met at a dinner with mutual friends

ries can be won."

Aranda explained that he'll have to get used to saying fiancée instead of partner now. He said he's happy to be a part of history and joining the same-sex matrimony club, of which many of their friends belong.

Beauchamp said they are thrilled and excited for this turn of events. He noted they decided to make it official now because many of their friends and relatives are getting older and they wanted to be able to include them at their re-



Cook County Clerk David Orr points to a marriage map during the press conference.

Photo by Hal Baim

and bonded over the Cubs when their friends had a disagreement during dinner and have been a couple ever since. They currently reside in Edgewater.

On their second date, Beauchamp offered to give Aranda a ride home because of the chill but Aranda insisted on walking the half-mile home so Beauchamp walked with him. After they parted company, Beauchamp took a cab back to his car and drove home. To this day, Beauchamp said he still wonders why he did that.

Beauchamp was born and raised in Western Springs, Illinois, and graduated from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. He's a lifelong Minnesota Vikings and Toronto Maple Leafs fan.

Aranda was born in Las Vegas and raised in Tempe, Arizona, and graduated from Arizona State University. He loves roller-coasters, especially X-Flight and Goliath at Six Flags Great America.

They both enjoy going to the movies, watching TV, reading, traveling, playing Scrabble and Cards Against Humanity with their friends as well as walks along the lake.

The couple were unaware of the timing of being the 10,000th. They had decided to get their license Aug. 31 because it was their day off. The clerk's office celebrated the occasion with a rainbow cake from Goddess and the Baker and by waiving the fee for the couple.

"The wait is over," said Orr. "We're all excited about this day. The symbolism of the two of you being our 10,000th couple shows that people who've loved each other for years can make it official because of equal marriage. This is such a celebratory thing and it's important to honor everyone who made this happen over the years. I hope this event encourages people to believe that change can happen and victo-

ception at Reza's in Andersonville. Beauchamp explained that they talked about getting married last year, but there was no official proposal or engagement rings exchanged.

The couple said they don't see their lives changing after they get married except for calling each other husband instead of partner but only time will tell.

To mark the occasion the couple received donated gifts including a honeymoon package (hotel accommodations, fine dining and entertainment) from the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, two roundtrip plane tickets from Southwest Airlines to use for their honeymoon, romantic dinners for two at Appellation Wine Bar & Restaurant located in Andersonville and Riva Restaurant on Navy Pier. The Navy Pier experience also includes a Shoreline Sightseeing tour and a VIP Ferris wheel ride. The couple also received flowers and balloons from Designs by Rosa, Inc., a fruit basket from Edible Arrangements and thank-you cards and stationery from Chicago-based designer La Familia Green.

This much-anticipated milestone came fewer than three years after the first same-sex marriage license was issued in Illinois, to Cook County residents Vernita Gray and Pat Ewert, who were married Nov. 27, 2013, a few months before Gray died, on March 19, 2014.

The state passed marriage equality in late 2013, and like Gray and Ewert's case, there were additional same-sex marriages deemed medical emergencies that were performed in the months leading up to the law taking effect across the state on June 1, 2014.

On Feb. 21, 2014, a U.S. district judge ruled that no same-sex couple in Cook County should have to wait until the law took effect to be issued a marriage license. Citing the Cook County



Anthony Aranda and Terry Beauchamp, who received the 10,000th marriage license issued to a same-sex couple.

Photo by Carrie Maxwell

district judge's ruling, Champaign County clerk officials began issuing licenses to same-sex couples shortly thereafter. Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan issued an opinion on March 4, 2014, that opened the door for every county to begin issuing same-sex couple's marriage licenses ahead of the law officially taking effect. Many counties across the state began doing so that spring.

Orr said he was relieved when marriage equality passed, after years of having to refuse

the requests of couples for licenses. An ally of LGBT rights, Orr said he had no choice but to turn away requests prior to being forced to issue licenses by the courts, and later allowed to by the state legislature.

See report from Monday's press conference at the Cook County Clerk's office: <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/Lgbt/Orr-marriage-backers-anticipate-10000-same-sex-licenses-56305.html>.

LGBT fund requests proposals for community grants

The LGBT Community Fund of The Chicago Community Trust ("The Fund") is requesting proposals for community grants.

The Fund seeks to fund innovative initiatives that focus ONLY on the following four priority areas: LGBTQ young adults, 24 and younger; older adults, 55 and over; general healthcare; and community safety. Proposals dealing with older adults and community safety are encouraged.

Grants will range from \$10,000 to \$50,000, and the Fund will award up to \$300,000 in grants.

The LGBT Community Fund awarded \$282,500 to fourteen organizations in August 2015. These IMPACT Grants provided funding for general operations, capacity building, and for seed money for new projects/organizations and/or those in their infancy. In addition, the Fund awarded \$350,000 in Transformation Grants to three collaborations involving six organizations in the spring of 2016.

In order to be eligible for funding, the applicant organization(s) must fulfill several criteria, including being a 501(c)(3) public charity in good standing in the state of Illinois; and serving the LGBT community of Cook County, among other things. Grants may not be used for capital campaigns or improvements, endowments, fundraising events, partisan political activities or to support individuals.

Completed proposals must be received by 11:59PM CST on Monday, Oct. 17, on the Chicago Community Trust Grant Central system.

An information session will be held at The Chicago Community Trust, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 2200, on Friday, Sept. 16, at 8-9:30 a.m. Because of building security, those who plan to attend must register at rsvp@cct.org by Wed., Sept. 14.

For more information, visit CCT.org/about/partnerships_initiatives/lgbt-community-fund/.

Report issued on criminal justice and LGBT youth

A comprehensive new report explores how the U.S. juvenile and criminal justice systems endanger the lives and life chances of young LGBT people.

"Unjust: How the Broken Juvenile and Criminal Justice Systems Fail LGBTQ Youth" is the product of an unprecedented coalition of organizations working on issues including LGBT equality, homelessness prevention, education, criminal-justice reform and more. The report partners include the Advancement Project, The Equity Project, Forward Together, GLSEN, GSA Network, Human Rights Campaign and Human Rights Campaign Foundation, JustLeadershipUSA, the National LGBTQ Task Force, the True Colors Fund and Youth First.

The "Unjust" report highlights several factors in the overrepresentation of LGBT young people in the juvenile justice system, including anti-LGBT discrimination and stigma, unsafe schools and discriminatory law enforcement. The report also spotlights factors that contribute to the abuse and bias LGBT youth face in the system, such as mistreatment as well as bias in pretrial release and court proceedings.

The report is at LGBTmap.org/criminal-justice-youth.

Jill Stein in Chicago Sept. 8

Green Party presidential candidate Dr. Jill Stein will be appearing at the Preston Bradley Center, 941 W. Lawrence Ave., on Thursday, Sept. 8, 7-9 p.m.

Stein will address an audience with remarks on the climate crisis, disinvestment in public education, police accountability and economic justice, including Chicago-specific issues. She will be joined by running mate Ajamu Baraka and by local activists, leaders and Green Party candidates.

See GP.org.

IFCON 2016 winds up in the company of Capone

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

The penultimate day of the annual International Friendship Conference (IFCON) began on the morning of Sept. 4, with a board meeting which, among other agenda items, decided upon the locations for the event over next two years (Montreal, Canada and Palm Springs, Calif.).

The day concluded, in the best traditions of IFCON 2016's host city of Chicago, by transforming the hotel ballroom of the Magnificent Mile's Doubletree by Hilton into a 1920s speakeasy.

Event attendees arrived in period finery both dapper and eye-popping. Gangster Al Capone was represented by a loyal contingent of his fan club.

As reported by Windy City Times, IFCON is the result of a merger between two events—Long Yang Club International (LYCI) and Asian & Friends' International Friendship Weekend (IFW).

This year, more than 150 people attended from cities across the United States, Canada and, in a few cases, worldwide.

"I started coming to IFW in 2003 in Pittsburgh and I've met so many people since then," Co-chair of The Asian & Friends umbrella group International Friendship Alliance Wesley Hung said. "It's why I come back every year regardless of where the [host] city is."

Hung moved to Canada 30 years ago.

"As a gay man it was very hard for me to find and meet people," he recalled. "Asian & Friends helped. There are a lot of couples who met during conferences like this. I made a lot of friends over the U.S. and Canada and I regularly visit them. IFCON is a way to reach out and meet people while teaching them about Asian culture. This year was definitely a success. On the boat cruise last night and on the dance floor, it has been all about fun."

The sentiment was echoed by Asian & Friends Chicago Board of Directors President Angel Abcede, who was not only co-chair of IFCON 2016 but also a part of the entertainment for the Sept. 4 banquet.

Abcede donned a flapper dress, an intricately detailed white wig and—alongside fellow performers from the Joel Hall Dancers and Center—wowed IFCON attendees with a rendition of All That Jazz from the hit musical Chicago.

It was part of a menu of acts that included Lyric Opera singer Rodell Rosel and Joel Camden who, earlier this year, played the role of Sebastian in a production of The Little Mermaid held at Cicero's Jedlicka Performing Arts Center.

"We welcome people from all parts of the country who are creating and generating communities of gay Asian men and people who appreciate Asian culture," Abcede said. "We create social situations in cities where it's difficult for gay Asians to find and have a voice. In North America, we feel like we are a minority within a minority. We want to feel valued. We want to feel loved. These environments are created to celebrate that."

"Chicago is a hidden gem," Abcede added. "So the approach that we took this year was for our Chicago members to develop mini-tours. We took a water-taxi down the [Chicago] river to Chinatown, we went on a gay bar tour; so many things that showcased the city and its local Asian group."

Abcede stressed that IFCON is more than just a party.

"It values the gay Asian community," Abcede said. "When people start to understand that, they become big supporters."



Above: IFCON 2016 attendees. Left: Angel Abcede. Photos by Gretchen Rachel Hammond



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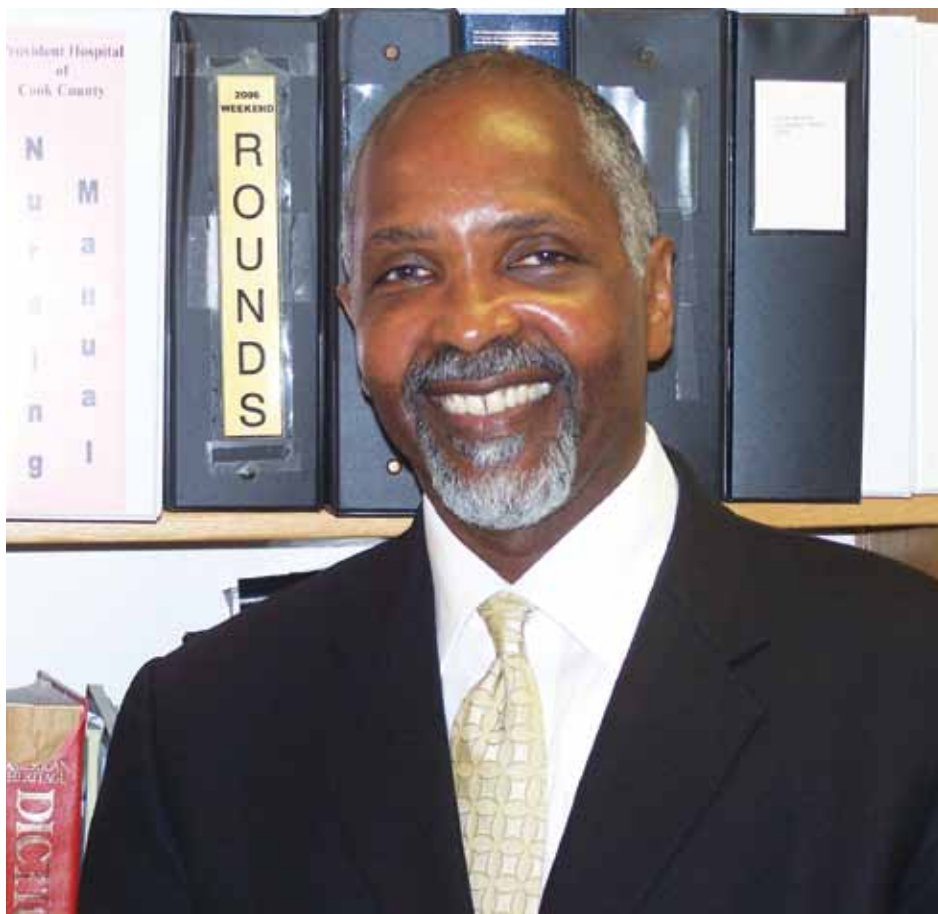
Sidney Thomas on board post, career, HIV/AIDS activism

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Sidney Thomas has spent his entire career working toward greater healthcare access for all, becoming involved with HIV/AIDS issues, the implementation of Medicaid expansion in metropolitan Chicago and mental-health issues.

Thomas was born and raised in Milwaukee. He moved to Chicago in 1980 to take a job as a psychiatric social worker at Garfield Park Mental Health Center—now known as the Bobby E. Wright Comprehensive Behavioral Health Cen-

Thomas' storied career includes holding a variety of positions at Cook County Health and Hospitals System (CCHHS) for more than 20 years. He's been a member of the behavioral health team responsible for improving internal-medicine resident's psychosocial assessment skills; an administrator of Woodlawn Adult Health Center and Englewood Family Medicine Health Center, where he helped kick off a health service initiative for Black men called Project Brotherhood; director of operations for the Ambulatory and Community Health Network; and the interim COO for seven years.



Sidney Thomas.
Photo courtesy of Thomas

ter. Following his stint at Garfield Park, Thomas became the director of emergency services at Community Counseling Centers of Chicago.

Prior to moving to Chicago, Thomas received his bachelor of arts in sociology from Beloit College and a master's degree in social work from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. To enhance his management abilities, he's also completed most of the coursework for a certificate in healthcare management from Loyola University.

Thomas originally wanted to be a journalist because he loves people and their stories and then thought about early childhood education, but that all changed because of his mom's line of work.

"My mom worked in a mental health facility and I was always fascinated with her stories of the patients she cared for," said Thomas. "A social work value is to be a change agent and I always wanted to play that role in underserved communities. I became interested in public health through my involvement in a training program for primary care physicians. I was part of a behavioral health team charged with helping internists understand the lives of their patients outside the exam room. That was in 1988 and we're finally acknowledging the role culture, employment, education, community and resources play in establishing and maintaining health."

In 2007, Thomas moved to Provident Hospital (a CCHHS facility) to lead a team tasked with addressing violations that resulted in the hospital returning to good regulatory standing. Thomas' final position at CCHHS (which he held for three years) was in a newly created post, director of provider relations. During that time, Thomas was a part of the team charged with the planning and implementation of the Medicaid expansion for adults called CountyCare as a part of the Affordable Care Act.

Thomas was also a faculty member of post-graduate programs for internal medicine residents at what is now known as Stroger Hospital.

Upon leaving CCHHS, Thomas was named the COO of Near North Health Services Corporation, serving in that capacity for a year. He's since become an independent healthcare consultant.

Earlier this summer, Thomas was named by Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle as one of five nominees to the governing board of CCHHS.

"I'm honored to be selected," said Thomas. "I've been a supporter of public health my entire career and CCHHS is a premier safety-net provider. I want to be a part of the team to guide the system as it enters a new phase of service delivery, while maintaining its mission of caring for the underserved."

Regarding his HIV/AIDS advocacy, Thomas

has been a principal investigator for a number of state and federal grants tasked with HIV prevention and primary care, as well as in a variety of positions including the nation's first African-American HIV/AIDS service organization, Kuopona Network. He was also an original member of the Chicago EMA Ryan White Title I Planning Council.

"Kuopona Network demonstrated the ability of the Black community to care for itself," said Thomas. "At times, we were called racist and separatist, but our only intent was to care for members of our community and their families who were not getting the care and support they needed and deserved from majority white, gay organizations. Those organizations provided great care to folks they knew, but were totally clueless to the context Black, gay men operated within at the time."

As for the work he did with the Chicago EMA Ryan White Title I Planning Council, Thomas said, "Those were raucous meetings with many agendas. Everything was so dynamic at the time, but some members felt they were experts and could dictate to communities of color. Once the egos were checked, we got down to work and did some great work. I recall intense discussions about what defining case management. Some took a community organizing approach while others looked to traditional social and nursing models. It pleases me to still be

around and see the organizations and models of care and prevention that grew out of that early work."

In addition to his work in the healthcare field and his new board post, Thomas is a member of the American Public Health Association.

"I'm also the treasurer on the boards of the Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus, Public Health Institute of Chicago and Quality of Life [a State of Illinois Board tasked with making sure funds from lottery ticket sales are given to HIV service organizations]," said Thomas. "I've also done volunteer work with several HIV/AIDS service organizations and in the past have volunteered at Literacy Chicago."

Thomas' life isn't all work and no play, however. He has an active social life that includes both indoor and outdoor activities.

"I'm a member of a media club, which facilitates my interest in all forms of the arts, i.e., film, plays, fiction, museum exhibits, etc.," said Thomas. "I'm an avid bike rider and formerly played volleyball in the CMSA league. Music has always been a major part of my life. I grew up playing piano and clarinet and enjoy attending performances, particularly R&B and jazz. As a Chicagoan for more than 30 years, I'm a true House Music fanatic. I also enjoy all the restaurants in my West Loop neighborhood."

Event marks 15th anniv. of 9/11

The Legacy LIVE series continues with "Honoring Fr. Mychal Judge—The Saint of 9/11" on Sunday, Sept. 11, 1-4 p.m.

Judge was a chaplain serving the firefighters of Engine 1-Ladder 24 who was among the first responders in New York City on Sept. 11, 2001. An openly gay Franciscan Friar and beloved New York activist, Judge refused to seek shelter with the city's elected officials, choosing instead "to stay with his men." Judge was killed by falling debris after administering last rites to a fallen firefighter.

The Legacy Project will remember "Victim 0001" on the 15th anniversary of the World Trade Center terrorist attack with a ceremony at Judge's Legacy Walk bronze memorial, 3540 N. Halsted St., at 1 p.m., followed by a screening of the award-winning documentary *The Saint of 9/11* at Lakeview Presbyterian Church, 716 W. Addison St., at 2 p.m. A fellowship reception will conclude at 3:30 p.m.

This event is presented in cooperation with The Legacy Project, Center on Halsted and the Northalsted Business Alliance and their presenting partners, Dignity/Chicago and AGLO (Archdiocesan Gay and Lesbian Outreach).

The event is free. Make reservations at <https://community.centeronhalsted.org/Legacy>.

Survey analyzes perceptions of police mistreatment

BY MATT SIMONETTE

A new survey released Sept. 2 illustrates the perception of the frequency of police harassment against gays and lesbians, as well as transgender individuals, among different demographics.

"GenForward: A survey of the Black Youth Project with the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research" polled 1,750 persons ages 18-30 to conceptualize how "race and ethnicity shape how respondents experience and think about the world." Black Youth Project (BYP) is housed at the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture at the University of Chicago.

The survey asked African-American, Latino, Asian-American and white adults ages 18-30 about their perceptions of police violence

against certain demographics. According to the survey, 25 percent of African Americans surveyed said that gays and lesbians were mistreated by the police; 26 percent of Asian American respondents agreed. About 35 percent of Latino respondents also said gays and lesbians were mistreated, as did 33 percent of white respondents.

Higher rates of respondents across the board perceived mistreatment of transgender men and women by police. About 30 percent of African American respondents said transgender individuals were mistreated, as did 34 percent of Asian Americans. About 38 percent of Latino respondents perceived such mistreatment, as did 45 percent of white respondents.

The complete report can be viewed online at <http://bit.ly/2c6MTwp>.

Trevor event Sept. 16 at Kimpton Gray

People are urged to join the fight to end suicide at "A Night Out for Trevor" Friday, Sept. 16, 6:30-10:30 p.m., at The Kimpton Gray Hotel, 122 W. Monroe St.

Out musician Steve Grand is slated to perform.

The mission of The Trevor Project is to end suicide among LGBTQ young people. The organization provides crisis counseling, resources, education and advocacy services.

See TRVR.org/Chicago.

Illinois Safe Schools brunch Sept. 18

The Illinois Safe Schools Alliance will hold its annual brunch Sunday, Sept. 18, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at Christy Webber Landscapes Rancho Verde, 2900 W. Ferdinand St.

The address indicates that this year's event is for the entire family. (Child care will be provided, and there will be a juice stand, separate from the adult bar.) Rancho Verde, the location of Christy Webber Landscapes' corporate headquarters, has won awards for its approach to the redevelopment of a brownfield site. It also has a playground, and is home to various farm animals.

This year's honorees include Kim L. Hunt (Advocate of the Year), Harlem School District 122 (Ally of the Year) and Alex McCray (Activist of the Year).

Purchase tickets at <https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/ILSafeSchoolsAlliance/Brunch.html>.

Howard Brown Health opens on South Side

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Dozens of community members turned out Aug. 31 for an open house to celebrate the launch of Howard Brown Health's 63rd Street clinic in Englewood.

The clinic, which opened in May, is part of an effort by Howard Brown Health to expand its services in additional locations throughout the city, relieving many patients of having to travel to its Sheridan Road location and alleviating the patient load there. An additional North Side location in Rogers Park is already seeing patients as well.

"I'm so pleased to see Howard Brown on the South Side of Chicago," said radio host and former Ald. Cliff Kelley, who emceed the welcoming program. "We certainly appreciate what you are doing."

Howard Brown Health President/CEO David Munar added that the organization was "excited to extend our system of care to our patients who need it" in the neighborhood.

"We're aspiring to make sure that our work on the South Side is equivalent to our work on the North Side," he said.

Site medical director Maya Green, M.D., spoke about the importance of neighborhood engagement.

"All of us are shaped by our life experiences and how we engage with our community," Green said. "Those factors contribute to who we are because they serve us at the times at the day when we're not at work, when we're not in an environment where we have to put on a façade. Our communities make us who we are

and they encourage us to grow."

Green further reflected on being able to go to work for the part of town in which she grew up.

"I'm an African-American woman from the South Side of Chicago," she said. "... Many of you were raised in communities like I've been, so many of you have had a front-row seat to the inequalities that have impacted to social determinants of health, those things that play into the prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, depression—which we don't talk about a lot—and infection. In Englewood and many communities of color, those things have drastic impacts on who we are. That's why I'm glad Howard Brown is here to serve us—mentally, physically and on the social level that is very important in healthcare."

The new clinic is part of an aggressive expansion by Howard Brown Health following its designation in 2015 as a Federally Qualified Health Center, which allowed it to compete for several additional grants. The organization additionally has seen many new patients thanks to the Affordable Care Act.

The 63rd Street clinic was previously an HIV clinic that the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) operated. CDPH outsourced management of several facilities after numerous infrastructure challenges; clinics in Uptown, Humboldt Park and South Chicago are now being managed by University of Illinois at Chicago.

Also speaking at the Aug. 31 opening were Michael Peery of Len Gar Media and Pastor Corey Brooks of New Beginnings Church of Chicago, who gave an invocation.



Above: Ribbon-cutting with IDPH Regional Health Officer Joseph Harrington, Howard Brown Health President/CEO David Munar, site medical director Dr. Maya Green and Cliff Kelley. Below: Celebration at South Side opening.

Photos by Matt Simonette



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Covenant House interim ED has homecoming

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

In the 1927 William Faulkner novel *Mosquitoes*, Dorothy Jameson—an artist and guest on board the yacht *Nausikaa*—tells the young man she is trying to seduce, “I think the serious things really are the things that make for happiness—people and things that are compatible, love. So many people are content just to sit around and talk about them instead of getting out and attaining them. As if life were a joke of some kind.”

Those who work and volunteer with the international New York-based non-profit Covenant House have never been content to just sit around.

Not when, according to the organization, every year over “two million kids in America will face a period of homelessness.” Not when 57 percent of them “spend at least one day every month without food.” Not when, in the United States, “as many as 20,000 kids are forced into prostitution by human trafficking networks each year.”

For 44 years, Covenant House has aimed to provide homeless youth with some measure of the “things that make for happiness”—shelter, food, healthcare, job training and a transitional housing Right of Passage from fear, rejection and desperation into independence, dignity and hope. They have facilities in 27 cities across the Americas.

In April 2016, Covenant House International President Kevin Ryan announced that they would be expanding to Chicago—their first new site in over 16 years. It was a decision that Ryan told *Windy City Times* was “largely influenced by the willingness of the local provider community to partner with us. It was dramatically more substantial than in any city we looked at.”

During the 2014/2015 school year Chicago Public Schools (CPS) estimated its homeless student population at 20,205. In addition, thousands more in the 18-25 age range are homeless. Chicago has less than 400 beds available for youth. In addition, the Illinois budget crises has stretched many social-service providers very thin, including those providing services and housing to youth experiencing homelessness.

Licensed clinical social worker Teresa Cortas has been scaling similar seemingly insurmountable mountains throughout her entire career.

When Covenant House began investigating new cities in which to expand, Cortas was heavily lobbying for Chicago where she was in the midst 18-year role at the Salvation Army. She was most recently director of the organization’s Evangeline Booth Lodge in Uptown.

On Aug. 7, Covenant House announced that Chicago Lighthouse former chief advancement officer Warren K. Chapman had been selected to become its Illinois operation’s first executive director.

However, Chapman soon decided not to accept the position.

Cortas stepped in as interim executive director.

Cortas said that, while Covenant House Chicago is not open yet, it has found a temporary location at the YMCA’s Lawson House on the Near North Side of the city.

“It is a starting point,” she noted, “because we really want to make sure we are serving the right community. Chicago has a way of doing things in pockets. So we need to find out which the best neighborhood is for us or if we need to have multiple, small locations.”

In coming back to Covenant House, Cortas has come full circle and returned to the organization where she began a life journey fight-

ing for homeless youth and against the glaring racial and economic injustices that permeate U.S. society.

Born in the northern Indiana city of Elkhart to a large “very Catholic family,” even her early education was one that opened her eyes to how poverty and racial inequity worked together.

“When I was growing up, Elkhart was the heart of the R.V. and musical instrument industries,” she told *Windy City Times*. “But it was very much a small town. The state of Indiana did not desegregate their schools until 1981—20 years later than the rest of the county. So I was part of that. I was watching the adults who were trying to protest and block that change; adults who I never would have thought were racist say things that weren’t consistent with the neighbors I knew.”

“Then I saw how they divided up the African American neighborhoods pretty randomly and sent the kids to different white schools as opposed to communities,” Cortas added, “It didn’t seem fair. School was really defined by economics. My school was considered African American and was struggling.”

When Cortas and other white children began to attend, she remembered that suddenly, “All of that changed and resources became available.”

“There are certain things that privileged whites have expectations of and will not tolerate less than,” she asserted. “But, when you are part of a culture that has been pushed out and pushed down you think ‘I’m lucky to get what I have and I don’t want to lose that.’”

Her father worked in the R.V. industry. Both he and her then stay-at-home mother were immersed in their city’s community. After Cortas and each of her three siblings left for college, her mother began working for the parish.

When Cortas left to attend Catholic University of America in Washington D.C., she was already instilled with the spiritual and ethical values of service to others. The powerful memories of her middle and high school years and the questions they raised were as central to the life she would go on to choose.

But her college years were as much about discovering herself as they were philosophy and the American literature toward which she gravitated—Faulkner and Harlem Renaissance in particular—as they were about questioning many aspects of the Catholic Church, such as patriarchy.

“I was sorting out what my attachment was to the faith,” she said. “As opposed to ‘is there a faith separate from the church and, if so, what does that look like?’ I lived a lot in my head. It wasn’t until my early 20s that I really began to realize who I was. Prior to that, even though I was approached by many women, it never really occurred to me.”

Cortas admitted that Catholic anti-gay doctrines essentially “shut down” the exploration of her own sexuality during her teenage years even though they were rarely discussed in the community until the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

“Then it was conversations of ‘God punishing drug addicts and homosexual men,’” Cortas recalled. “At the time, I was confused because you could have said the same thing about God giving a person cancer to punish who they were. I was also intrigued to find out more about the epidemic.”

Cortas graduated in 1989 with a degree in English literature.

“I didn’t know what I was going to do with it,” she said. “My parents had always been supporters of Covenant House and I remember [Covenant House founder] Father Bruce [Ritter] coming to speak at university. So I started



Covenant House Interim Executive Director Teresa Cortas.

Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

working in their volunteer program.”

After training for a month in New York, Cortas was sent to Anchorage, Alaska, to work with the city’s homeless youth.

“It was absolutely extraordinary,” she said. “Beautiful but very isolated. A lot of the kids were displaced from other parts of Alaska and they would make their way to Anchorage and have nothing.”

A significant number of them were Native American.

Cortas added that they would try to survive Alaska’s bitterly cold winters “by doubling-up until they got kicked out or sometimes they would find a squat in the mall.”

“We would connect them back with their families and try to resolve whatever issues there were or assist the youth in getting permanent housing depending on their age,” she said. “Part of the problem was that they would be listed as ‘missing.’ Covenant House had come in at the request of the archbishop at the time to address the problem of missing children and the human trafficking that was happening. When they opened up, there were almost 500 missing kids from around the state. After five years, the number was down to three.”

In her song “Poor Man Blues,” iconic Harlem Renaissance Bessie Smith wrote, “While you livin’ in your mansion, you don’t know what hard time means. Po’ man’s wife is starvin’, your wife is livin’ like a queen.”

Los Angeles is truly unique in its illustration of Smith’s sentiments. It is there that the differences between arrogant, self-absorbed opulence and the wretched, desperate poverty that Mahatma Gandhi once famously called the “worst form of violence,” are possibly among the most glaring in the United States.

On a towering range overlooking L.A. sit Palos Verdes Estates and Rolling Hills. The population is predominantly white and the medium household incomes top nearly \$168,000 and \$185,000, respectively. The 845 K-12 students of the Chadwick School (where actress Joan Crawford sent her daughter) belong to families who live in a bubble of material affluence.

Only 31 miles away are the nearly 18,000 people who live in over four square miles of tents, in boxes or out of backpacks. The population of L.A.’s Skid Row is nearly 45 percent Black. Their trade is survival—to get through the next 24 hours. Some describe the community they have built as “vibrant” although it is one that is subject to brutal attacks and abuses from law enforcement as the city itself is engaged in an attempt to gentrify a neighborhood that was deliberately designed to be invisible to the rest of the world but instead became synonymous with the indifference which gave rise to it.

It was into this environment that Cortas was sent after a year in Alaska.

“I was completely overwhelmed,” she said. “I mean where do you even start? It really challenged my own thinking. When I arrived, I was around the same age as some of the youth I

was serving. I mean ‘there but for the grace of God.’ I could have been in their situation had I had different circumstances. Many were suffering with their own sexual identities. Many were involved in [sex work], addicted to drugs or they were a part of the massive porn industry there. I tried to help them visualize something beyond what they knew.”

“There is a belief that the homeless are responsible for being homeless,” she added. “That all you have to do is pull yourself up by your bootstraps. It over simplifies the situation. What I found was that so many of them fell victim to so many things because they were victimized at home and that started when they were very young. They were running away from something as much as they were running towards something. It was a process to help them come to terms with their own self-determination.”

A significant part of the role Cortas played at the L.A. Covenant House was as ombudsman. It forced her to have to emotionally separate herself from what she was seeing.

“When kids had to leave the program for one reason or another, my role was to review that discharge and determine if they could come back in,” she recalled. “If my head went too far [into emotion] I couldn’t make a decision that was best for the program. If a kid put his fist through the wall, I couldn’t turn around and let him back in the program but, at the same time, where could he go? What was going to happen to him in that process? We always made sure they had somewhere to go if they could not remain with us, but that was not easy to do.”

However, for Cortas, there was a deeper reason for keeping her emotional distance. “The kids need to take ownership of all of their accomplishments,” she said. “By my personalizing them, they become my accomplishments and they are not. I am just one of many people they are going to come across in their life who are going to hopefully point them in a direction best suited for them. I just want to make sure they have the best options in front of them.”

After completing her service in L.A., Cortas attended the University of Chicago to get her masters in social work.

Covenant House then asked her to return to Southern California to direct their residential program. She had been gone only two years, but the population of homeless youth had both drastically increased in number and changed in demographics.

“We opened a new facility that attracted more youth,” she said. “We were and still are very open to transgender kids and we saw a huge increase in the numbers of them participating in the program.”

Meanwhile, Cortas began dating.

“I didn’t feel any pressure from the organization to be a certain way,” she said. “We always had a very diverse staff reflective of the population we were serving. I certainly knew many staff members who were out. It was never an issue and, if anything, it made it much easier for the youth to feel more comfortable in the program.”

Nevertheless, Cortas censored many of her letters back to her family in Elkhart.

“I spared them a lot of the details of what I saw,” she said. “It was just disgusting how kids were victimized and how so many of them are rounded up from other parts of the country and dropped into Los Angeles.”

Eventually, Cortas came out to her parents.

“Anytime you come out to someone, it’s about them and not about you,” she said. “My mom’s concern was that I would get AIDS. My dad was worried that I was leaving the church and so I’d have eternal damnation as a result. I felt as though I was leaving the church. I couldn’t participate in any of the sacraments. Today, I’m not a practicing Catholic because the church has asked me not to be. I still struggle with it.”

After more than three years in Los Angeles, Cortas wanted to be closer to her ailing mother. She returned to Chicago and accepted

AFC, Harvard Law file federal complaint against Humana

BY MATT SIMONETTE

AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), on Sept. 6, filed a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights (OCR) against Humana, charging that the insurance giant routinely denies coverage for or limits access to HIV medications through prohibitively high cost sharing requirements.

AFC filed the complaint in partnership with Harvard Law School's Center for Health Law

and Policy Innovation (CHLPI), which has partnered with a number of health organizations for complaints against insurance companies in other states.

According to the complaint, Humana offers policies on the Affordable Care Act marketplace but regularly refuses to cover lifesaving medications and requires significant cost-sharing from patients with certain conditions such as HIV. Insurance companies on the marketplace cannot refuse to exclude policyholders because of pre-existing conditions.



Above: AFC Vice President of Policy and Advocacy Ramon Gardenhire.

Photos courtesy of AIDS Foundation of Chicago

"We're calling for change because we cannot codify discriminatory practices by insurers," said Ramon Gardenhire, vice president of policy and advocacy at AFC, in a statement. "This landmark effort will protect insurers who offer reasonable access to HIV medications, promote more consistent coverage patterns by insurers, and support efforts to ensure that people living with HIV and other chronic diseases can thrive."

"Filing this complaint is a step toward making the ACA work better," added AFC CEO and President John Peller. "We're taking this action to ensure that the Affordable Care Act remains affordable. The vast majority of health care plans in Illinois provide good and affordable

coverage for people living with HIV. Unfortunately, there are some bad actors that need to be addressed and returned to compliance for the sake of health equity across the U.S."

According to the complaint, a Humana individual plan enrollee taking the medication Trimeq would pay more in three months than an enrollee with diabetes would pay in an entire year for all prescriptions and medical services.

"CHLPI and AFC are using the OCR process to shine a light on discrimination occurring under the cloak of supposedly neutral insurance plan benefit design. When an insurer requires chronically ill patients to pay a disproportionate share of the cost of medication, it violates federal law," said Robert Greenwald, CHLPI's faculty director and clinical professor of law at Harvard Law School. "These are landmark Complaints that will benefit everyone looking to receive equitable, comprehensive health care through the marketplaces by helping to define anti-discrimination law at a time when insurers are covering less and less."

The complaint comes as part of a larger call for accountability for coverage, or lack thereof, in the federal-insurance marketplace.

"Health care that people cannot afford is about as useful as no health care at all," said Gardenhire. "Left unchecked, these practices will drive people living with HIV out of the health insurance market, essentially returning them to a pre-Obamacare coverage gap."

Victory Fund reception Sept. 18

The Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund Chicago Champagne Reception will take place Sunday, Sept. 18, at 12 p.m. at Ignite Glass Studios, 401 N. Armour St.

The Fund will mark 25 years at this event, which will feature Iowa state Sen. Matt McCoy. McCoy is the first openly gay member of the Iowa Legislature, and is the highest ranking openly gay politician in the state.

RSVP at VictoryFund.org/chicago.

Conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly dies

BY MATT SIMONETTE

Arch-conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly, who bitterly opposed LGBT rights, pro-choice rights and the Equal Rights Amendment, among other causes, died Sept. 5. She was 92.

Schlafly, an attorney and writer, gained considerable influence in conservative circles in the '70s when she spearheaded opposition to the ERA, though she'd been active on the right for several decades. The amendment had 30 out of the required 38 states on board when Schlafly entered the fray; it was defeated in 1982. Schlafly maintained that the ERA would lead to a loss of workplace-safety protections for women, increased rights for gays and a strengthening of the pro-choice movement.

Indeed, those were all issues that Schlafly turned her sights upon, and much of her early work laid the groundwork for the contemporary conservative milieu. She also played a large role in conceiving conservative platforms opposing same-sex marriages, gays in

the military, LGBT equal-rights laws and sex education in school.

In 1992, her son, John Schlafly, was outed as gay just after his mother debated a gay Republican at the 1992 GOP convention. A staffer at his mother's organization, the Eagle Forum, he continued to support her in her causes.

In March 2015, she told Michelangelo Signorile in Huffington Post that, should the U.S. Supreme Court come down in favor of marriage equality, the right would mobilize against it, just as it had done after Roe v. Wade.

"We should develop all kinds of strategies—legal strategies, legislative strategies and public opinion strategies, in order to reject the rules of, in many cases, a single judge or just a simple majority of judges," Schlafly said. "I do believe the grass roots can take back the Republican Party These kingmakers ... they're the people who really want us to be bipartisan and get along with everybody. But that's not the American way. Americans believe in the adversarial concept."

The Huffington Post article is at <http://huff.to/1BzSjVp>.

COVENANT from page 10

a position at the Ascension Respite Care Center working with HIV-positive women and their children.

"It was 1996 and HIV was still very much a death sentence to many," she said. "Although, I am relieved to hear that some of the babies we were working with have grown up. A lot of the moms we worked with didn't know they were infected until they had the baby."

After two years, Cortas began working for the Salvation Army.

"It was not my original plan," she admitted. "But I wanted to continue to work with homeless populations. So I started at their Sunnyside and Broadway building in Uptown [since developed into a housing and retail center] and then they needed someone to direct their homeless center for families on Lawrence Avenue and Marine Drive. We grew the program from 120 beds to 240 beds and it is still thriving."

However, even before she began work with the Salvation Army, Cortas was trying to convince Covenant House to open in Chicago.

"I was talking to the [then Covenant House] President Sister Mary Rose [McGeady] about opening in Chicago because I saw the need," she said. "She was an amazing woman. Hilarious but a real task master. She kept saying there were difficulties with coming to Chicago and that they didn't have the resources to do a start-up. Kevin was a friend of mine in college. When Sister Mary retired and he became

president, I reached out to him and said 'you need to be in Chicago'. When Covenant House decided Chicago met all their criteria, I was elated."

Her life and career spent making a difference may have come home to the organization which helped shape it, but for Cortas, this is not a time for reflection. The work is just beginning and the challenges which lie ahead are monumental.

"Is it going to be an easy process? Not at all," she said. "I think Chicago has extraordinary youth agencies. My experience with them has been phenomenal. The problem is there is not enough. There is not enough space. The number of homeless kids in CPS is astonishing and unacceptable and we have to do something about that. There is good advocacy, grassroots organizing and collaboration in Chicago. The issue is resources—space and money."

Yet perhaps there are lessons to be taken not only from the life Cortas has already invested in homeless youth and families, but in many of the kids it has touched. They are lessons which Faulkner captured when he wrote "You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore."

"It takes a lot of courage for us to be something other than our families [are]," Cortas said. "I don't think enough LGBT [people] realize that. But when you do, you can really begin to fight."

For more information about Covenant House Chicago, see <https://www.covenant-house.org/tags/chicago>.

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Project& updates the vision of Studs Terkel's 'Working'

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

Introducing his groundbreaking 1974 best-seller *Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day And How They Feel About What They Do*, iconic Chicago author, radio personality, performer, historian and activist Louis "Studs" Terkel wrote, "To earn one's bread by the sweat of one's brow has always been the lot of mankind. No matter how demeaning the task, no matter how it dulls the senses and breaks the spirit, one must work. Or Else."

"Ought not there be an increment, earned though not yet received, from one's daily work—an acknowledgement of man's being?" Terkel wondered.

In each of the working lives Terkel went on to, often intimately, detail, including a farmer, a sex worker, a washroom attendant, a dentist,

of Love and War.

Also a MacArthur Fellow, award-winning and pioneering architect Jeanne Gang and the internationally acclaimed company she founded Studio Gang—an 80 plus collective of "architects, designers and thinkers"—collaborated on the exhibit's design.

In addition, Project& started significant dialogues about the initiative with the U.S. Department of Labor and forged partnerships with advocacy organizations and think tanks nationwide including the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, Access Living, Women Employed, the Center for American Progress and the Chicago-based Pride Action Tank (on which Saks serves as an advisory board member.)

The voices that *Working in America* amplifies

the good, the bad, the ugly and the inspiring, and the people that make it up," she told *Windy City Times*. "My parents always told me that 'you have to make a life and you have to make a living. One isn't more important than the other.' So you can't make lots of money and not care about contributing to bettering the world and you can't have a fabulous life and not be able to pay your rent."

Working in America also emerged from one of Saks' most deeply held beliefs.

"I don't think that there are enough people in our Democratic experiment who are able to participate in our society with equity and

came to piercing. "I have always loved body piercing," he asserted. "I started in middle school, self-taught on my friends. They all kept coming back for more, so I decided this is one of the things I love to do."

He is also an electrical contractor in a business he co-owns with his father.

"We have to work in the heat, a lot of stress," he said, "the possibility of getting shocked or killed. This is a very dangerous job."

"James is saying 'I want to do what gives me confidence and is authentic to me,'" Saks said. "He is an incredible electrician who also thinks about the pride he has in his body and showing up visibly in the world. Living our lives is a creative process and our work is one of its major elements. We have to think about our work as just as influential as other things that shape us."

In Orlando, Florida they met professional escort Ava St. Clair.

"I love the fact that there are very few jobs

"Work is about a search for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for recognition as well as cash, for astonishment rather than torpor; in short, for a sort of life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying."

— Studs Terkel

a musician and an actor, he set out to explore that question and what he called the "mystique of work."

"Perhaps it is time the 'work ethic' was re-defined and its idea reclaimed from the banal men who invoke it," Terkel stated. "Once we accept the concept of work as something meaningful—not just as the source of a buck—you don't have to worry about finding enough jobs."

Terkel's collage of the hopes, needs, raw emotions and the search to the answer to the conundrum of happiness that lies at the basic core of humanity is timeless.

For 42 years, it has inspired people to ask questions about their own working lives and was the basis for the hit Broadway musical *Working*.

Beginning Sept. 14 at the Harold Washington Library Center in downtown Chicago, one of the city's most innovative and prolific new arts and social justice organizations Project&, will open an extraordinary multimedia exhibit that takes the fundamental questions of Terkel's book and, through a heightened intimacy of photography and storytelling, asks them of the 21st Century working American.

Project& is an organization which collaborates with artists of every discipline worldwide to "Create new models of cultural participation with social impact" through an absolute belief that "Art changes the world."

It is a belief through which Project& amplifies "artistic voices that risk, engage, investigate and inspire" when addressing "issues at the forefront of our time including race, justice, access and equity, identity, gender, cultures of violence, human rights and economic inequality."

It is within such essential dialogues that Project& founding president and artistic director Jane M. Saks says her organization seeks "new models of participation through culture."

The *Working in America* exhibit is beautifully aligned with that goal.

Collaborating with Project& in its creation is Lynsey Addario, a Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer, MacArthur Fellowship recipient and author of *It's What I Do: A Photographers Life*

belong to 24 working Americans engaged in a wide range of professions including "Veterans, janitors, tech workers, farmers, athletes, artists, entrepreneurs, elected officials and others."

Each of faces of the 24 subjects were presented in a photographic grid as a part of the exhibit's visual logo and promotional materials.

Addario not only captured an absolute reflection of the multicultural and beautifully diverse population of American workers but of humanity completely uncensored and without the airbrush applied by a mainstream, commercial attempt to synthetically replicate what Terkel called "the extraordinary dreams of ordinary people."

Some of the faces present a broad smile, as if they have solved the conundrum of happiness—at least for the time being and to their satisfaction. A few even seem to have surpassed it. Yet there are others who make very little effort to mask profound sadness, or deep exhaustion—the dream more improbable than extraordinary.

There is clearly a story to each of their lots in life.

According to Project&, those stories are told "in raw and authentic terms."

Within them lies the exploration of "the relationships between the social, cultural, physical, and psychological realities of work that shape everyday life. Issues of work and economic equity anchor the major conflicts of our times, be they the widening wealth gap, access to education and training, the housing collapse, or the impact of the global economy on people's abilities to patch together jobs in order to earn a living."

Saks conceived and curated *Working in America*.

The idea for the exhibit was not borne simply from her knowledge of Terkel's work, but a deeply personal experience of the man himself.

Her father was friends with Terkel, and Saks would often join the two of them in drives around Chicago. From the backseat, she received an early education in civic engagement and the fight for social and political change.

"They taught me what this city was about—



Jane M. Saks.
Photo by Emma Ruby-Sachs

success," she said. "All the work that I do is focused on that. I was in a meeting in Washington, D.C. and we were having a conversation about economic inequality in America. I thought about what my work in arts and culture would look like in addressing that issue."

Grappling with the question, Saks went home and took her father's copy of Terkel's *Working* off her bookshelf.

Within its pages, she found her answer.

"So I decided to revisit it," she said. "The last 40 years has been a tumultuous time for our economy and for workers. We are at a really critical moment, especially with the upcoming election when many people are tackling the issues of work and economic and social equity."

Saks and Addario, a longtime close friend, began to cross America together collecting stories and photographs.

In Albuquerque, New Mexico they found James—a 30-year-old electrician and body piercing artist.

James loves his art with such a passion that he said it was his goal to have 100 percent of his body tattooed. (He is 95 percent of the way there.)

James had the same artistic drive when it

where every single time you go to work, you know that you're making someone's life a little bit better, even if it's just for a little while, even if it's just for an hour," she said.

But Saks noted that "St. Clair works like many people: 'I go, I do what I do, I get paid, and I leave it there.'"

However, she chose her profession in part because, as St. Clair explained, "Men feel so entitled to women."

"They're entitled to your time and they get mad if you don't want to give them your number or smile at them," St. Clair said. "So I felt like I was taking control and saying, 'You know what, you can have all of those things but you're going to pay me for them.'"

Having gathered innumerable narratives and portraits, Saks curated 24 of them—people aged 21 to 87 living and working in 17 states. They include a number of LGBTQ individuals.

Gang collaborated on the design of their narratives and Addario's photography into an exhibition that presented them and their professions in keeping with Project&'s highest standards of artistic excellence.

However, Saks was just as determined that

Working in America should be experienced in a public, accessible and free space.

"I'm a huge Benjamin Franklin fan," she said. "He developed the library so that rich people weren't the only ones with access to knowledge. So I wanted it to take place in a library. It is designed in a way that is almost like steamer trunks. The trunks open up and people find an incredible exhibition inside. So no library can't take the exhibition because of staff limitations or they can't afford to present it."

Alongside the power of photography and the human narrative, Saks tapped into a third highly influential medium to form a part of the exhibit.

"There is a radio series," she said. "Working with the Studs Terkel Archives, I got unprecedented access to the field interviews that Studs did for the book. They have never been heard."

That will change thanks to another collaboration—this one between Saks and another close friend, Peabody Award-winning radio producer Joe Richman.

He is the founder and executive producer of Radio Diaries, which captures "extraordinary stories of ordinary life" and broadcasts them to a worldwide audience through National Public Radio (NPR), the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and via the Radio Series Podcast.

"Working Then and Now" is co-produced by Saks/Project& and Richman/Radio Diaries and will air on NPR's All Things Considered and Morning Edition the week of Sept. 26

"For some of the series we found some of the people in Stud's book who are still alive," Saks said. "We revisited them. They heard their interviews for the first time and talked about their 40 years of working life. We also paired them with contemporary voices."

Working in America also offers an opportunity few, if any of its contemporaries can boast—people can not only experience but become a part of it by sharing their own working stories – it's called Your Working Story.

Project& has put out a nationwide call for people to take a picture of themselves at work and caption it by answering two of Terkel's questions:

What does work mean to you?

What is one thing people don't know about your work?

The photo and the answers can either be emailed to Project& or posted on Instagram with the hashtag #WorkinginAmerica. People can also visit Working.org.

"I wanted people across the United States to be able to participate in this conversation," Saks asserted. "Even if the exhibition does not travel to their city, we now have an online, living community of narratives. Anyone can join in to this working, breathing conversation."

Saks believes these stories are essential to a conversation that is not limited to hushed whispers in museum. It is a global chorus that is as diverse in experience as it is unified in need.

"Recording and hearing our experiences really preserves the wisdom of humankind," she said. "It includes the breadth of our whole



Some faces of Working in America.
Photo by Lynsey Addario and Galambo Associates

society and it adds audiences and oxygen to voices that are often left out or invisible."

It is an idea that is very much in keeping with the architecture of Terkel's original book.

Among the 1974 narratives he included was 37-year-old steel mill laborer named Mike Lefevre.

"It's hard to take pride in a bridge you're never gonna cross, in a door you're never gonna open," Lefevre told Terkel. "You're mass-producing things you never see end result of it. In a steel mill you don't see where nothing goes."

Saks and Addario met Roque Sanchez in Chicago, 40 years later. His story is a part of the exhibit.

Sanchez arrived in the U.S. as one of the invisible—a five-year-old undocumented immigrant along with his family. Sanchez's first job was in a mustard factory but his voice is one of gratitude and hope.

"Everyone wants to work towards something and that's why you see people get up every day," he told Saks and Addario. "You see people riding to work, working towards something and it's very, very special to be part of the whole thing."

However Saks also believes that Working in America also speaks to those who are not a part of the labor force.

"The idea is to show how people are creating their lives, how they are putting their lives together," Saks said. "There is one woman in the exhibition whose husband committed suicide after serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. She talks about how much she loves her work because she is working with people dealing with suicide. It comes from this extreme tragedy in her life but she has found something that makes her understand what she is supposed to be doing in the world."

Saks added that, prior to her current position, the woman had been through a number of jobs that "just seemed like work."

Such a statement cuts to the heart of one of Terkel's most quoted arguments. "Work is about a search for daily meaning as well as daily bread," he wrote, "for recognition as well as cash, for astonishment rather than torpor; in short, for a sort of life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying."

"Why do we have to think about work in that

way; where we are just doing a job?" Saks wondered. "There's a population that gets to say 'yes. I want to be fulfilled. I want to have work that really helps me grow, change and evolve as a human being and helps me understand more about the possibility of the world. Then there's a much larger population that's just supposed to get a job and not even want those things. Can't we be a working world that is as large as our spirit, as large as our capacity rather than 'you'll never make a living at this?'"

"I understand the world through the pinholes of art and culture, asking myself question after question after question." Saks added, "How can we create opportunities for deeper experiences, and wider human participation? That's really the possibility I imagine: a world with equitable participation and human dignity as the measure of success. It's what I strive for every day."

Working in America runs Sept. 14, 2016 to Jan. 30, 2017, at the Harold Washington Library.

Opening night includes a panel discussion moderated by author and journalist Alex Kotlowitz and featuring Addario, director of the Domestic Workers Alliance Ai-jen Poo; Lucia McBath (mother of slain youth Jordan Davis); retired auto worker and union leader in Terkel's original book, current exhibit and radio series Gary Bryner; and Roque Sanchez and others from the exhibit.

For more information about Project&, visit <http://projectand.org>. For more information about Working in America, visit Working.org.

To share a story about Working in America, email info@projectand.org or post it on Instagram with the hashtag #WorkinginAmerica.



Lynsey Addario (left), Jane M. Saks (center) and exhibit feature Jeffrey McGee (right).
Photo courtesy of Saks

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Puerto Rican Cultural Center hosts out gay Mass. councilors

BY GRETCHEN RACHEL HAMMOND

The streets of the Paseo Boricua (Puerto Rican Promenade) in the Humboldt Park neighborhood of Chicago were possibly the most vibrant and jubilant in the city Sept. 3 as the 23rd annual Fiesta Boricua—described as “one of the Midwest’s most important branded Latino festivals”—kicked off two days of music, dance, arts, crafts and cuisine.

Founded by the Puerto Rican Cultural Center of Chicago (PRCC)—the largest, community-based Puerto Rican organization in the Midwest, for over twenty years Fiesta Boricua has become an integral part of the firmly established identity of the neighborhood.

Yet, this year, the festival featured two stark reminders of what happens when identity becomes a casualty of hatred.

Over half of the 49 courageous fallen in the June 12 Orlando Pulse Nightclub massacre were Puerto Rican. The pictures of the 49 which led this year’s Chicago Pride Parade were saved and installed on a Division Street wall in the heart of the Paseo Boricua.

On another wall at the corner of Campbell and Division, Puerto Rican artist Richard Santiago had begun work on a mural honoring their memories.

It was Humboldt Park and Fiesta Boricua’s celebration of community that provided Holyoke Mass. City Councilor Nelson Roman with his first experience of Chicago.

Roman is a native of Connecticut who moved to Western Massachusetts following initial rejection by his family when he came out. He spent two years homeless while infected with HIV/AIDS. Roman prevailed, eventually becoming a homeless case manager and community organizer.

Inspired by Holyoke’s first openly gay mayor Alex Morse, along with lesbian and Puerto Rican city councilor Jossie Valentin (now in her second term after her 2013 election as the first lesbian ever to hold that office), Roman decided to run himself.

Today, he and Valentin are the only openly gay members of the Holyoke City Council.

Both were in Chicago due to the PRCC’s national work around the fiscal crisis currently faced by Puerto Rico. PRCC representatives from met Roman in Massachusetts and invited him to visit the city as part of a delegation.

Activist and PRCC board member Roberto Sanabria hosted a Sept. 3 reception at his beautiful apartment overlooking the Paseo Boricua to welcome Roman and Valentin.

“I am overwhelmed with joy and excitement,” Roman told Windy City Times. “Especially coming here to the Paseo Boricua and seeing the Orlando vigil wall or the Pride as well as the Puerto Rican flags. I haven’t even gone to the downtown area. This is Chicago and it has been an amazing experience.”

“The city of Holyoke has about 40,000 residents and about 49 percent of them are Latino,” Valentin said. “But, when you look at the political representation, there’s 15 city councilors and only four of us are Latino. For me, running was part of the phrase ‘if you’re not at the table, you are on the menu.’ As a woman, as a Latina and as a lesbian, I felt like it was important that I run with all of those identities at the forefront.”

“This is the first time in its history that Holyoke has two Latino, openly LGBT elected who are social justice oriented,” she added. “Both of us our similar in the narrative we are trying to frame. For example, it took a very long time for elected officials to start talking about the importance of the Black Lives Matter (BLM)

movement. In 2014, I decided to participate in a Black Lives Matter protest in Holyoke. To this day, I get a lot of criticism for doing that but, for me, it was a no-brainer. We’re here to talk about oppression and how to change things.”

“The way I feel that we govern and participate in government is in an activist’s role,” Roman said. “Holyoke has the number one hormone treatment facility and medical center for transgender individuals. Programs like Needle Exchange are something that Jossie and I believe in and fight for. We support an LGBT youth group in Holyoke. It is a very proactive approach to a lot of the issues that we are facing.”

Valentin recently put forward a resolution opposing North Carolina’s anti-transgender legislation while asserting that Holyoke stands against such oppression. Roman noted that, this year, Holyoke will host its first World AIDS Day activities including a vigil.

“Some of our colleagues didn’t get Jossie’s resolution,” he said. “But we rallied them. When it comes to human or civil rights you have to be fearless and not worry about whether you are going to win reelection or not.”

Yet the outcome of the November 7 general election does concern them both.

“It’s increasingly critical not just at the top of the ticket, but at even local board levels,” Roman said. “Outside the island of Puerto Rico,



Out Holyoke, Massachusetts, councilors Jossie Valentin and Nelson Roman at Fiesta Boricua. Photo by Gretchen Rachel Hammond

there’s 5.5 million of us living in the U.S. and 3.5 million on the island. Wherever our diaspora is, we have an opportunity to sway this election. If we don’t, it will embolden racist, homophobic and transphobic individuals to pass laws to restrict our rights and take us back

to a time where we have to live in fear of being who we are.”

For more information about the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, visit: <http://www.prcc-chgo.org>.



Attendees at the national summit. (Two faces are blurred for anonymity.)

Photo courtesy of Kim Nguyen

i2i receives award at national summit

The Chicago LGBTQ Asian/Pacific Islander (API) group Invisible to Invincible: Asian Pacific Islander Pride of Chicago (i2i) received the Advocacy Award at a national summit.

On Aug. 11-14, four members of i2i—Anne Watanabe, Kim Nguyen, Kristina Tendilla, and Ro Truong—traveled to New Orleans for a training and networking summit that the National Queer Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA) organized for leaders from LGBTQ API organizations around the country.

The Advocacy Award recognized the member group that had participated in significant grassroots and public policy-advocacy activities and programs the previous fiscal year. i2i was recognized for advocacy in Chicago for activities such as organizing around API support for Black Lives Matters, voter phone-banking and immigrant-rights advocacy; organizing against Uptown gentrification; participating in NQAPIA’s Week of Action on #RedefineSecurity; hosting a family acceptance workshop; and participating in Chicago’s recent Dyke March and the Disability Pride Parade.

The leadership summit was an invitation-only event for leaders at LGBTQ Asian American, South Asian, Southeast Asian and (API) organizations. i2i was able to attend in part with support from the Alphawood Foundation.



in the LIFE

Olin Eargle

TEXT BY ROSS FORMAN

PHOTOS COURTESY OF EARGLE

- **Age**
32
- **Neighborhood**
West Andersonville
- **Relationship status**
Married for four years
- **Job title**
Real estate broker for @properties; singer/actor
- **Hobbies**
Running, tennis, volleyball, softball, traveling, watching college football and singing
- **Favorite TV show**
Law and Order
- **Favorite movie**
A Walk To Remember
- **Favorite professional athlete**
Kris Bryant
- **Favorite app**
Words with Friends
- **Favorite Chicago restaurant**
Select Cut
- **Little-known fact**
"I used to weigh 210 pounds, [then during] my freshman year at Appalachian State University, [I] lost weight while being a cheerleader."

His passion for real estate dates back decades.

Olin Eargle used to draw house plans as a youngster and even helped his dad design and build their home in the Carolinas. Eargle then worked as a leasing agent as his summer job and became a resident assistant in college for three years.

"There was always something about housing/real estate that I loved and I immediately knew it's what I wanted to do as a career," he said.

But that field didn't bring him to the Windy City. Rather, he moved to Chicago to work for The Oprah Winfrey Show. Eargle worked as the executive assistance to the director of media and public relations.

Eargle did, though, get his real-estate license in 2007—and he now brings a "fresh perspective" to the business, he said.

"So many times agents use the same techniques, [the] same old systems to an ever-changing business and it actually can hurt the clients more than help them," Eargle said. "I know what it's like to be a first-time buyer and a first-time seller, and I work to make the transaction smooth, navigating from [the] first meeting to [the] first year in the new home."

The first home Eargle ever sold was "a cute, one-bedroom condo in East Lakeview on Briar [Street]," he said. "It was a friend of mine who fell in love with the place and the location, and it actually was a very smooth deal with no hiccups."

Eargle said the best part of his job is simply "seeing the happiness and joy a client feels when they see the home that speaks to them. I literally had a client stand in the back yard of a home and break into tears saying, 'This is our home; this is going to be our home,' and we all stood there and cried, before even making an offer."

"I love making dreams become a reality for my clients."

About half of Eargle's clients are LGBT, and many come through referrals. "I love being able to take care of folks in our community,"



he said. "When I was a first-time buyer with my first boyfriend, before I got into the business, there was an agent who looked down on us as two men buying a home together, and [the agent] verbally made that known to us. I vowed to never let that happen to anybody else."

Eargle is a member of the Illinois LGBT Chamber of Commerce and has been in the Pride Parade for eight out of 10 years with some group or another, and is a founding member of the Cabaret Project, a gay owned and operated cabaret performance troupe.

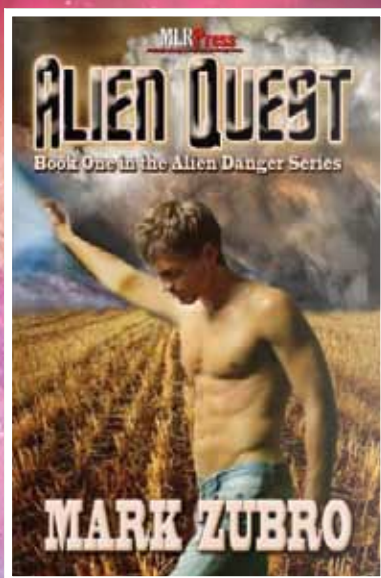
He also is active within the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA), as he has played softball for the past eight years, primarily as a middle infielder. This year, he has ventured into CMSA beach volleyball, and the team name is the "Olin Sells Chicago" Beach Bums.

Eargle also has had what he called an embarrassing sporting moment several years ago while playing in the annual Gay Softball World Series: "I took a line drive straight to the eye, knocking me on my back. My eye swelled up and turned purple just in time to join thousands of people in the March for Equality down Pennsylvania Avenue [in Washington D.C.] ... and who do I look over and see I'm marching beside? Lady Gaga."

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viewpoints



**Dana
RUDOLPH**

MOMBIAN

Family Equality ED sees families helping families

Everyone's first week on the job should be like Stan Sloan's. The new executive director of Family Equality Council, the national organization for LGBTQ families, began the role on the first day of Family Week in Provincetown, the organization's signature event and the world's largest gathering of LGBTQ families.

The 500 families took part in activities including a family parade, a beach campfire, free HBO kids' programming, and workshops on more serious topics like how to talk with children about the Orlando shooting. Afterward, Sloan spoke with me about his vision for the organization and our community.

Before coming to Family Equality, Sloan had for 16 years been CEO of Chicago House, which provides housing and employment programs for people disenfranchised by HIV/AIDS, LGBTQ poverty and/or gender nonconformity. He is also an ordained Episcopal priest, and while he acknowledges that "religion has been very damaging" to many LGBTQ people, he hopes to use his status "for good"—for example, in fighting so-called "religious liberty" laws that discriminate against LGBTQ people.

He takes up his new role at what he calls "a very critical moment" for the LGBTQ community. Now that marriage equality is won, he said, "Either we find something big enough to capture us for the future or we may not stay together" as such a strong movement. "I'm very passionate about that," he insisted. "We are better and stronger together than we are apart."

"We're nowhere near a resting point," he continued. Discrimination still exists in the foster care system against LGBTQ potential foster parents and LGBTQ kids, as well as in employment and housing, which impact both LGBTQ families and individuals. "The idea of lived equality and of equality within LGBTQ—I think we're just now starting to scrape the surface of that. That's where I see Family Equality being able to take a real leadership role."

A key part of that role, he believes, is encouraging families to help families. He explained, "Currently, about five percent of LGBTQ people support LGBTQ causes. If you look at the fact that LGBTQ children and LGBTQ families are about twice as likely to have food insecurity as mainstream families, we can certainly be doing a better job of taking care of one another. I see that as our huge agenda for the future."

That agenda would include "LGBTQ people with resources sharing with LGBTQ people in need, but also fighting to change the policies of our emergency systems, our food programs, and our housing assistance programs."



Family Equality Executive Director Stan Sloan.
PR photo

"A lot of people here at Family Week can afford to take a week off work and stay in P'town, and that's great," he said—but when he's spoken with them about those who can't attend and may be putting their children to bed hungry, he's seen tears in their eyes. "We're ready to do something better," he asserted.

He added, "You can't talk economic disparity without talking race." His favorite event at Family Week, he said, was an ice cream social for interracial families. "It was a metaphor of what we're looking toward. We're still way too segregated and too isolated. Part of the power of families helping families is you can connect stories and break down some of the stereotypes that exist, both socioeconomically and racially."

To that end, another Family Week event encouraged conversations around topics such as gun violence, racism, and the Black Lives Matter movement. The event, held in partnership with COLAGE, the organization for people with LGBTQ parents, created breakout sessions for parents of color raising children of color, White parents raising children of color, and White parents raising White children, then brought them back together to learn from each other.

They plan to continue conversations about racial injustice through online forums, and will work for change in coalition with various partners, such as organizations focused on gun violence prevention.

And Sloan's vision of families helping each other could have a wider impact on the LGBTQ movement as a whole. He explained, "If we can do it with families supporting families, then hopefully we'll move that bar from only 5 percent of LGBTQ people supporting LGBTQ causes. ... And if we could do it for families, because people care about kids, it's an easy entry point for people into the idea of building a better world and of altruism. I think we've got a real role to play there."

For Family Equality to take on this role, however, Sloan feels, means being more outspoken about their own work. The organization has been doing "amazing things," he said, but "I don't think we're very good at letting the world know how we're impacting the broader movement." While big court decisions and legislative wins grab headlines, many of Family Equality's successes have come from less flashy but still important work with federal and state executive agencies. Even before national marriage equality, for example, they partnered with other organizations to help the Department of Labor implement a rule change that extended job-protected leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act to employees with same-sex spouses anywhere in the country. They similarly helped change the federal student aid process to better recognize same-sex-headed families and helped modernize federal forms to include "parent" and "parent" options instead of just "mother" and "father."

Moving forward, he asserted, "We'll be less quiet about what we do and much more intentional about making sure that we're supporting one another better under our rainbow. I'm very grateful to be here and I'm very optimistic about what we're going to be able to do."

Dana Rudolph is the founder and publisher of Mombian (mombian.com), a GLAAD Media Award-winning blog and resource directory for LGBTQ parents.

letters

*His Excellency Thomas Bach
President
International Olympic Committee
Château de Vidy
1007 Lausanne
Switzerland*

Dear President Bach:

On behalf of the international Federation of Gay Games, we congratulate you and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on the success of the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This success is in terms of not just the execution of the games themselves, but more so the IOC's commitment to build a better world through sport:

—Principle 6 of the Olympic Charter now includes specific mention of sexual orientation

—Your quote from the Opening Ceremony speech, "In this Olympic world, there is one universal rule for everybody. We are all equal."

—Statement that future host cities should be required to sign anti-discrimination agreements as part of their contracts

—Improved number of out LGBT athletes and athletes feeling safe enough to compete openly at the Rio Games

—Inclusion of the first-ever Refugee Olympic Team

—Widespread condemnation response to the homophobic Grindr outing piece in the Daily Beast

The Federation of Gay Games applauds your

leadership and focus on human rights in partnership with the international LGBT+ sport community.

We look forward to further developing our relationship and continued dialogue to promote our common interest of sport; sport for all; and sport free from discrimination. We invite you to join us for Gay Games 10, Paris 2018, and our shared motto of "All Equal." We welcome you to learn more at www.paris2018.com.

*With deepest respect,
Joanie Evans and Kurt Dahl
Co-Presidents*

WINDY CITY TIMES

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Gay Glow at Charlie's.



In tent

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The movie *Akron* examines young gay love.

Still from the film's official website

SCOTTISH PLAY SCOTT

Husbands hired for Goodman's 'Wonderful Town'

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Auditioning actors know that getting cast in a show can be a cutthroat business. But imagine the dilemma for a performer if his or her spouse was competing to play the exact same role.

This uncomfortable situation actually happened to married Chicago actors Wade Elkins (Blue Man Group) and Steven Stafford (End Days, *Methtacular!*). Both were called in to be seen for the comic role of a romantic soda jerk named Frank Lippencott in Tony-winning director Mary Zimmerman's new production of *Wonderful Town* at the Goodman Theatre.

"Steven was actually called in for the role of Frank Lippencott, and I was called in for the understudy of Frank," Elkins said. "We've never had that happen before."

Both Elkins' and Stafford's auditions went so well that they were called back multiple times in competition for the same role.

"We were actually pretty excited that the

chances for at least one of us getting the role was pretty good," Elkins said.

Stafford was slightly nervous when he was contacted yet again for another callback. In addition to Frank, he was also asked to prepare an audition for the character of the smarmy New York reporter Chick Clark.

"I threw together this audition," Stafford said. "Usually, that never works out. When you get asked to read another role, it's usually because they say, 'We think you're talented,' but then you don't get the job."

But to the delight of Elkins and Stafford, they were both respectively cast in the show as Frank and Chick. They even get to play opposite each other in a musical comedy number called "Conversation Piece," where their characters turn rather nasty toward each other during an awkward apartment dinner party.

The reason for the animosity is because both Frank and Chick are trying to get the romantic attentions of one of the show's leading ladies,

Eileen Sherwood (Lauren Molina), the prettier sister of the more enterprising and ambitious journalist Ruth (Bri Sudia).

"I quite enjoy the fact that we have this scene together where he is just a jerk to me and it's so funny," said Elkins of playing opposite his husband.

"Every time I'm doing the scene in rehearsal, my number one job is not to laugh," Stafford said. "It feels like *The Carol Burnett Show* where we're trying so hard not to break and laugh."

Both Elkins and Stafford have delighted in getting to know *Wonderful Town* itself. It's about the misadventures of two Ohio sisters who move into a basement Greenwich Village apartment in 1930s New York.

Wonderful Town was a critical and audience hit, winning five Tony Awards in 1953 including Best Musical and Best Actress for its famous Hollywood leading lady, Rosalind Russell. But the show isn't that well known.

Part of the problem stems from Hollywood never turning *Wonderful Town* into a major musical motion picture. It was due in large part to complex rights issues with Ruth McKeney's original stories as source material versus Joseph Fields and Jerome Chodorov's 1940 stage adaptation entitled *My Sister Eileen*.

Columbia Pictures released a musical version of *My Sister Eileen* in 1955, but it didn't feature *Wonderful Town*'s jazzy score by bisexual composer Leonard Bernstein and lyricists Betty Comden and Adolph Green (which included the wistful duet "Ohio" and showstoppers like

"Conga!" and "Wrong Note Rag"). Russell was only able to preserve her acclaimed performance as Ruth in a special 1958 TV version of *Wonderful Town* and in an earlier 1942 non-musical film version of *My Sister Eileen*.

Wonderful Town did get some major attention in the past decade when a New York Encores! concert staging was revived and adapted for Broadway in 2003 starring Tony Award-winner Donna Murphy as Ruth and Kissing Jessica Stein star Jennifer Westfeldt as Eileen. That production didn't tour to Chicago, so Zimmerman's new take on *Wonderful Town* for the Goodman Theatre is a major and rare chance to see a full-fledged staging of the musical.

"What was really amazing about working on it is that even though it is of its period, the style and sophistication of comedy is really exciting," said Stafford, a self-professed "musical comedy nerd" who admits to not being that familiar with *Wonderful Town* before he started auditioning for it.

"So often when you do older shows, the book is creaky and the jokes feel hackneyed," Stafford said. "But these jokes are excellent and they're really, really funny. We're really excited to be in the cast we're in."

Wonderful Town plays from Saturday, Sept. 10, through Sunday, Oct. 16, at the Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn Ave. Tickets are \$25 to \$93; call 312-443-3800 or visit GoodmanTheatre.org.



Bri Sudia, Karl Sean Hamilton, Lauren Molina, Steven Stafford and Wade Elkins in rehearsal.
Photo by Liz Lauren

THEATER REVIEW

Thee Trinity

Playwright: Rick Roberts
 At: Polemic Theatre Company at
 Royal George Gallery Space,
 2433 N. Lincoln Ave.
 Tickets: 312-988-9000 or
 PolemicTheater.com; \$30
 Runs through: Oct. 1

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

If you ever pondered what Jesus Christ and Lucifer might think about modern-day reality TV shows and diet cola, then you might want to check out Rick Roberts' world-premiere play *Thee Trinity* for the new Polemic Theatre Company. But be forewarned—*Thee Trinity* comes off more like an exercise by Roberts in trying to shock staid audiences around ideas of faith, science and pop culture rather than being a concise play that doesn't overstay its welcome.

The premise for *Thee Trinity* is this: The fey and effeminate angel Gabriel (Elias Rios) and the more butch archangel Michael (Adam Thatcher) have called a meeting on the matter of the second coming of the Messiah. In attendance is Mike Jimerson as Jay (the nickname for Jesus Christ), Jocelyn Adamski as Holly (the nickname for the Holy Ghost) and Laura Stewart Obernauf as Lucy (the nickname for Lucifer, who has decided on this occasion to take the form of a vivacious woman who loves to play Devil's Advocate whenever possible).

While everyone is waiting for God Almighty to show up, Gabriel gets to call in former human witnesses like the scientist Albert Einstein (Andrew Pond), poet/playwright Oscar Wilde



Thee Trinity.
 Photo from
 Polemic Theatre
 Company

(David Schaplowsky) and terrorist mastermind Osama Bin Laden (Scott Minches) for advice. With such a diverse group, arguments arise from every direction amid quite a number of eye-rolling gay sex jokes.

One of many construction problems with *Thee Trinity* is that it needs better dramatic momentum and some severe editing of Roberts' ideas on theology. Topics of discussion between the characters often get repeated in both acts, and the pause for intermission doesn't come after a high moment of drama to leave audiences

atwitter to find out what happens next.

Although religious debates dramatized through figures seen as holy will probably never go out of style, Roberts' *Thee Trinity* often feels like reheated goods meant to shock. The 2003 British musical *Jerry Springer: The Opera* does a far better job of mixing holy Christian characters amid pop cultural phenomena.

Even though they're saddled with a less-than-best script, the cast under the able direction Brian Rabinowitz do what they can with their characterizations. Particularly good

is Pond, though you wish that his zany take on Einstein had better material to work with like Steve Martin's *Picasso* at the Lapin Agile or Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *The Physicists*. Instead, you get Pond as an aroused Einstein hitting on Lucy whenever possible.

As a new ensemble, Polemic Theatre Company appears to be producing *Thee Trinity* so it can get some notoriety via a succès de scandale. But really *Thee Trinity* is more of a dramatic muddle as it frequently scrapes the bottom of the barrel for its humor.

THEATER REVIEW

Dutchman/TRANSit

Playwright: Amiri Baraka/Darren Canady
 At: American Blues Theater at the
 Greenhouse, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave.
 Tickets: \$19-\$49
 Runs through: Sept. 25

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The map on the wall of the train car, the empty seats and the advertisements for Burma-Shave indicate that we are in New York City on an early evening during the mid-20th century for the first in this double bill of plays. Amiri Baraka's career-making 1964 one-act recounts how Black corporate Clay is lured by white free-spirit Lula's seductive banter into sharing an

erotic fantasy that turns suddenly ugly following the entrance of other passengers.

The chronological markers in Darren Canady's "response"—PSAs for condoms and restroom orientation—locate us in the immediate present, where African-American trans woman Veronica and effete blue-eyed Luke find their friendship tested after their late-night commute is interrupted by dancer/hustler Lalo, whose swagger triggers a burst of residual machismo. One encounter ends in murder, the other in what we hope is merely a pants-wetting scare.

In 1992, Rodney King pleaded to angry mobs, "Please, can't we just *get along*?" Apparently we can't, not as long as individuals dissatisfied with their own lives take comfort in bullying those less fortunate. Baraka rants against the

humiliation inflicted on the perceived descendants of slaves by a society bent on ascertaining that even double-degreed Village poet/authors (like himself) will never rest easy, but he offers no remedy for this injustice. More than fifty years later, Canady reaffirm this gloomy dispatch, but expands the range of its context. No one can deny the manifestation of hostile prejudice today, but are we then to conclude from the experience of our three disenfranchised waifs that our nation's long-extended promise of re-invention is a myth and that gender-linked ancestral imperatives will always triumph?

This disappointing prospect doesn't rule out thrilling theater forged from its muddy logic. Under Chuck Smith's savvy direction, Michael Pogue and Amanda Drinkall resist the tempta-

tion to rush the risky—and ultimately fatal—head games parsed by Clay and Lula, rendering all the more abrupt the latter's unexplained descent into vilification. Manny Buckley and Edgar Miguel Sanchez likewise take the leisurely route in generating an atmosphere of testosterone-fueled danger, while Jake Szczepaniak renders Luke's pacifism ambivalent, but never malicious.

This approach ensures that by the time physical violence breaks out, the emotional tension has escalated to a level designed to leave us so numb with shock that we can almost overlook the irony of our conspicuously racial/sexual/economically diverse audience bearing witness, together, in the Greenhouse's smallest studio, to the assertion that multicultural harmony is unachievable.

THEATER REVIEW

Fefu and Her Friends

Playwright: Maria Irene Fornes
 At: Halcyon Theatre at Evangelical
 Lutheran Church, 3253 W. Wilson Ave.
 Tickets: HalcyonTheatre.org; \$20 (some
 first-come, first-served
 free tix are available)
 Runs through: Oct. 8

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Fefu and Her Friends hasn't been produced in Chicago in many years. It's an important 1977 play by Cuban-born Maria Irene Fornes, the award-winning avant-garde playwright, director, feminist and former lover of Susan Sontag. Fornes, now 86 and ailing, has inspired many contemporary Latina theater artists such as Coya Paz, Tanya Saracho, Karen Zacarias and Caridad Svich through plays such as *Mud*, *The Danube* and *Promenade*.

Stephanie, called Fefu (Eleanor Katz), hosts seven female friends at her New England home to plan a charity gala. It's 1935, but these stylishly coiffed and dressed women

(costumes, Izumi Inaba) appear untouched by the Great Depression.

The dialogue sounds natural enough, but *Fefu and Her Friends* is slightly mystical or magically real as the women reveal inner longings and, especially, fears related to men, power and sexuality. Wheelchair-bound Julia (Mary Ann de la Cruz) may suffer from hysterical paralysis, while Paula (Maren Rosenberg) and tomboyish Cecilia (Tamika Lechee Morales) have a romantic history together. Christina (Sarah Rachel Schol) admits her timidity and conformity compared to "adventurous" Fefu. The women's party is completed by ebullient and theatrical Emma (Laura Stephenson), diplomatic Sue (Allyce Torres) and Fefu's sportily-dressed confidante Cindy (Ashley Agbay).

These women question, seek and wonder about themselves but never quite trust their own instincts, repeatedly measuring women against men. I think Fornes chose the 1935 setting because the modern Feminist Movement didn't exist yet and there were few independent women. Undercurrents of danger, even premonitions of death, haunt the play as Fefu fires a pistol and several women vividly describe violent dreams. Or did they really happen?

It's interesting and complex material, made more so by a three-part structure. Parts I and III gather all the women in Fefu's living room while Part II offers four simultaneous scenes in four rooms of the house. The audience divides up and promenades between scenes, which are repeated until everyone has seen them all. Director Tony Adams (a man) and his designers (Nicholas Schwartz, scenic; Cat Davis, lighting; Jessica Mondres, properties) do a nifty job with the physical staging on the third floor (no elevator) of a church hall, but the play's emotional and psychological depths are not fully realized. Yes, *Fefu and Her Friends* has some splendid moments, such as de la Cruz's extremely intimate solo scene in a tiny bedroom, but too much seems charmingly facile, typical of Fornes' style but just the surface of the play.

I missed some details about characters and situations because a lot of the play—particularly Part II—was spoken barely above a whisper. The audience may be only three feet away but actors still need to project and point their lines. Some audio adjustment is needed.

CRITICS' PICKS

The Anton Chekhov Book Club Returns, Moving Dock Theatre Company at Stage 773, through Sept. 23 (Fridays only). In just 80 minutes, the four "book club" members perform page-to-stage adaptations of six Chekhov short stories. MSB

Bloodshot, Solo Celebration at Greenhouse Theater Center, through Sept. 10. Playwright Douglas Post and actor Simon Slater deliver a murder mystery steeped in London noir as rich and romantic as the sweat generated by the lone actor recounting the tale of mendacity, revenge, deception and double-crosses. MSB

A Red Line Runs Through It, Second City e.t.c., in an open run. Laugh at all the timely sketches focusing on trending topics like Black Girl Magic, controversial local news and drag tips for straight men. SCM

Three Hotels, Bluebird Arts at Athenaeum Theatre, through Sept. 17. Jon Robin Baitz's two-person play soars on forceful yet understated performances by Dave Belden and Jaimelyn Gray as a couple seeking salvation (not in a religious sense) against a background of international business exploitation. JA

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge
 and Morgan

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MIRZA from cover

film Anything may have further cemented the idea that the people behind mainstream Hollywood are wedded to the same (lack of) vision that gave us Marlon Brando as a Japanese villager, Burt Lancaster as a Native American warrior, John Wayne as an East-Central Asian conqueror and a multitude of other miscast performances that drives more nails into the coffin of on-screen diversity.

However, Mirza's Signature Move: Life, Love

because he wanted to make a feature film and a Chicago story. I always joke with Brian that he is a straight, middle-aged white guy who said "The Chicago story I think we've got to tell is a Pakistani Muslim lesbian's story."

It was a year and a half ago when we made that first step. Then Lisa and I were revising the first draft; honing, crafting and fine-tuning it. Working with our director, we did revisions even on set. There's the movie you imagine, the movie you write and the movie that you end up shooting.

WCT: What made Jennifer Reeder stand out to you as a choice for director?

FM: Part of what Brian and New City wanted to do was to work on a project that was a Chicago story using Chicago resources—meaning talent, crew, post-production, music, everything. So we wanted a Chicago director. I knew that I wanted a female director so we interviewed several women. I had never worked with Jennifer before Signature Move, but I had heard about her short films that had screened at Film Festivals like Sundance and her ability

what happens behind and in front of the camera. What was really nerve-racking was working with Shabana Azmi as my mother. She is the Meryl Streep of India. She flew in to do this role. I had no experience working with that level of talent and making sure, as artists, that we found our rhythm as mother and daughter.

We had an amazing team. We worked with Angie Gaffney [CEO of Chicago-based Black Apple Media and co-founder of Stage 18] as our line producer. Our director of photography Chris Rejano is brilliant. He has a beautiful eye. If we had lighting like that all the time, we would all fall in love with each other! It really allowed me to focus on acting once production started. But, when something didn't go right, my producer brain kicked in with "How do we solve this problem?" Our Executive Producers Jan Hieggelke, Nabeela Rasheed and Michael Shannon were great at putting out any fires.

WCT: So a diverse, talented and authentic cast, an equally brilliant duo of women writers and a female director bringing it all together. In your opinion, just what the hell is Hollywood's problem?

FM: I guess when a select group of people who all look and are the same and have been doing something the same way for so many years are the ones making the decisions, I imagine they are going to make the same choices until someone pushes them to stop or until someone else gets to start making decisions in their place. It's offensive when the [HBO] show The Night Of is about a Pakistani family but one of the men they cast is not Pakistani. He is clearly an Iranian man with an Iranian accent. It's like they know that South Asians know better but they don't care enough to try harder. They are just lazy. That's the argument for making your own content because then you don't have to rely on anyone else. You have complete control and to cast authentically means sometimes you do have to work a little harder to see more people.

WCT: It seems their laziness applies during both the summer blockbuster and Oscar-begging seasons.

FM: Mmm-hmm. I had the privilege to be a part of the web series Her Story. That's a story about trans women with authentic representa-



Shabana Azmi.
Photo by Christopher Rejano

and Lady Wrestling sets out not only to tell an all-Chicago love story about a Muslim lesbian (Mirza) who falls for a professional woman wrestler from Mexico—but to do so in a way that is completely authentic.

Each of the roles—be they extra, featured or starring—was cast using the multicultural, multiracial and gender diverse talent pool for which they were written.

Produced by New City editor and publisher Brian Hieggelke and Full Spectrum Features founder Eugene Park, Signature Move's principal photography took place using locations across Chicago.

Following the film's Aug. 29 wrap party, Mirza took off for a well-deserved vacation in Asheville, North Carolina, ahead of a 2017 release date.

From there, she spoke with Windy City Times about Signature Move, the experience of writing, acting in and completing her first full-length feature film, proving that an A-list actor will never equal accuracy in the way that a just as talented but decidedly more genuine performer-of-diversity can.

Windy City Times: Tell us about the genesis of Signature Move.

Fawzia Mirza: I was dating a Mexican woman in Chicago and we had so many similarities across our culture. I was also on a comedy talk-show in Chicago called Talk Hard. There was a former pro-wrestler on the show as well. I was inspired by her and how strong she was. I wondered about these women's stories in the greater narrative of women in the United States. I love when I get to talk about Brown women in ways that people don't expect. So, somehow, I thought wrestling should be a part of this.

In many ways there's a metaphor in it. I mean we're all wrestling with something in our lives whether it's relationships or work. So the wrestling metaphor is very universal. I originally wrote [Signature Move] as a short, but then I met Eugene and he wanted to produce it and turn it into a feature. My gut said that Lisa was the one who would be crazy enough to go with me on this journey, so I called her up and, in Los Angeles, we constantly wrote for a little over a week before we had a first draft. Eugene then introduced us to Brian at New City

WCT: In shooting it, how important was it for you to have authenticity in casting?

FM: Diversity and authenticity were of the utmost importance to me. One of my visions as an artist is to tell authentic stories from my world and not wait for someone else to do it. It was essential to me that all of us were preserved in that process. I play the lead character Zaynab. In my experience growing up, there was a lot

to connect with women's stories and especially these coming-of-age stories. Brian, myself and Eugene unanimously knew she was the one.

WCT: How about the Chicago locations you chose?

FM: Part of the reason that Signature Move is such a Chicago story is that it's a love story between a South Asian and a Mexican woman. We have two of the highest populations in the country in the city of Chicago especially Upper



Left: Fawzia Mirza (left) and Sari Sanchez ("Zaynab" and "Alma").

Photo by Fawzia Mirza

Above: Jennifer Reeder and Christopher Rejano.

Photo by Lisa Donato

of our native language of Urdu spoken. I wasn't going to just turn it all English for an American audience.

In casting the role of my mother we chose a woman who is authentically South Asian. So she speaks the language fluently and can understand the character. The love interest Alma and her mother Rosa are a Mexican family. So [in casting] I didn't want to see anyone who was not Mexican. Sari Sanchez [Alma] and Charin Alvarez [Rosa] are both Mexican women and Chicago actors. We filled out the other roles with people who are part of the queer and LGBT worlds and made sure that the space included women, trans individuals and people of color.

Rogers Park and in Little Village. So we shot a lot of footage there. We wanted to capture real faces. The final shooting weekend was a party at Rosa and Alma's home. It was almost exclusively Mexican community members who were a part of those scenes. We also used a bookstore in Printer's Row and the iconic bar The Hideout. We included Chicago brands to highlight and get them involved.

WCT: So how would you describe the experience of principal photography? Were there some challenges?

FM: I'm always a little nervous about everything I do. This was a first for me because of the nature of the beast—being responsible for

tion. It would not have happened if Jen [Richards], Laura [Zak], Angelica [Ross] and Katherine [Fisher] weren't doing it themselves. It's exciting to see that it was nominated for an Emmy. It took that much work, so much pushing and being so vulnerable to put all your own stories out into the world saying "This is who I am and this is where we come from." We all have signature moves. We all have those things that we do that people can see, get and connect with.

For more information about Signature Move and to join the film's email list, visit: <http://www.chicagofilmproject.com/signaturemove>.

Finding Prince Charming
contestant Sam Provenzano.
Photo courtesy of Logo



TELEVISION

Chicago man competes on groundbreaking 'Prince Charming'

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Starting Thursday, Sept. 8, Logo will break new ground with its brand-new reality dating competition series, Finding Prince Charming—which, in essence, is a gay twist on The Bachelor.

Thirteen men will vie for the affections of interior designer Robert Sepulveda Jr. in a journey that promises many twists.

Sam Provenzano—an affable, candid man who resides in Chicago and heads the LGBT-friendly personal-trainer network Right Fit For You—is one of said competitors. Windy City Times talked with him about several aspects of the show.

Windy City Times: I have to start at the beginning, of course. How did you end up on the show?

Sam Provenzano: I was with a group of

friends, and we saw something on Instagram. They thought I should go for it and I thought, "Why not?" So my friends applied for me online. I was contacted about a month later, and it was a pretty long process. But it was cool.

WCT: So were not leery of being on a reality show? I'm sure you've seen a few.

SP: Oh, no: I'm a big fan of reality TV and television, in general. I don't mind the camera—I'm not going to lie—but putting myself out there was a little nerve-wracking. I talked it over with my parents, my job—and everyone was saying, "It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. So just go for it." So, I did.

WCT: Were you concerned about how you might come off?

SP: Oh, yes! I'm Italian, I'm from the Midwest. I don't have the L.A. lifestyle or the New York lifestyle; Midwesterners are a different breed. I'm very forward; it's nothing bad—it's helped and hurt me in my life. I will say what I

have to say; that's who I am. As long as I can get that portrayed on television, I'm totally fine with that. But you do get a little nervous, for sure.

WCT: Because I saw the trailer, and you come off a little...

SP: Yeah, I come off a little ... mmm-hmmm. [Interviewer laughs.] And that's fine—you have to give the people what they want. Not to give too much away, but when you're living with 13 other gay men—it's not about finding your best friend; it's about finding Prince Charming. If someone comes at me I will attack back, even though I'm normally a very sweet, loyal, down-to-earth, real person.

WCT: That's what threw me a little bit.

SP: As long as they show the good, the bad and the ugly, I'm fine with it—and there's a lot of good that happens in that house. I learned about myself in there, and made some great friends as well as met some enemies. It was an all-around positive experience.

People do have to remember, though, that

any drama you have with an individual on a show [is different in that] you can't go anywhere. Normally, if anyone is disrespecting me constantly, I wouldn't associate with that person—but, here, you're constantly seeing them. So it's reality, but it's not reality.

It'll be a bumpy ride, but fun.

WCT: What was the biggest surprise for you about the filming process?

SP: The biggest surprise was that the people there really do look after you. They were really cool and took care of us. It was really interesting.

Also, it's interesting that there are cameras everywhere. When I wake up and I'm in my underwear, there they are. Hello! It actually ended up being cool, though, seeing the behind-the-scenes of a reality show. The crew works really hard.

With the camera, you don't want to look like an idiot, of course. After a while, I forgot they

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CULTURE CLUB



SPOTLIGHT

U.S. Muslim comedian Azhar Usman has garnered much acclaim for his stand-up routines from critics and fellow comedians. But now Usman is trying his hand at a one-man theatrical show called **Ultra American: A Patriot Act**. This world premiere for Silk Road Rising explores the tensions and paradoxes faced by American Muslims living in an increasingly polarized world. Ultra American: A Patriot Act continues through Sunday, Sept. 25, in the Chicago Temple's Pierce Hall (lower level), 77 W. Washington St. Tickets are \$25 general admission and \$15 for students; call 312-857-1234 or visit SilkRoadRising.org.



Azhar Usman stars in Ultra American: A Patriot Act. Photo by Bradford Rogne

KNIGHT at the movies

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

Akron; Other People; gay classic Hollywood

Mothers and their gay sons

Two well-received queer-themed movies, **Akron** and **Other People**, open this weekend—which, in itself, is a miracle and a reason to head to the Siskel and Facets—offer great proof that the stereotype of the close bond between gay sons and their mothers is still more than a little valid.

Adorable twinks Benny (Matthew Frias) and Christopher (Edmund Donovan) meet cute on the football field their freshman year at the University of Akron and fall hard for each other. That's where Akron gets its awkward title; however, unlike the usual gay-themed romantic drama that ensues, both guys are not only comfortable with their sexuality, but so are their friends and families. So all is good as Benny and Christopher find themselves moving from lust (there's a very sexy lovemaking bout in a tent when they go camping) to love.

Then, just as the cutesome twosome are heading to Florida for spring break to meet Christopher's doting mother, Benny and his family stumble upon the most improbable of coincidences. A tragedy early in the lives of both guys connects them in ways they'd never imagined and now Benny—as well as his family, especially his even-more-doting mother—have some hard choices to make. Both mothers, having played a large role in shaping the mindsets of their sons, have a none-too-subtle influence on the future of the relationship as well. To the credit of Brian O'Donnell (who scripted, co-directed along with Sasha King, and co-produced), this doesn't seem cloying or smothering.

Although the emotional crisis that precipitates all this is a bit contrived (okay, VERY contrived), Akron is helped by the earnest performances of its two appealing, easy-on-the-eye leads and an adept, convincing supporting cast. It plays exclusively at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 N. State St., beginning this Friday, Sept. 9. O'Donnell (who also co-produced) and executive producers Ellen and Tim Kollar will be present for audience discussion at the Sept. 9-10 screenings. <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org/akron>

The relationship between David (Jesse Plemons, of Fargo and Breaking Bad) and his mother, Joanne (Molly Shannon, of SNL and Year of the Dog), is also central to Other People, the touching feature screenwriting-directing debut from SNL writer Chris Kelly. David is a comedy writer struggling in New York who's just broken up with his boyfriend when he returns home to Sacramento for the first time in 10 years to deal with his mother's cancer diagnosis. A lot has happened in the preceding decade as his younger sisters have been growing up, but the conservative attitude of his homophobic father (Bradley Whitford) is still horribly rigid, even as Joanne's health continues to decline.

As David struggles to reconnect within his family and old friends he runs into around town, he decides to pretend that his relationship is still thriving and that his career is flourishing. His desperation increases as Joanne's health moves into its final stages. It is here that the film becomes movingly bittersweet, almost painfully so, and the scenes between Joanna and David, mother and gay son, have an intimacy that are deeply affecting. Naturally, there are plenty of laughs, too—this be-



Jesse Plemons and Molly Shannon in *Other People*.
PR photo

ing an SNL writer at the helm. Other People is a lovely and emotionally satisfying addition to the queer movie canon. The film opens this Friday and plays exclusively at Facets Cinematheque, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave. <http://www.facets.org/cinematheque/films/sept2016/other-people.php>

Gay classic Hollywood

Three films about a trio of gay men important to the history of Hollywood—for different reasons—have recently been released on Blu-ray/DVD and are definitely worth adding to the collection.

Women He's Undressed, from award-winning Australian director Gillian Armstrong, is a glitzy portrait of the celebrated costume designer Orry-Kelly, who hailed from tiny Kiama, Australia, and rose to the top of his profession, dressing generations of film icons from Ingrid Bergman to Marilyn Monroe to Shirley MaLaine and winning three Oscars in the process. This exuberant, gossipy portrait of the gay Kelly and Hollywood fashions through the decades also lifts back the curtain on the unspoken sexual politics of show biz, from Marlene Dietrich to Cary Grant, who (according to Kelly's own unreleased memoirs) was his one-time lover. This is a colorful and delightfully entertaining exception to the usual talking-head documentary.

Tab Hunter was the epitome of American hunkitude at the movies circa 1950s—blonde, blue-eyed, square-jawed and ripped in an era when that was the exception rather than the rule. The statuesque Hunter was the polite, sweet-natured boy next door who made all the girls swoon—and (secretly, in the dark) a lot of the boys, too. Hunter shared that secret for he, too, was gay and in out director Jeffrey Schwarz's entertaining and mostly hagiographic documentary portrait, **Tab Hunter Confidential**, the onetime heartthrob, now 84, reflects on his decades-long closeted public life with a mixture of understated self-deprecation, glib humor and brief glimpses into the emotional toll being quiet about his sexuality had on his psyche. Those with an interest in both Hollywood and queer history will find much to like here.

Shelagh Delaney's **A Taste of Honey**, the supreme example of British kitchen-sink drama, was groundbreaking when it debuted on the stage and again in gay director Tony Richardson's sensitive and non-judgmental 1961 film adaptation. The story focuses on Jo, a working-class teenage girl who has a brief affair with a Black sailor and whose gay best friend becomes her roommate and offers to marry her—until the girl's loutish, overbearing mother returns on the scene.

Rita Tushingham became an instant star as the disaffected Jo and is ably supported by Murray Melvin as the gay best friend. Richard-

son's film version was released in Britain the same year as the gay-themed *Victim*, both films paving the way for a new openness in the movies and eventually, a more honest inclusion of queer people. The Criterion Collection has just released a brand-new restoration of the film and packed it with the usual goodies that we film fanatics appreciate.

Upcoming movie calendar

Highlights from films (alphabetized by date) opening in Chicago, Sept. 9 and 16 (some descriptions come from studio press materials).

Akron (9/7)—See details above.

Other People (9/9)—See details above.

Sully (9/9)—After landing a plane in New York's Hudson River, Capt. Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger (Tom Hanks) faces an investigation that threatens to destroy his career and reputation. Clint Eastwood directs this movie that's based on a true story.

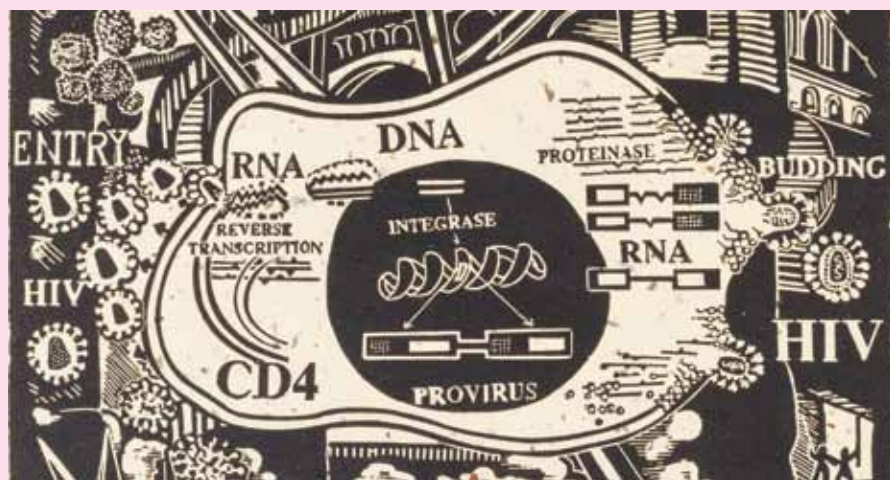
When the Bough Breaks (9/9)—When a professional couple (Regina Hall and Morris

Chestnut) who are unable to conceive hire a young woman (Theo Rossi) as a surrogate, she develops a psychotic fixation on the husband that turns violent.

Pure Imagination: A Gene Wilder Tribute (9/13 ONLY)—Two of the most beloved films of Gene Wilder, the late, lamented comic actor, will be screened as a double feature at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Ave., one night only, Sept. 13. The films are 1971's children fantasy musical *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* and 1974's *Blazing Saddles*. This is a rare chance to see Wilder at his manic best on the big screen. <http://www.musicbox-theatre.com/collections/pure-imagination-a-gene-wilder-double-feature>

Bridget Jones's Baby (9/16)—Breaking up with Mark Darcy (Colin Firth) leaves Bridget Jones (Renée Zellweger) older than 40 and single again. Feeling that she has everything under control, Jones decides to focus on her

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Eric Avery, *Life Cycle of HIV*, 1999, linoleum cut and color lithograph.
Image from the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art

Northwestern to run LGBT, AIDS exhibitions

Northwestern University's Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, 40 Arts Circle Dr., Evanston, will run the art exhibition "Keep the Shadow, Ere the Substance Fade: Mourning during the AIDS Crisis" Sept. 17-Dec. 11 at the Katz Gallery.

During the same dates, it's also running the first major retrospective of artist Tseng Kwong Chi (1950-1990) in "Tseng Kwong Chi: Performing for the Camera."

By juxtaposing objects and artworks related to mourning from the Victorian Era and during the AIDS crisis, "Shadow" examines

two analogous cultures of bereavement. The show includes loans from the Leather Archives & Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Art as well as the Block Museum collection.

Artists in the exhibition include Eric Avery, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, David Grieger, Robert Mapplethorpe, Richard Mock, Domingo Orejudo, Andres Serrano and Leonard Rifas.

As for Tseng show, the artist—born in Hong Kong, educated in Vancouver and Paris, and later based in New York City—produced photographs that both captured the downtown Manhattan art and club scenes of the 1980s, and reflected the increasingly globalized movement of people across nations and continents. Tseng died at age 39 from complications related to AIDS.

John-Michael Williams at his Tykables store.
Photo courtesy of Williams



Entrepreneur talks ABDL, Tykables store, public reaction

BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Since his early childhood years, John-Michael Williams has lived most of his life as an adult baby diaper lover (ABDL).

Williams, 30, noted that there isn't one answer to what it means to be an ABDL. For him, it's a way to relax and relieve stress.

"While I personally find cuddling on the sofa with my boyfriend while wearing a diaper relaxing, others may view that as foreplay; for me it's a typical Tuesday," said Williams. "I incorporate many aspects that are normally expressed as a child or infant into my daily life as a means of regression.

"This includes sucking my thumb when I go to sleep. For others, it might be more of a role play which may be sexual with their partner, though it should be noted that the A stands for adult. The fetish aspect is always between consenting adults. The difficult part for some to grasp is that the actions on both sides of this coin, stress relief and fetish, can be one in the same with different results for different people or even situational."

Williams realized there were other people like him when he was a teenager, although he'd been wearing diapers and sucking his thumb since his elementary school years.

"I'm not exactly sure when I first realized I was an ABDL," said Williams. "What I can say is that I've always had tendencies in my everyday life which later on when looked at together kind of fell into place. While being an ABDL is not an orientation like the LGBTQ community, for many people it has a similar emotional weight. For example, when people finally are able to express this desire, it feels similar to 'coming out'; particularly when you can express this desire with someone else. Having the trust and ability to confide in someone with something so personal can give that person a similar feeling as someone who comes out of the closet so to speak."

Williams explained that in terms of overlap,

the LGBTQ and ABDL community are really no different than any other subgroup.

"For example, with gay men specifically you sometimes have a more dom/sub style relationship," said Williams. "The ABDL lifestyle is more of an enhancement to that roleplay, which can be either sexual or not. This isn't exclusive to gay men within the LGBTQ/ABDL subgroup."

In speaking about his parents' reaction, Williams noted they didn't like or understand his ABDL desires and when they would bring it up he would shut down completely. Williams said if he had a chance to speak to parents whose kid might be an ABDL he would tell them to have an open mind and be supportive.

In order to combine his personal and professional lives, Williams started an online business Tykables (formerly known as Snuggies) on Feb. 14, 2014 and this past April he opened a store in Mount Prospect, Illinois—the first dedicated ABDL store in the U.S. The store features a nursery space with an adult-sized crib, high chair, rocking horse and ball pit. The company ships its products to U.S., Canadian and U.K. customers and will be expanding to other countries in the coming months/years.

"The Tykables name literally means tyke like or more exactly, like a tyke," said Williams. "We make products that are normally intended for infants and toddlers but in adult size, mainly diapers. Many people who purchase our products do so for various reasons. These can include things ranging from stress relief to more risqué role play. We have many customers who are also on the autism spectrum and often use our products as sensory or comfort objects. The store is a new way for us to display our products as well as a new line of clothing coming soon."

Since the store's opening, Williams has received pushback from community members who are concerned with the store being in their town. During a village board meeting in June,

'Nutcracker' sneak peek Sept. 8

The Joffrey Ballet will offer the public a rare glimpse into the rehearsal studio when it streams a live first look of the world-premiere production of *The Nutcracker* by Christopher Wheeldon, winner of the 2015 Tony Award for Best Choreography for the Broadway hit *An American in Paris*.

The view will take place Thursday, Sept. 8, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., and is accessible via the Joffrey's online YouTube channel.

The *Nutcracker* will be presented at the Joffrey's home venue, the historic Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, in downtown Chicago at 50 E. Congress Pkwy., in 27 performances on Dec. 10-30.

Single tickets, priced at \$35-\$170, are available for purchase at The Joffrey Ballet's official box office, 10 E. Randolph St.; the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University box office; on Joffrey.org; or at 312-386-8905.

Sivek's gallery preview Sept. 8

In advance of the upcoming the upcoming annual fall fete fundraiser for Lawrence Hall (on Saturday, Sept. 24), artist Marketa Sivek will be holding a gallery preview event Thursday, Sept. 8, 6-8 p.m. to give a sneak peek of her donated piece for the live auction to interested guests. Sivek's gallery is at 1123 W. Belmont Ave.

Sivek's work has been featured on NBC's Chicago PD and found its way into the private collections of Oprah Winfrey, Tom Hamilton of Aerosmith and more.

For more than 150 years, Lawrence Hall has been delivering high quality care to at-risk and neglected youth and their families throughout the Chicago metropolitan area.

See LawrenceHall.org.

Rapinoe makes own anti-anthem move

In a statement that echoed the recent controversial move by San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, lesbian soccer player Megan Rapinoe took a knee during the playing of "The Star-Spangled Banner" before her team, the Seattle Reign, played the Chicago Red Stars on Sept. 4.

After the game, Rapinoe told John D. Halloran of American Soccer Now that her action was "a nod to Kaepernick."

"I am disgusted with the way he has been treated and the fans and hatred he has received in all of this," Rapinoe told espnW's Julie Foudy. And quite honestly, being gay, I have stood with my hand over my heart during the national anthem and felt like I haven't had my liberties protected, so I can absolutely sympathize with that feeling."

Rapinoe said she will kneel in each match going forward.

'Sexy Liberal' show Sept. 10

The 2016 Sexy Liberal Comedy Tour—with Stephanie Miller, John Fugelsang, and Fran Callier and Angela V. Shelton (aka Frangela)—comes to the Chicago Theater, 175 N. State St., on Saturday, Sept. 10, at 8 p.m.

The Stephanie Miller Show is heard and seen nationally on Sirius XM and Free Speech TV and locally on WCPT, reaching more than 3 million-plus listeners weekly. Miller, an out lesbian, is ranked number 12 on influential industry publication *Talkers Magazine's* "Heavy Hundred" list.

See Ticketmaster.com.

'Matthew Shepard' music CD out Sept. 9

On Sept. 9, 2016, Harmonia Mundi will release *Considering Matthew Shepard*, composed and conducted by Grammy winner Craig Hella Johnson.

Johnson is the founder and artistic director of *Conspirare*, a professional choir in Austin, Texas.

Shepard was a young, gay college student at the University of Wyoming who in 1998 was kidnapped, severely beaten, tied to a fence and left to die.

Considering Matthew Shepard is Johnson's first concert-length work. It received its world premiere at the A.I.S.D. Performing Arts Center in Austin on Feb. 20.

The CD is at <http://conspirare.org/product/considering-matthew-shepard/>.

Book reveals LGBT activism in Germany

In the new book *Queer Identities and Politics in Germany: A History, 1880-1945*, from Harrington Park Press and distributed by Columbia University Press, author Clayton J. Whisnant recounts the emergence of various "queer identities" in Germany from 1880 to 1945 as well as the political strategies that early gay and lesbian activists pursued.

Germany in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed key developments in LGBT history, including the growth of the world's first gay organizations and gay and lesbian magazines, as well as an influential community of German sexologists and psychoanalysts.

Additionally, *Queer Identities* examines gay life in a range of cities beyond Berlin, including Munich, Hamburg and Cologne.



Miss Continental 2016-17 chosen

Jazell Barbie Royale rose from a field of 40 contestants to be chosen as Miss Continental 2016-2017, Monday, September 5. The two-night contest, which took place at the Vic Theatre, 3145 N. Sheffield Ave., was the crowning touch on an extended Labor Day weekend filled with pageantry.

Royale is pictured above with Continental Pageantry System founder Jim Flint (center), Miss Continental Elite 2016 Teryl Lynn Fox (left), Mr. Continental 2017 Antwaun Steele (second

from left) and Miss Continental Plus 2016 Natasha Douglas.

As a particularly emotional culmination of the night's events, Royale collapsed on stage as she first learned of her victory. She was quickly helped up and supported by many others, including the new Mr. Continental.

Photos by Kat Fitzgerald (www.MysticImagesPhotography.com). See more online.



Images from the Mr. Continental 2017 prelims, Friday, September 2, at The Baton Show Lounge, 436 N. Clark St. The following night, Antwaun Steele (center) was chosen as the new Mr. Continental at the Park West, 322 W. Armitage Ave.

Photos by Kat Fitzgerald (www.MysticImagesPhotography.com)



THE LEGACY LIVE SERIES

FALL 2016

Exploring the stories behind our ancestors and the important milestones that have shaped LGBTQ life today. Through thought-provoking FREE programming, and creative, entertaining events, we are bridging the gap between our past and our future.

COMMEMORATING 9/11: Fr. Mychal Judge

Street Memorial Blessing Ceremony and Film Screening



Sunday, September 11
1 PM
Location TBA

SPORTING CHANCE

The State of LGBTQs in Professional Sports



Tuesday, November 1
6:30 PM
Center on Halsted
3656 N. Halsted Street

I AM NOT IN/SANE

Comic Tribute to Repealing Homosexual "Mental Illness"



Thursday, December 8
7 PM
Sidetrack
3349 N. Halsted Street

FIVE YEARS AND COUNTING

Celebrating the Repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell



Tuesday, September 20
6:30 PM
LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois
3179 N. Clark Street

WORD UP: POETRY SLAM

Birthday Tribute to Audre Lorde and Essex Hemphill



Tuesday, November 17
6:30 PM
The Den
3208 N. Halsted Street



CENTER ON 3656 N. HALSTED



NORTH COAST FESTIVAL

Chicago gets rocked by Ty Dolla \$ign (left), Matt & Kim (center), Sleigh Bells and many more. Photos by Jerry Nunn

the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Green Bean; Bistro Campagne

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Green Bean (734 W. Fullerton Ave.; GreenBean-Restaurant.com) advertises itself as an “alternative fast-food restaurant,” and it certainly is—down to the music piping from the speakers (songs from acts such as AWOLNATION, Foster the People and Cake, to name a few).

Opened in 2015 by partners Aaron Bush and Chef Mike Watson, Green Bean offers fare that’s, among other things, free of GMOs, gluten and even high-fructose corn syrup.

People can choose from items (wrap, panini or salad), ingredients (chicken, steak or portabella mushroom) and styles (Casear, Asian, Caprese, Spanish, griller or Greek).

And if you think the food might taste like cardboard (which was my main fear), think again. The steak panini griller and Spanish-style chicken salad my dining partner and I had were absolutely delightful. Sides include tempura-battered green beans, sweet potato fries (possibly the best ones I’ve ever had, to be honest), kale slaw and black-bean hummus. In addition, there are soups, breakfast items and even dessert options (like the addictive gelato-filled cupcakes).

By the way, don’t worry if you can’t make it to the charming restaurant—Green Bean has a huge delivery business. So, one way or another, you can have access to this delicious and, yes, alternative, cuisine.



Green Bean’s tempura green beans.
Photo by Andrew Davis

Bistro Campagne keeps dishing

With a style called “French New Country,” Lincoln Square restaurant **Bistro Campagne** (4518 N. Lincoln Ave.; BistroCampagne.com) continues to bring in patrons.

A recent invite-only event at the eatery showed

why. Out in the beautiful courtyard, Chef Lucas Creagan prepared items such as steak tartare, fromage et charcuterie, pork chop (cote de porc) and the ever-popular Amish chicken (poulet roti forestiere). Dessert offerings included pluot tart, profiteroles and pave au chocolat.



Fromage et charcuterie at Bistro Campagne.
Photo by Andrew Davis



CHARLIE'S

Seeing the light at Neverland’s Gay Glow party, Fri., September 2. Photos by Jerry Nunn

nightspots the big TO-DO

OUR WEEKLY PICKS TO PLAN
YOUR NIGHTLIFE CALENDAR

All Things Beyoncé



Wed., Sept. 7, 9 pm
Sidetrack,
3349 N. Halsted St.

Dance to Queen B all night with no cover. Bey-licious drag by Dida Ritz, Saya Naomi and The Vixen. All Things Bey contest: Dance, sing or lip sync to win fun prizes. Hosted by Dixie Lynn Cartwright

MAFIA/AGM Weekend



Fri., Sept. 9, - Sat., Sept. 10
Touche,
6412 N. Clark St.

Touche welcomes red flaggers (and those who admire them) at the AGM welcome/M.A.F.I.A. party on Friday. Come back on Saturday for the Great Lakes Drummer contest.

Out in the Park



Sat., Sept. 10
Six Flags Great America,
Gurnee, Ill.

Ride the annual roller coaster that is Out in the Park! Stick around for special performances by Todrick Hall and the DJs of Scarlet from 7:30 until midnight.

The Ladies of Shakers



Sat., Sept. 10, 10 pm
Shakers on Clark,
3160 N. Clark St.

New showtime! Theme: Rock n’ Roll/Marilyn’s Birthday Show. Performances by Marilyn Black, Natasha Douglas, Zuleyka Noir, Serina Devine and guest Sabrina Kinkade.



"And I was like, 'Hmm ... right, what were you thinking? Seriously, what were you thinking?'"—**Miranda Kerr** reveals what she said to ex **Orlando Bloom** when he texted her to say some nude photos of him would be coming out. I'm surprised she didn't say, "Been there, done that."

The **Go-Go's** have played a big role in my life. Even though they broke up (for the first time) shortly after I entered high school, they reunited by the time I got to college. Not only had I realized I was gay, but I realized that they were gay icons. (Well, seeing Sara Gilbert at the shows kinda solidified it.)

The girls often call themselves one big dysfunctional family, and as I've gotten to know them, I can confirm that's pretty accurate. Like most families, they've had their ups and downs. But what I've always admired is that they've never made a secret of the problems. Every time they fought, we knew they'd eventually get back together. They never called any of their shows a farewell—until now. The "GOing, GOing, GONE" tour came six years after **Belinda Carlisle** first broached the idea of disbanding. In retrospect, she may have been onto something. The girls may sound and look better than ever, but we currently have only four-fifths of the band. **Kathy Valentine** was jettisoned three years ago—the most public schism yet. Since Kathy's ouster, the band has continued with fabulous bassist **Abby Travis**. But for purists, it's not exactly the same—something I'm sure Bangles devotees felt when Abby replaced **Michael Steele**.

So I went into the final shows with mixed emotions. At this point, the group is a well-oiled machine, and its set included all of the hits and a few rarities (including some which were only for die-hard fans). The tour poetically wrapped up at the Greek Theatre in Los Angeles—the site of the band's landmark "Wild at the Greek" concert in 1984. This was not a weepy, maudlin farewell, but a celebration. The capacity crowd danced and screamed for the full 90-minute concert, and the girls seemed to be having a blast. Still, I couldn't help but notice that just before the final bow, Belinda Carlisle stopped for a moment, scanned the audience and took it all in. She was the first to quietly slip away. After the show, the girls hosted a reception for family and friends. While most of the band were extremely accessible (including an incandescent Carlisle), Jane Wiedlin needed some time to herself before celebrating. It should be noted that gay luminaries Tab Hunter and Greg Louganis were there to join in the fun.

One postscript—despite the bad blood between Kathy Valentine and the group, she still responded to a post on Belinda's Instagram account: "Sad not to be there! I loved my 32 years in the Go-Go's and hope for a great reunion at the RRHOF [Rock and Roll Hall of Fame]!! love to all the fans and my former band." Carlisle quickly wrote back, "And we send our love to you." Something to look forward to...

This week, we have a gay bachelor hitting the airwaves, courtesy of **Logo's Finding Prince Charming**. By now, you all know that you could have had him as your own Prince Charming if you ponied up \$250 an hour! Yes, **Robert Sepulveda** was a hooker—and he's sheepishly admitted it. Word has it Logo was caught completely off-guard, and an unnamed source claims, "Nothing came up during the background check. The network didn't find out until well into production." These things don't happen on ABC's *The Bachelor*, a show run by **Mike Fleiss**, who knows a thing or two about hookers! While Sepulveda isn't hiding from



Belinda Carlisle (above) and The Go-Go's have wrapped up things.
PR photo

his former profession, he feels "the past is the past"—which might be the case were it not for those videos. Oh, yes: In addition to the photos we have published showing his self-proclaimed "fat uncut 10-inch cock," there are videos of a more graphic nature. Yes, we get the obligatory masturbation video, which no hooker should be without. But then there's that video that quenches other thirsts. I dare not say more in a family publication, but you can see all on BillyMasters.com.

Nobody is immune to criticism—gay or straight. Take **Tom Daley** ... please! In the upcoming documentary *Diving For Gold* (they might want to rethink that title), he says, "I don't think I would be diving if I hadn't met Lance." However, many athletes have said that having any relationship can be a distraction when preparing for the Olympics. Then there was an internet troll called Christian Voice who wrote, "Turning gay doesn't seem to have done Tom Daley any favours at #Rio2016." What that person probably didn't count on was getting a response from **JK Rowling**: "Can't decide which is more offensive in this tweet, the stupidity or the spite."

Then there's the Olympic heartbreak of Japanese pole vaulter **Hiroki Ogita**. In a story that Matt and Meredith inexplicably missed, Hiroki came awfully close to clearing the 5.3-meter pole he was attempting to vault, until his penis grazed the top of the bar. Just goes to show sometimes you can get into trouble with just the tip!

In an announcement that may send oodles of my fans to Switzerland, a new coffee shop will be opening in Geneva by the end of the year called *The Fellatio Cafe*. And, yes, you can get a cup of coffee and a side of a blow job! Damn, those Swiss think of EVERYTHING! The cafe is based on similar shops in Thailand. Well, if we're using that as our barometer, I wonder where they will find enough pre-pubescent baristas. In touting the high quality of the service, the company mouthpiece (so to speak) said, "In five or 10 minutes, it's all over." And after nine cups, the tenth is free!

When baristas are making foam the old fashioned way, it'd definitely time to end yet another column. Believe it or not, we just celebrated the 21st anniversary of this column. It's ironic that as I'm inching closer to becoming an AARP member, the column is finally legal! But, that means you have two decades of dish to read on www.BillyMasters.com—the site that doesn't look its age! Although we didn't have room for an "Ask Billy" question, you can still write to me at AskBilly@BillyMasters.com, and I promise to get back to you before Hollywood starts scouring death row to find a serial killer to star in a film about Jeffrey Dahmer! So, until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.

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CHARMING from page 21

were there. However, I have to say that you really appreciate your family and friends after an experience like this [being sequestered]; at the end of the day, you just have your family.

WCT: By the way, what was [host] Lance Bass like?

SP: Lance was very nice. He has a good personality for the show, and he's done a lot for the LGBT community. But he was away from the house, but we really only saw him during elimination ceremonies or at challenges.

WCT: Prince Charming looks like a prince to me.

SP: He kind of looks like a wolf to me. [Interviewer laughs.] He was interesting. [Editor's note: After Provenzano's interview with WCT, it was revealed that the show was blindsided by the revelation that Sepulveda once worked as a male escort. (Logo has issued a statement saying the escorting did not come up during a background check of Sepulveda.) A debate has emerged on social media, with some saying it is wrong to pass judgment on one's sexual behavior.]

WCT: Now, I'm sure you heard about the news that TMZ broke about there being an

TYKABLES from page 23

dozens of Mount Prospect residents said the store is a threat to children and demanded that it be shut down, however, the village attorney Lance Malina told them officials have no legal standing to shutter Tykables.

"Our store is not a threat to children, or anyone for that matter," said Williams. "It's on a major highway in an area with no other stores marketed to kids. The windows are covered with white panels and anyone who wants to visit the store has to set up an appointment."

The store is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. most weekends.

In the weeks since the village board meeting, Williams said he hasn't received any complaints, threats or had any vandalism done to the store from anyone.

Williams explained that the store's location was chosen because it was close to where he lives, which is also in Mount Prospect. He said he also looked at locations in Des Plaines,

KNIGHT from page 23

career as a top news producer. Suddenly, her love life comes back from the dead when she meets a dashing and handsome American named Jack (Patrick Dempsey). Things couldn't be better, until Bridget discovers that she is pregnant. Now, the befuddled mom-to-be must figure out if the proud papa is Mark or Jack.

Snowden (9/16)—Former CIA employee Edward Snowden (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) leaks classified information to the media. Shailene Woodley, out actor Zachary Quinto, Nicholas Cage and Scott Eastwood co-star in Oliver

HIV-positive competitor on the show. To be honest, one part was thinking, "Is this really news?" However, another part of me thought it could be a great vehicle to educate people.

SP: I think that's the angle they're going for. Maybe I'm too trustworthy, but I do believe that'll be a positive influence. I don't know who the individual is, but this person is obviously successful. I think it'll show that you can be diagnosed with HIV and still have a great life and look for love.

WCT: Now, with a show like this, contestants could fall in love with each other.

SP: Yeah—that's what makes this show a little different from The Bachelor or The Bachelorette. It's very different, and there's definitely that possibility. You'll have to stay turned to see if that happens, but that was also on my mind coming into this show. Fair game, baby—fair game. [Interviewer laughs.]

WCT: How would you describe your Finding Prince Charming experience in three words?

SP: Emotional, self-discovery—and wild.

Finding Prince Charming will begin airing Thursday, Sept. 8, on Logo at 8 p.m. CT. For more information, visit LOGOtv.com.

Schaumburg, Chicago and other suburbs before settling on the Mount Prospect location.

"We were the first and only ABDL brand and company to have a booth at Folsom Street Fair," said Williams. "That was in 2014. The people at Folsom Street Fair are amazing, accepting and absolutely supportive of the ABDL community."

When asked how many people identify as either an ABDL, an AB or a DL, Williams estimates the number is north of one million Americans.

"While I, nor the company, intended to set out and 'educate' the masses about the ABDL community, I would hope that people would be willing to take the time to speak to someone before passing judgment," said Williams. "As adults, we often think and fear the worst of things. We have become conditioned to believe that if the worst possible answer is an option it must be the truth. We forget that sometimes, the simple answer is in fact something innocent."

See <https://tykables.com/> for more information.

Stone's adaptation of this story ripped from the headlines.

Save the Dates: Reeling: The Chicago LGBTQ+ International Film Festival (9/922—9/28)—The 34th edition of Reeling (of which I'm the co-program director), the second oldest queer film festival in the world returns with a slate of more than 40 feature films and shorts. Everything from RuPaul Drag Race winner Bianca Del Rio in her film debut Hurricane Bianca to James Franco, Christian Slater and Disney Channel twink Garrett Clayton in the truth life gay-porn murder-thriller King Cobra. <http://reelingfilmfestival.org/2016/>

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wed., Sept. 7

Meet Lesbian Sports Icon Diana Nyad

Long-distance swimming star and journalist Diana Nyad, author of *Find a Way: The Inspiring Story of One Woman's Pursuit of a Lifelong Dream*, at a luncheon hosted by The Union League Club. Reserve your space by phone. 11:30am The Union League Club, 65 West Jackson Blvd., Chicago 847-446-8880

Living With HIV? Free educational event. Inspiring stories. Treatment options. Connect with local organizations. Ask questions. Join the conversation. Friends and family welcome. Food available. Reserve by phone. Registration on site 5:30pm-6:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago 1-844-524-9035 <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

Gay Liberation Network organizing meeting Monthly planning meeting of Chicago's multi-issue direct action group that promotes the rights of LGBTI people. Through demonstrations and advocacy, we change the social and political situation of police brutality, labor, immigration, and more. Sept. 7 Oct. 5 Nov. 2 Dec. 7 7:00pm Berger Park Cultural Center 6205 N. Sheridan Rd Chicago <http://www.gayliberation.net>

Thursday, Sept. 8

Trans Talk: a Three-Part Series on Living Trans The first of three consecutive Thursday afternoons (September 8, 15, and 22) at 1 p.m., beginning with a free screening of "Just Gender," a groundbreaking educational film that directly addresses the all-too-often misunderstood world of transgender people. Register online. 1:00pm - 2:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago

**KING OF THE HALL Saturday, Sept. 10**

Todrick Hall will entertain at the LGBT event Out in the Park, in Gurnee.
PR photo

<http://www.centeronhalsted.org/new-events-details.cfm?ID=12490>

Parents of Trans Individuals Parents of Trans Individuals (PTI) is a sub-chapter of PFLAG. It offers a safe place for parents of children from all ages - families and friends of transgender and/or gender questioning individuals to come together to meet for conversation, support and education. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org/newevents-details.cfm?ID=11120>

Panel discussion of local Olympians and Paralympians Christina Loukas, Patrick Byrne, Paul Moran, Consulate General of Brazil in Chicago in attendance. Remarks by Stephanie Kanter of

the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago's (RIC) Sports and Fitness Program. Refreshments and music 6pm. 7:00pm - 7:30pm National Hellenic Museum 333 South Halsted Chicago Tickets: <https://www.nationalhellenicmuseum.org/calendar/the-road-to-rio/>

Bi Discussion Group Every other Thursday, chat about upcoming bisexual events, concerns, and answer each other's questions about the community. 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

Friday, Sept. 9

Chicago Roundup A weekend-long gathering of LGBT's celebrating recovery from alcohol and drug addiction and those interested in finding out what a life of recovery has to offer. 9:00am Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://chicagoroundup.org/about/>

Queer Genre Fiction Book Group The PowerBook is twenty-first century fiction that uses past, present and future as shifting dimensions of a multiple reality. The story is simple. An e-writer called Ali or Alix will write to order anything you like, provided that you are prepared to enter the story as yourself and take the risk of leaving it as someone else. You can be the hero of your own life. You can have freedom just for one night. But there is a price to pay. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/1109544352445241/>

OPALGA September Potluck Please bring a dish to share and BYOB. 7:00pm Contact organizer for location <https://www.facebook.com/events/1784303618517226/>

Saturday, Sept. 10

Ravenswood ArtWalk: Tour of Arts and

Industry Showcasing historic Ravenswood Creative Corridor, one of Chicago's most diverse and vibrant communities of 'makers.' Equal part arts market, open house, gallery hop and outdoor festival. 11:00am - 6:00pm From Leland Avenue to Irving Park Rd., Chicago 773-975-2088 Tickets: <http://ravenswoodartwalk.org/>

Gerber/Hart Library Book Sale The sale includes LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ fiction and non-fiction books, videos, and erotica. Proceeds from the sale support the operations and mission of Gerber/Hart Library and Archives. 12:00pm - 6:00pm Gerber Hart Library and Archives 6500 N Clark St Chicago <http://www.gerberhart.org>

End The Violence- Remembering Orlando NW Indiana Gay Straight Coalition kick off meeting to foster policies on gun safety and creating a more inclusive environment for the LGBT community in NW Indiana where LGBT rights have been challenged by the governor. Indiana also plays a role in the presence of guns in Chicago. 7:00pm Art Space Building, 717 Franklin Michigan City, Indiana; see Eventbrite.com

OUT IN THE PARK Six Flags Great America Performances by Todrick Hall and the DJs of Scarlet 7:30pm - 12:30pm Six Flags Great America 1 Six Flags Parkway Gurnee, IL 60031 <http://www.Facebook.com>

Sunday, Sept. 11

The 12th Annual SEA Blue Chicago Prostate Cancer Walk & Run Chicago's longest running prostate cancer event, a 5K race and a Celebration Walk through Lincoln Park. Supports Us TOO International (www.ustoo.org), in providing free education and support to the prostate cancer community. \$40 for 5K adult runner, \$35 for adult walker, \$25 for 5K child runner, \$20 for child walker. Free for kids six and under 8:00am - 12:00pm LaSalle and Stockton, Lincoln

Park, Chicago 630-795-1002 <http://SEABlueProstateWalk.org>

Honoring Fr. Mychal Judge, the saint of 9/11, service and screening Commemorating the 15th Anniversary of 9/11 with a memorial invocation ceremony at Legacy Walk bronze memorial at 3540 N. Halsted, a 2 pm documentary screening at the church and a 3:30 reception. Free. Questions to victorsalvo@legacy-projectchicago.org. 1:00pm - 4:00pm Lakeview Presbyterian Church 716 W Addison St. 312-608-1198 <https://community.centeronhalsted.org/Legacy>

Monday, Sept. 12

Center on Halsted Ballroom Nights Each Monday evening on the third floor. Free classes first Monday of each month goes into one particular style and subsequent weeks go into execution. No registration required. Students with no experience may join at any time but best early in month. 7:00pm Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago <http://www.centeronhalsted.org>

Tuesday, Sept. 13

Book Launch and signing, Alan Wieder's Studs Terkel: Politics, Culture, but Mostly Conversation. Speakers include Alan Wieder, Haki Madhubuti, Kathy Kelly and Kevin Coval. Refreshments provided. Free. RSVP online 6:00pm - 8:00pm Jane Addams Hull-House Museum. 800 S. Halsted St., Chicago <https://www.eventbrite.com>

Wed., Sept. 14

NewTown Writers Read. A Live Lit, Open Mic Event Open-mic reading featuring cutting-edge LGBTQ lit by NewTown Writers as well as authors appearing in the *Off the Rocks* anthologies. 7:00pm - 9:00pm Volumes Bookcafe, 1474 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago <https://www.facebook.com/events/648585521965782/>

BOOK REVIEW

The Joy of Swimming

by Lisa Congdon

\$18.95; Chronicle Books; 141 pages

REVIEW BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

People say you're all wet.

Maybe that's not the nicest thing you've ever heard but hey! If something's true, it's true, right? Yep, you love being in a pool, lake, pond, the ocean, a puddle, it doesn't matter. And in *The Joy of Swimming*, by Lisa Congdon, you'll meet like-minded people in swimsuits.

At the tender age of 8, Congdon learned to love swimming when her mother signed her up for swim team near their California home. It was fun, but it was work, and her interest in swimming declined: life got in the way, school demanded time, injuries happened. It wasn't until college, after she came out as a lesbian, that Congdon resumed the sport in earnest, and it connected her to the better parts of her life.

Swimmers, as she shows in this book, come in all shapes, sizes, and ages. Gertrude Ederle, for instance, was just 20 years old when she swam the English Channel in under 15 hours, a record she held for a quarter-century. Johnny Weissmuller, who later played Tarzan in the movies, was the first person to swim the 100-meter freestyle in less than a minute. Roxanne Winston thinks more Black swimmers should "feel inspired to join the sport." Kimberly Chambers almost lost her leg to "a freak accident," but she still swims. Chel Micheline finds that being in the water frees her from spina bifida.

But swimming isn't just about a cool dip in the lake: dog-paddling can be embarrassing (unless, of course, you're a dog!), so you'll want to know a few basic strokes, the science behind and the history of which Congdon explains. You'll learn a "very brief history" of swimming pools here, too, including where the largest one is located; you'll read an itchy-bitsy bio on the bikini; and you'll get quick facts on swimming and the Olympics.

Find out why you'll want to cover your eyes if you visit an Icelandic locker room. See how even

Michael Phelps is slow, compared to a sailfish. Get the real definition of a "swimming hole." And find out why some people take bandages along when visiting a public pool in Japan.

Seriously, can you ever have a summer without at least one great big cannonball, dead-center in the water? If your answer is to the negative, then *The Joy of Swimming* is a perfect poolside book for you.

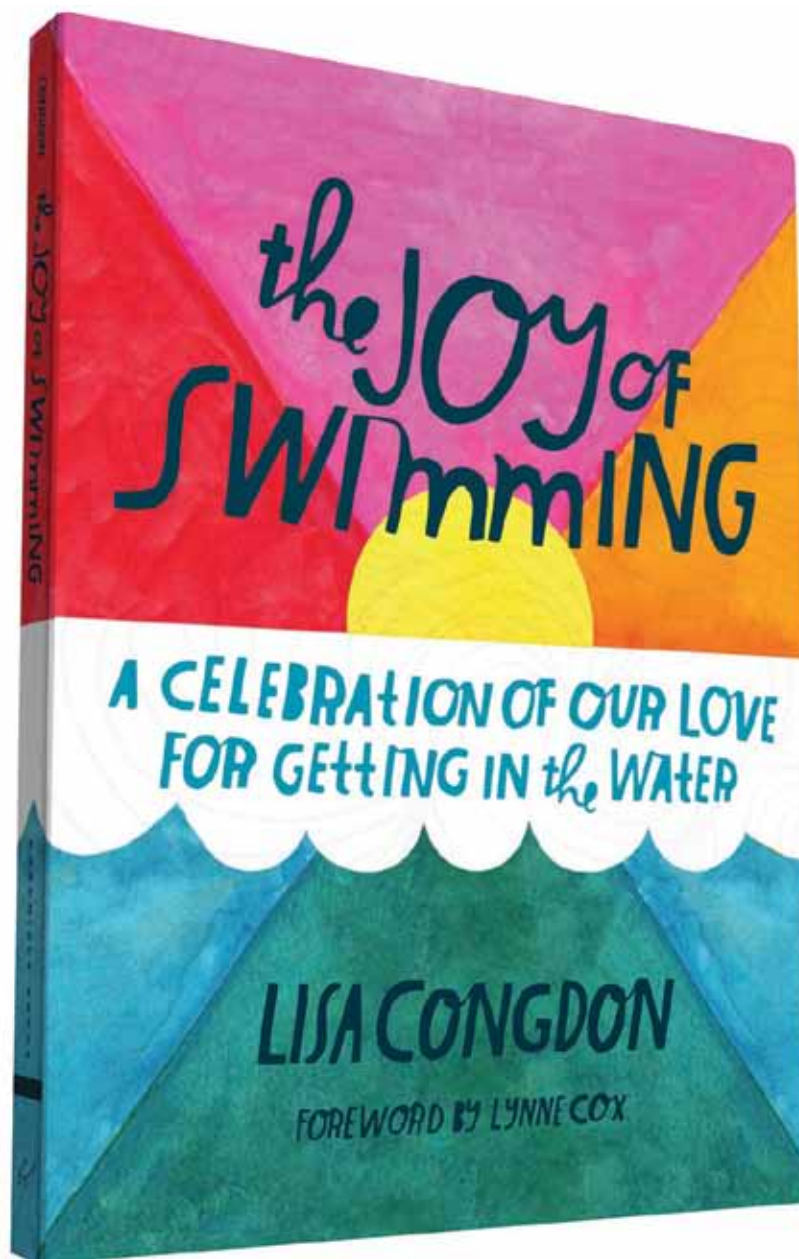
Using old ads, interviews, and her own drawings as illustration, author Lisa Congdon offers readers a bit of quirk for their deck chair. This has the feel of a sketch book or a haphazardly kept scrapbook with mini-memoirs of the famous and never-famous, trivia, Olympic facts, statistics and random thoughts. That messiness is really appealing, and you'll come to love this book after a few laps around its pages.

Dip your toes in if you dare, or just dive right in. The water's fine, and so is this book; for mermaid, athlete, or mere fans of the old waterin' hole, *The Joy of Swimming* will make a big splash.

Want more? Then look for *Find a Way*, by Diana Nyad; or *Breaking the Surface*, by Eric Marcus and Greg Louganis.



Author Lisa Congdon.





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