

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter November-December 2024 Newsletter



PFLAG Family,

Happy Fall to you and yours – the days are shorter and the air is crisp. We are readying ourselves for the end of a dynamic year.

On Page 2 you will read Sara's heartfelt reaction to the elections and her commitment to fight again.

On page 3, we highlight a variety of ways you can get involved in the chapter and make a difference. You can volunteer without taking on a leadership role – take a look and reach out – we would love to have your support!

Page 4 and 5 are dedicated to our support group meetings. On page 4, Board Member Renna, speaks to all parents and allies and the importance and power of returning to support groups to help the new families who are now at the beginning of their journey.

On Page 7 Jessica lets us know about Advocacy Alerts! You can sign up to receive them – to stay informed about time-sensitive opportunities. No obligation to participate – just the power to act when you can.

On Page 9 we give a shout out to Ben Greene's new newsletter, Good Queer News.

In closing, I have enjoyed being newsletter editor for many years – I am now seeking a successor.

This is your chance to help amplify voices, share stories of love and acceptance, and keep our community informed about the latest events, resources, and initiatives. Join us in spreading hope, love, and understanding – one newsletter at a time. Together, we can make sure every family knows they are not alone!

In solidarity,
Karen Paese, Newsletter Editor/
Spanish Support Group Co-Facilitator



Sara



Pg. 2

Important Links

Please visit our website:

[PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula](#)

Please also visit our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pflagsanjose/>

2024-2025 Board Members



Yvonne McGuire
Karen Paese
Windsor Smith
Paul Sonkowsky
Renna Ulvang
Sara Larson
Nina O.
Jessica Gachet
Marla Parker

Support Meetings



Pg. 5

Get Involved !



Pg. 3

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter November-December 2024 Newsletter

Letter from President Sara Larson

I feel so sad and angry right now. I like my letters to you to be chipper, but I'm not chipper at the moment. The outcome of the presidential election has me wanting to hide under my blankets. I wish more people understood the existential threat some of these soon-to-be empowered people pose. These voters' choice looks like cruelty and callousness to me.

People are more complicated than that, I know. My immediate plans are to try to take up meditation, and talk to people I trust, or to myself, about all of my concerns. My middle term plans are to talk to my neighbors more, and to my family more, about any and all topics, including LGBT issues. My long-term goal is to see all LGBT people protected under the law.

Take some time to cry, then get ready to fight again.



PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter November-December 2024 Newsletter

Join the PFLAG Family and Make a Difference!

Are you passionate about creating a more inclusive and supportive world? PFLAG invites YOU to get involved and help us advance our mission of support, education, and advocacy for LGBTQ+ individuals and their families. Whether you have a few hours a month or are ready to take on a larger role, we have a variety of ways for you to make an impact:

Opportunities to Get Involved:

- ❖ **Board Members:** Help guide the vision and strategy of PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula. Your input can shape programs, policies, and outreach efforts. Time commitment is one board meeting a month, participation in one support group meeting a month, and the time you can dedicate to chapter goals. No prior experience is required—just your dedication to the cause.
- ❖ **Scholarship Readers:** Assist in selecting deserving students for the eQuality Scholarships. This meaningful role requires only a modest time investment but has a profound impact on a young person's future. Scholarship reading is concentrated to the month of February. If you are seeking a larger role, we are also looking for a lead for our Scholarship Committee.
- ❖ **Speakers Bureau Chair and Participants:** Share your story or help organize speaking engagements to educate the community and foster understanding. It's a powerful way to make a difference.
- ❖ **Volunteer Coordinator:** Are you a natural organizer who loves connecting people with meaningful opportunities? PFLAG is looking for a Volunteer Coordinator to help build and empower our team of passionate volunteers! This role is flexible and can be done on your own schedule.. With just a few hours a month, you'll help us create a warm, welcoming space for all our volunteers.
- ❖ **Newsletter Editor:** You'll curate and compile content for our regular newsletters, sharing updates, upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and inspiring stories. Newsletters are currently distributed six times a year.
- ❖ **Join a Team:** Many roles are collaborative and designed to fit into your schedule. From event planning to outreach, you can contribute without taking on a leadership position.

Why Volunteer with PFLAG? Your time and talents can create lasting change. Whether you're a parent, ally, or community member, your involvement helps amplify the voices of those who need it most. Volunteering with PFLAG isn't just about giving—it's about being part of a community that uplifts and inspires.

How to Get Started: Reach out today info@pflagsanjose.org to learn more about how you can join the PFLAG team. Let us know your interests and availability, and we'll help you find the perfect fit.

Together, we can create a world where everyone is valued and loved for who they are. Be a part of the change. Volunteer with PFLAG today!

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter November-December 2024 Newsletter

**Reaching Out to Parents & Allies Who Attended Support Groups
Come Back and Support New Families with Your Love and Experiences**

Giving Back to the PFLAG Community

Thank you to all the parents and allies who have attended our support meetings. It was a privilege to accompany you and your loved ones on your journey as new members of the LGBTQ+ community. We welcomed you, supported you, acknowledged your tears and feelings and shared our stories of hope and positivity with you. Whatever issue you were struggling with, we have been there too and it was affirming to share what we learned.

You are the reason that PFLAG exists and it gave us great joy to be there for you as long as you needed us and then to see you leave, feeling strengthened and empowered.



**Renna Ulvang
Board Member**

And now we want you back!

We are inviting you to once more attend our support meetings. Your presence as parents and allies with so many rich and important experiences is invaluable to our new group members. Just as you did, new members are challenged by kids coming out for the first time, with gender expression, with managing extended family relationships, and now with fears for the safety and basic rights of our children and families.

PFLAG is a non-professional organization founded on the power of mutual peer support.

We would love you to consider returning as mentors and source of support, wisdom and experience to offer our new group members. Thank you so much!

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter November-December 2024 Newsletter

Important Links

You may also contact us by:



info@pflagsanjose.org



(408) 270-8182



P.O. Box 2718
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

To join, renew your membership,
or donate by credit card, visit one
of the two links below:

[Join/Renew](#)
[Donate](#)

Remember to take advantage of
your employer match when
donating to PFLAG as well as
your employer volunteer time
programs!

Pg.5

Support Meeting Schedule

To participate in full Zoom video (preferred) or by Zoom phone, email info@pflagsanjose.org beforehand, or leave a message at (408) 270-8182; we'll respond with the information you'll need to join the meeting. If you share your email address, we'll continue sending that information in subsequent months, so you won't have to request it each time as we vary it to protect your security. You will note below, some support groups are only zoom, some only in person and some are hybrid.

The General Support Group Meeting will be zoom only in December while the San Mateo Pride Center is closed for Renovations. This may extend in early January – stay tuned!

Remember, the General Support Group for the South Bay now meets at the Billy DeFrank Center the first Thursday of the month at 7pm.

- Also, please remember we have a One-to-One Support offering: Just send an email to info@pflagsanjose.org or leave a message at (408) 270-8182 and ask about "one-to-one support". Let us know if you have a preferred language other than English.

Dates and Times	Meetings
Nov 6 th and Dec 4 th 7:30 p.m.	Estamos Contigo (PFLAG en Español). This meeting is typically the <u>first Wednesday</u> of the month. Zoom only
Nov 2 nd and Dec 7 th Nov 16 th and Dec 21 st 10am- Noon	Families of Trans Youth -This meeting is always on the <u>first and third Saturday</u> of the month. First meeting of the month is in person at the Redwood City Main Library and third Saturday of the month is via Zoom
Nov 11 th and Dec 9 th 7:00 p.m.	General Support, Peninsula This meeting is always on the <u>second Monday</u> of the month and is hybrid for November and zoom only for December
Nov 7 th and Dec 5 th 7:30 p.m.	General Support, South Bay meets in-person at the Billy DeFrank Center the first Thursday of the month
Nov 19 th and Dec 17 th 7:00 p.m.	Asian/Pacific Islander (API). This meeting is the <u>third Tuesday</u> of the month. Zoom only
Nov 21 st and Dec 19 th 7:00 p.m.	Board Meetings – <u>Third Thursday</u> of the month Zoom only

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter November-December 2024 Newsletter

Out and About in Fall 2024

On Friday, October 11, 2024, Sara represented PFLAG at the annual Santa Clara County LGBTQ+ Summit, held at the Holiday Inn San Jose. The event brought together advocates, allies, and community members to celebrate progress, share resources, and discuss ongoing challenges facing the LGBTQ+ community.

Sara collected several informative brochures from the summit, gaining valuable insights and resources that can support PFLAG's mission. A highlight of the event was the keynote address delivered by Alex Locust, a renowned speaker and advocate known for his engaging and empowering presentations. Alex (he/she/they) is a Black biracial, queer "Glamputee" audaciously creating and celebrating the representation they want to see in the world through art and activism.

The summit provided an excellent opportunity to connect with other organizations, share ideas, and reaffirm PFLAG's commitment to fostering a more inclusive and supportive community.



PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter November-December 2024 Newsletter

Turn Your Love into Action - Sign Up for Our Advocacy Alerts!

Many of us are concerned about the upcoming years, with good reason. One way to feel more empowered and connected is to get involved.

Advocating for our community can take many forms and they are all meaningful. Opportunities include:

- sending messages to our representatives,
- attending school board meetings,
- cheering an inclusive sports team,
- participating in marches,
- joining Equality California in Sacramento for Lobby Day.

Many of us are concerned about the upcoming years, with good reason. One way to feel more empowered and connected is to get involved.

Every action counts, and you choose your level of involvement and visibility. Sign up for our advocacy alerts at advocacy@pflagsanjose.org to stay informed about time-sensitive opportunities. No obligation to participate – just the power to act when you can.

Questions? Contact Jessica
at jessicag@pflagsanjose.org

Together, we Lead with Love!



PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter November-December 2024 Newsletter

Transgender Athletes Belong

We support transgender athletes participation in sports

As the controversy surrounding the SJSU Women's Volleyball team continues, the San Jose / Peninsula chapter of PFLAG commends San Jose State University women's volleyball coaches for leading with love and supporting all their players in this difficult environment. We also commend SJSU for respecting the privacy of its students. We must stand up against bullying and misinformation which seek to divide us.

It is disappointing that politicization of sports has meant some teams have denied SJSU and themselves opportunities to play, simply because a team might have a transgender player. All student-athletes, including trans athletes, deserve the same chance to be part of a team, learn from one another, and respect the game. **Transgender athletes belong.**



Several of our PFLAG San Jose Peninsula Chapter members, joined by members of the PFLAG Oakland Chapter, attended San Jose State University Volleyball games in November in support of the team during this challenging time.

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter November-December 2024 Newsletter

Shoutout to Ben Greene's Good Queer News!


Looking for a dose of positivity and inspiration? Check out **Good Queer News** by Ben Greene—a fabulous platform that celebrates uplifting stories and highlights progress in the LGBTQ+ community. It's the perfect reminder of the power of resilience, joy, and connection.

Ben Greene, is a transman and advocate who spoke impressively at a PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula chapter meeting. Ben has recently started publishing Good Queer News.

You can sample it, catch up, and subscribe for free here:

https://goodqueernews.substack.com/?utm_campaign=pub&utm_medium=web

“Victories for LGBTQ+ Folks Abounded in the 2024 Election” was the title of Ben’s November 14, 2024 newsletter and is a welcome read after the elections.

Thanks, Ben, for keeping us informed and inspired!  



Good Queer News!

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter November-December 2024 Newsletter

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula

All current and prospective PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter Members,

Please keep an eye out for the mailing of the annual membership renewal drive expected to be distributed shortly.

- Family Membership \$40
- Individual Membership \$30
- Student Membership \$15

Do you qualify to make tax-free donations, without itemizing deductions?

If you are over 70 ½ and have an IRA the answer may be yes! A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) transfers money from your traditional IRA to a non-profit, without going into your income. It does not matter whether you currently have to take RMDs, as long as you are over age 70 ½ at the time of the donation. But if you do have to take an RMD, your donation counts toward that amount. Check with your institution to see whether they'll send the money directly to the charity for you, or send you a check payable to the charity for you to send on.

We would be very grateful if you considered a separate donation to the scholarship fund.

Also, if you are making larger donation, please send a check to help avoid the credit card transaction fees, of almost 5%.

Thank you!

