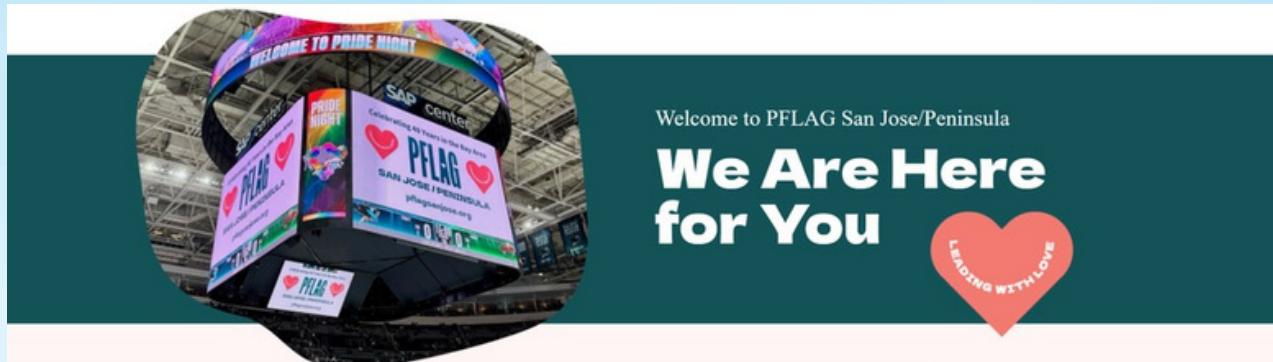


PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter April 2026 Newsletter



Springing forward to Summer. The future looks better in the sun

While the blooming flowers and warmer days of Spring and Summer signal a season of growth, allergies, sun, ice cream, iced tea and the 'where did I put my sunglasses?' hunt, this year's 'change in the air' is a bit more than just pollen for our community. We are currently tracking an unprecedented 747 anti-trans bills across 42 states, with a sharp focus on restricting healthcare, education, and even the right to use public facilities. However, there's still a glimmer of hope. The U.S. Supreme Court recently refused to reconsider the constitutional right to same-sex marriage in the Kim Davis case. In California, lawmakers are fast-tracking the CARE Without Fear Act and the SAFETY Act to shield our youth and providers from out-of-state overreach. Share Sara's frustration, fear but resilient and how we can channel those emotions into actions on page 2.

So, let's slather on that SPF 50, find the sunglasses we definitely didn't lose last year, and get to work. Whether it's making a phone call to your legislator and be more persistent than a telemarketer, marching in a parade with those fabulous sunglasses and a hat, or simply wearing a Pride pin that says, 'I'm here, I'm queer, and I have excellent taste in accessories,' every little action adds up to a movement. After all that hard work, treat yourself an iced tea (or something stronger if you feel like you should) and dive into one of Marla's book picks on page 3.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." — Margaret Mead

Be safe and stay radiant,

Newsletter Editor

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President's Message

I feel awful. I feel like I have to tell you to be optimistic, when I have no hope. I feel I must urge you to keep fighting, when I have had the wind knocked out of me. This is a hard Spring for me. As the mother of two LGBT kids, now grown, I feel like the country is going down a very dark road right now.

The news headlines make me so unhappy, so scared, so helpless. I truly believe this is what powerful people against LGBTQ+ rights, want. They want us to despair to think that our actions, our votes, our purchasing power, none of it matters. That is false. All of it matters. Every time you speak to your neighbor, every time you wear your PFLAG pin, every time you patronize an LGBTQ+-friendly store, your actions speak volumes. This is what I know. Decide what you make of it.

The attacks are real, and they are serious. Since January 2025, the Trump administration has signed executive orders targeting transgender people. Many anti-LGBTQ+ bills are being brought before state legislatures, including sweeping "sex definition" laws that seek to redefine sex in ways that erase transgender and nonbinary people from legal recognition. This is deliberate, and it is not stopping on its own.

People in California, as in other parts of the country, are fighting back. Equality California has unveiled a 2026 legislative package of 12 bills covering health care, data privacy, student protections, veteran support, workplace protections, and community safety. One of those bills, AB 1876, would explicitly prohibit health plans from discriminating against transgender, gender-diverse, and intersex Californians and ensure they cannot be denied coverage for medically necessary care.

The California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus is also working to restore the "Press 3" option on the 988 crisis line for LGBTQ+ youth that the Trump administration eliminated. California Attorney General Rob Bonta has stated publicly that California schools will remain welcoming, inclusive, and safe for all students. These battles are far from over—but they are being fought, hard, by skilled and committed people

What we are doing together now is Equality California is holding their annual LGBTQ+ Lobby Day in Sacramento, and PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula is participating. We will have a chance to influence state legislators on the bills currently under consideration by sharing stories from our lives. Personal testimony changes minds.

When this newsletter reaches you, Transgender Day of Visibility on March 31 will have just passed. The day was created to celebrate the lives and contributions of trans people, and to draw attention to the disproportionate discrimination and violence they face. I hope you found a way to mark it. I hope someone in your life felt seen.

In April, our chapter will begin planning our Pride Season calendar. Please contact us at volunteer-coordinator@pflagsanjose to volunteer. We will march in parades and hand out our brochures at tables in the shade.

Make sure your voter registration is up to date for the gubernatorial primary in June. This isn't easy, but we have an ace in the hole: our community. I have seen what we do when someone we love is under attack. We show up. We tell our stories. We march, make phone calls, send letters. Let's show them what we're made of. Take your vitamins. We will prevail. Keep fighting.

Sara

Chapter President





Secretary's Corner

Our board president, Sara, started a regular feature at our board meetings sometime last year that I really appreciate. From a recent agenda:

7:08 Check-in. One minute for each board member. How have you been?

It is optional, and some of us keep silent sometimes, but it is like a micro support group. I think it helps ground us into the reasons we volunteer and prevents us from slipping into an overly corporate efficiency over people mode.

This month, another board member shared during her check-in a couple of book recommendations: Project Hail Mary and Atmosphere. If you need a bit of thought-provoking escapism, enjoy these!

I will give you some more titles: This Is How It Always Is: A Novel, by Laurie Frankel.

Skip this paragraph if you want to avoid knowing anything about the plot - minor spoiler here. Ben Greene (activist and author) recommends writing stories about the world we want, in detail. Not a whole novel, but like a few paragraphs (or a novel if you wish!). I think this is a wonderful framing of the future because honestly, no one knows exactly what it could/should be like, really. Frankel's book is a story about how one very close family navigates having a very young child with articulate dysphoria. It inspired in me a dream of families being as strong and loving (even in conflict) as the one in that book, yet also welcomed by an equally loving and local queer community.

Another great book, extremely removed from reality while at the same time all about identity and relationships: Light From Uncommon Stars, By: Ryka Aoki. I will say nothing more about this book other than it defies categorization: fantasy? sci-fi? mystery? trans-fiction? competitive classical violin?! Some people don't make it very far into this book, but trust me, it is worth a read or listen or both.

Happy reading!

Marla

Chapter Secretary





Why support groups?

- *A mom and dad are wondering what to do now that their son has told them he's gay.*
- *A parent is looking for information about how to support their transgender child.*
- *Another parent wants to meet like-minded folks to discuss ways to advocate for LGBTQ+ rights.*
- *A young adult is seeking support in navigating her extended family's lack of acceptance of her queer identity.*

Many different scenarios like these bring people to our peer support meetings. Our goal is always to help people along the path of acceptance, understanding, and affirmation for their LGBTQ+ loved ones. We'd love to have you join us, whether you're looking to find support, give support, or both! Visit our website or email support@pflagsanjose.org for more information.

What's faith got to do with it?

If my church teaches that my child's identity is a sin, what do I do? Can I even be a Christian if I stand with my LGBTQ kid? What if I lose my faith community because of it? Questions such as these can be highly fraught, and there aren't always easy answers. Because of my own background I want to do what I can to support those who face these kinds of dilemmas.

As "Faith Communities Liaison" for our chapter, I'm also on the lookout for ways we might form collaborative relationships with welcoming and affirming houses of worship (churches, temples, mosques, etc).

In my own faith journey I've moved from a "traditional", conservative view over to being fully affirming of LGBTQ+ folks. If you ever want to chat about this kind of stuff, let me know! You can reach me at paul.sonkowsky@pflagsanjose.org. I'm always up for an open conversation.

Peace,

Paul





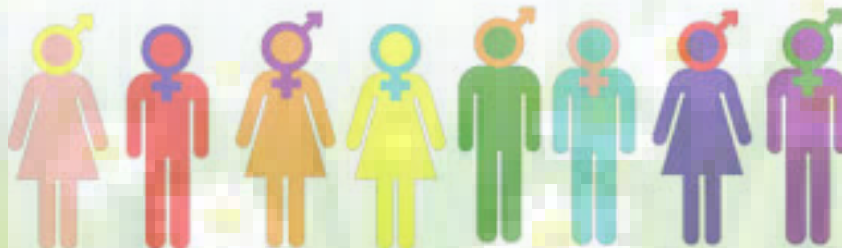
An Opportunity to Put Your Mouth Where Your Money is

Our Chapter is restarting our Speakers Bureau. This is a group of trained speakers who briefly tell their stories of being in the LGBTQ+ community, or the parent of someone who is. We put a face, or the face of a loving family member, and a real world narrative to sometimes poorly understood concepts of gender identity and sexual orientation. We can describe the impact of supportive or hostile legislation or policies on someone's real life. Members of the PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula Speakers Bureau (PSB) have the potential to open minds and inspire people to become allies in our work for LGBTQ equality.

We are currently recruiting and training new speakers. A 3-5 minute summary is all you have to prepare. Guidance in developing your story and preparing to speak in public is provided, as well as how to maintain privacy and set boundaries on what you will share.

We are most often invited into college classrooms but are available for middle and high school classes, affirming church and temple groups, company pride clubs, etc. There are opportunities during the day, evenings, and weekends. You can speak just at the times and places and work for you.

Volunteer or find out more by emailing SpeakersBureau@pflagsanjose.org





eQuality Scholarship Collaborative

Every year PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula joins with eQuality Scholarship Collaborative to generate funds for students who show leadership in the face of challenges to support the LGBTQ+ community. Thanks to the generous donors during our 2026 scholarship fundraising campaign, we reached our goal of funding five \$6,000 scholarships. We are proud of all the finalists and impressed with their achievements and commitment to their studies and supporting their communities.

These scholarships support exceptional high school seniors and community college graduates who have demonstrated courageous leadership in advocating for LGBTQ+ rights in their schools and communities. They are passionate, determined young people working to create a more inclusive world, and we are proud to help support their continued education.

Our donors' generosity not only provides financial assistance — it affirms these students' voices and invests in their futures.

We are accepting donations for the bright future of our 2027 scholars through our donation platform <https://pflagsanjose.org/scholarships/>

With sincere appreciation,

Gloria

2026 Scholarship Program Chair





If you have time, check out these events

April

- Day of Silence (National): Friday, April 10. A student-led protest where people take a vow of silence to highlight the silencing of LGBTQ+ students.
- Lesbian Visibility Week: April 20–26, culminating in Lesbian Visibility Day on April 26.

May

- Filoli Pride Weekend (June 13 & 14): Family-friendly event featuring art, wellness, sound baths, and drag bingo.
- SF LGBT Community Center Party (May 31): Celebration featuring live entertainment, queer & well programming, and an art exhibit.
- National Queer Arts Festival (May - June): Throughout the Bay Area, featuring performance art, poetry, and fashion.



June

- San Francisco Pride (June 27 -28): One of the nation's largest gatherings, featuring a parade down Market Street, a two-day festival at Civic Center, and the Trans and Dyke Marches.
- Sacramento Pride (June 13, 14): Features a parade march, festival on Capitol Mall, live music, and a dedicated kid's zone.
- Sonoma County Pride (Santa Rosa) (June 5 & 6): Features a parade plus unique events like the "Atlantis" Pool Party.
- Santa Cruz Pride (June 7): A historic parade and festival downtown, marking one of the oldest in the state.
- Disneyland After Dark: Pride Nite (June 16 & 18): Special ticketed events featuring a Pride Cavalcade and dance parties.





Support Meeting Schedules

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. 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	Meeting Locations
4/1, 5/6, 6/3 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.	Estamos Contigo (PFLAG en Español). This meeting is typically the first Wednesday of the month. Zoom only.
4/18, 5/16, 6/20 10am - 12 noon	Families of Transgender/Nonbinary family members is always on 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month. First meeting of the month is in person at the Redwood City Main library. Third Saturday of the month meeting is via Zoom.
4/13, 5/11, 6/8 7:00 p.m.	General Support, Peninsula. This meeting is always on the second Monday of the month. Zoom only.
4/2, 5/7, 6/4 7:00 p.m.	General Support, South Bay meets in-person at the Billy DeFrank Center the first Thursday of the month
4/21, 5/19, 6/16 7:00 p.m.	Asian/Pacific Islander (API). This meeting is the third Tuesday of the month. Zoom only.
4/16, 5/21, 6/18 7:00 p.m.	Board Meetings – Third Thursday of the month. Zoom only.



Welcome to PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula

**We Are Here
for You**



Important PFLAG Contact information and Links

There are many ways to reach us for support or join our cause.

Email: info@pflagsanjose.org

Phone: 408-270-8182

Mail: PFLAG San Jose

P.O. Box 2718

Sunnyvale, Ca 94087

www.pflagsanjose.org

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

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter membership rates:

Family Membership \$40

Individual Membership \$30

Student Membership \$15

If you are over 70 ½ and have an IRA, you qualify to make tax-free donations! 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!