



# JUST FOR US

FOCUS ON COMING OUT AND VISIBILITY

Vol. 19 #2  
2007

FOR PEOPLE WITH LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND/OR TRANSGENDER PARENTS

## THE WORLD IS CHANGING Shannon Bowman-Sarkisian

I will never forget the faces of the two boys who sat in front of me in my seventh grade band class. Geoff and Jon played saxophone. I played trumpet. This was the year that I began coming out to my friends about my mom being a lesbian. Most of my friends were supportive, or at the very least indifferent. Somehow, Geoff and Jon found out about my mom, and I became a target. Every morning the boys would say horrible things to me; they called my mom names and accused her of molesting me. I sat in silence for several days. I don't know why I allowed them to get away with harassing me for so long.

Perhaps I was still coming to terms with my mom's lesbianism, or maybe I was too embarrassed to speak up. I thought they would give up after awhile, but they didn't. I told my mom about the situation, and she spoke to the school. The boys were given detention and wrote me apology letters. It was a terrible experience for me, an awkward pre-teen. I didn't feel that I had the support of the school or my teacher.

This event inspired me to get involved in the LGBT community. I began speaking at universities to future teachers and therapists. I started doing media work to educate others. I learned that the best way to educate the world is to live life openly and honestly.

Sexuality is nothing to be ashamed about. There is no need for our families to live in hiding. Having a lesbian mom has taught me that there are two ways to respond to homophobia: you can keep silent and think that the world will never change, or you can stand up and say, "This is wrong and I'm going to change the way the world works."

Who I am is strongly connected to growing



up with a lesbian mom. I learned to be strong, independent, and courageous. I have moral and ethical values that are deeply tied to the LGBT community. I believe in the inherent worth and dignity of all human beings, not just those who conform to certain standards.

The world is changing; I've seen the shifting take place during my lifetime. This generation is going to come into its own in the next few years. We must decide what we want our cities, states, countries and world to look like. It is up to us to stand up in the face of fear and say, "My experience and my family are just as valid as anyone else's." I plan on being there, representing my own family. Whenever someone speaks against gay marriage using children as an excuse, I will be right there to say, "I am one of the children, and I'm proud of my mom."

*Shannon grew up in Felton, CA and now attends San Jose State University for creative writing. In high school she started a group called Gaybies that worked with other kids of LGBT parents and put out a newsletter.*

## STAND UP AND BE PROUD

AN INTERVIEW WITH  
TERRANCE MCGEORGE

Folks in the COLAGE community who are 2nd Gen deal with not only coming out about their parents, but also their own coming out. To explore the different ways that COLAGErs have dealt with coming out, particularly in communities of color, *Just For Us* interviewed Terrance about his experiences.



### JFU: Tell me about yourself and your family.

Well, I am 20 years old and am an African American male. I have been out with people since I was sixteen. I found out my dad was gay when I was seven. Once I came out, I started joining different peer groups and am very active with an HIV Prevention group, an LGBT and Straight Ally Dance group and a non-profit production company that puts on fashion shows to raise money for different causes.

### JFU: Do you remember the first time you came out about your dad?

My experience was different. I didn't have to tell people. You could just tell by looking at my dad that he was gay. But my sister told the whole neighborhood. It was difficult because it was a low-income area. I was teased a lot because of it. Before it was a problem; now, it is just cool. My dad always encouraged me and was there for me, for whatever it was, graduations, performances, he was there, immediately.

### JFU: What was your own coming out experience like?

My story has many different versions. I told the first person when I was sixteen. She was my best friend. I then joined Dreams of Hope and went to Philadelphia to an equality forum and never saw so many gay people before in my whole life. It gave me strength. When I got back home, I told my mom and dad. My mom

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# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

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DEAR COLAGE FRIENDS & FAMILIES,

Since the first gatherings of youth and adults with LGBT parents, COLAGE has been exploring the unique ways in which we, as people with one or more lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT) parent/s, go through our own coming out processes which can both mirror and greatly differ from our parents' coming out paths and experiences.

From my own experience as the child of a lesbian and as a member of this community for nearly 13 years, I believe one thing is certain and common: we make decisions every day about whether, when, where, how and to whom we share this part of our lives and identities. Over the course of one's lifetime there are innumerable opportunities to come out. Sometimes we must come out quickly and maneuver within unfamiliar (or decidedly

homo-hostile) terrain and other times we can leisurely weigh the many reasons and potential consequences (both personal and political) for coming out before doing so. At the same time, many of us are challenged by a firmly held decision (sometimes made by our parents and sometimes by ourselves) to not come out in some or all parts of our lives.

Coming out means something different to each of us as we and our life circumstances change.

Here's what Coming Out means to me right now:

**Coming Out means liberation.** The first step towards family liberation and personal freedom is being open and honest with yourself and at least one other person about the wondrous complexity of you and your family—who you are and whom you and your parent(s) love. This leads to being out and open about the myriad aspects of our identities.

**Coming Out means visibility.** You do not have to go far to come out. By coming out or being out as the child of an LGBT parent you automatically become a role model and an educator to those around you. You can come out in your school, your workplace, your faith community, to your health providers, to your elected officials. Each time you come out you raise visibility and awareness not only for your own family but also for other marginalized families who are actually in the majority.

**Coming Out means power.** As both COLAGE and COLAGERS become more visible in society and build our vibrant community, we gain political and social power. We are a movement of voices that speaks authentically about what it means to

have LGBT parents. We develop new definitions of what it means to be a family. We confront injustice by advocating for our rights and the rights of all children, youth and families.

In this *Just For Us* you will hear the stories of many COLAGERS who have approached coming out in different ways. This issue reveals how visibility of COLAGERS, for example through the mediums of film (Morgan's article about "Tru Loved" on Page 13) and radical cheerleading (Read Caroline's story on Page 12), is a powerful tool for broadening discussions about children, youth and adults with LGBT parents and ensuring that COLAGERS are an integral part of such conversations. I am also excited to share on pages 10 and 11 tools to help youth and adults alike navigate the world of coming out and raising visibility through being out.

In honor of National Coming Out Day, I invite you to participate in the third annual COLAGE Support Our Community Campaign during the month of October. This yearly grassroots fundraising drive is your opportunity to come out as a supporter of COLAGE and encourage others to join our community and support our work. The funds raised through this campaign will help us carry out our exciting Strategic Plan in the upcoming year. Please check out the Support Our Community information on the back cover of *Just For Us* and sign up today!

Sincerely,

Beth Teper

## COLAGE

### MISSION

COLAGE ENGAGES, CONNECTS, AND EMPOWERS PEOPLE TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE FOR CHILDREN OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND/OR TRANSGENDER PARENTS AND FAMILIES.

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## COMING OUT IN THE SOUTH

I am the eldest child of a wonderful bisexual woman, but at one time, no one knew. She was married to my dad for eleven years when they divorced. I lived with my dad for four years in a small town called Thibodaux, Louisiana. While living in Thibodaux, I was a student at a private Catholic school, and during our religion classes I held my tongue when the subject fell to homosexuality. I didn't think it was right to subject my mom to ridicule by the group of elementary school students. I transferred to a public school in Baton Rouge at midterm of my sixth grade year. This began an entirely different experience.



Up until then, I had not told anyone about my mom. No one ever needed to know. It wasn't until I made friends and had them over to my house for my thirteenth birthday party that I had to tell someone. I was very happy when my friends thought it was cool that my mom was in a relationship with a woman. It was their parents I had to worry about. One particular pair comes to mind. The parents of my best friend decided that she was not allowed to be associated with me any longer because of my mom and her then partner. They believed that what my mom was doing with her life was a sin and did not want them to influence their daughter in any way. This was particularly hard for me because this was the first time I had to come out about my family. Because of the way these parents reacted, I went back into seclusion.

I did everything I could think of to be "normal" in the eyes of my peers. I joined clubs, played sports, and played in the band. I never mentioned my mom's partner when speaking about my family and not many were ever invited to my house. This went on until my eighth grade year. At this point, I had an epiphany. I was ashamed of what I was doing to my mom. I questioned what I had been doing: I was perfectly fine with my mom's lifestyle and so was she. So why was I afraid to tell others? Once I overcame my fear, I told everyone. I told anyone who would listen. It felt great. I felt this weight lift from my shoulders. No one had a problem with my family. Among my peers, it was okay that my mom was bisexual and was in a relationship with a woman. The Church, on the other hand, thought otherwise.

My family is Catholic and attended Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation. My mom was a Eucharistic minister, which is the person who presents the Body of Christ, or the bread, and the Blood of Christ, or the wine, to the congregation. When the priest and the congregation, our so-called "family", decided to take this privilege away from my mom because of the life she chose. Needless to say, I was livid. They told her she was a sinner and unclean. She was not allowed to participate in such leadership roles in the Church any longer. I continued to go to Mass and PSR (Parish School of Religion) because it was what my mom wanted. Everything I took part in with the Church was for her. Once I had graduated from PSR, I cut off most of my contact with the Church. I had enough of their twisted views and values and to this very day, I am not involved with any particular religion or church. I believe in God, but I have my own views and values that are different from what I was taught through those treacherous years of religion classes.

As I am reflecting on all of these events, I am realizing the main reason I did not tell anyone about my family. It was because I thought I was the only person in the world whose family was different. Thanks to COLAGE, I now know different. Today, I am the out and proud child of a bisexual woman. It does not matter who my mom chooses to love. All that matters to me is that she is happy.

*Danielle is 18 years old and an accomplished tuba player from Louisiana. She spent the summer as an intern in the COLAGE office. Read more about Danielle on Page 15.*

## THE PICTURE

By Sara Berger

I'm wondering how much time has passed  
As I sit here in my dorm

Looking at our picture.

I've got your eyes, you know it  
And a slightly crooked smile to match yours, too.  
I wish I had your cheekbones...

**I wish I had your courage.**

Though I've yet to find a

"GAY" side like you have,

(Which I probably won't)

I believe we're very much alike

In all the ways that should count.

And although your lover,

She doesn't share

The same genes

Or blue jeans

As me,

I am convinced that I have her brainy wit....

Which is **better** than genetics anyway.

And it's a shame that people can't tell

From the faces in the frame

All that we've been through...

All that we share.

And as I watch the airbrushed photo slowly

collect with the dust

That is almost always

correlated to a lazy college student,

I remember the hoarse laughter,

Pig Latin,

Dancing in the living room,

**Tears,**

**RAINBOW FLAGS,**

The lookout,

Ellen,

And British Columbia.

And I remember how because of you and her,

My life was **destined** to be different.

Destined to be strange.

Hated.

Feared.

**QUEER.**

And I remember how I would  
never change it for the world.

*Sara Berger goes to school in Minnesota but grew up with lesbian moms in North Dakota. She recently was named a winner of the COLAGE Lee Dubin Scholarship. Read more about her and other scholarship winners on page 14.*



# SPEAK OUT

## WHEN AND HOW DO YOU COME OUT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY AND/OR PARENTS TO YOUR FRIENDS? WHAT WAS ONE OF THE BEST, HARDEST OR FUNNIEST COMING OUT EXPERIENCES YOU HAVE HAD?

Until about a year ago, I never really had any trouble discussing the fact that I had two moms. But when I went to a camp with my 13-yr-old, donor-half-sister last summer, everything changed. A bunch of our bunkmates asked how we two were related, and we started talking to them about donors, LGBT families, half-siblings, and the relationships between our families. A counselor told us that she "couldn't let us talk about such things, as it might offend other campers and/or their families". It really hit my half-sister and me hard, because this was the first time in either of our lives that this subject of diversity and family had ever come up as an issue. Some advice to those who want to come out (about their families or themselves) to friends: just be brave, confident, and honest. If the person is really your friend, they will understand and support you, not turn away and snort or giggle about it to someone else. Those who will listen and be "cool" about it will become your true pals. If they aren't mature or educated enough to understand, then either wait for them to grow up, or try yourself to help them open their minds to diversity.

**Alana, Age 13, Albany, CA**

When I was in 7th grade I took a whole day to try to tell my best friend about my moms but I was too scared I didn't how to put it in words. So I told her over the phone that night and once it finally came out there was silence and I sat there for about 6 1/2 min. until she finally said that's cool and went on talking about the movie we were discussing.

**Sadie, Grade 10, Jamaica Plain, MA**

I've had lesbian moms all my life, and most of the kids who went to my elementary school knew I had two moms.

But two years ago, I moved up to middle school, with its classroom and locker challenges. And I had even more to worry about. I was counting on making many friends, and so I was scared about homophobia. It was in May this year that I finally came out to one of my best friends!

**Noah, Age 14, Lexington, MA**

When we talk about play dates and they say to me, "have your Mom and Dad pick you up" I tell them I don't have a dad but 2 moms. Sometimes my friends say, "I thought that was your mom," I tell them that she is and so is she (meaning both those ladies are my moms). When I tell them I have 2 moms, there jaw drops like they can't believe it! One person said to me, "My Mom said you couldn't have 2 moms." I told her, "Guess she's wrong, because I do." Even her Mom has become friends with us now. Tell people when you are ready and be proud of your family, I am!

**Leah, Age 9, Douglas, MI**

I think we should be honest with our friends and classmates right away. If you hide the fact you come from a LGBT family you are acting like you are ashamed or embarrassed by your family. When you have confidence in who you are and who your family is it sends the message you believe in yourself and your family. People respect honesty.

**Patrick, Age 13, Altadena, CA**

My friends at school ask if one of my moms is my dad. I asked her once to pretend to be my daddy. The kids at school keep asking me why I have two mommies. I had to leave my pre-school because my mom has a girlfriend.

**Thea, Age 4, Sacramento, CA**

## GOOD LUCK EMBER COOK!



Ember with COLAGE Bay Area youth

With much gratitude we wish Ember Cook much luck and success in her new role as the Production Manager at the Berkeley Playhouse Theater. She left her role as the COLAGE Bay Area Program Coordinator in May 2007 to pursue this exciting new opportunity. We want to celebrate the two years she worked with COLAGE as the Program Coordinator as well as acknowledge Ember's years of dedication and involvement with COLAGE. Thank you Ember!

## COMING OUT FOR PRIDE



Ian and Ayana prepare to lead the family contingent during the San Francisco Pride Parade.

## MY COMING OUT STORY By Melanie Jones

**M**y parents divorced right before my 18th birthday after 27 years of marriage but they had a strained relationship from as far back as I can remember. My mom later told me that she wanted to leave my dad when I was 5 years old but stayed to get us kids raised. I wish she had left instead - I think it would have been better for all of us. Instead, I grew up watching their interactions, which were almost always in the form of arguments. In addition, my mom was battling alcoholism, dealing with being an incest survivor and fighting anxiety/depression. These are the things that challenged me, not her lesbianism.

In fact, her coming out was extremely healing for me and answered many questions about my family that had plagued my mind for years. My mom always looked butch, preferring jeans, t-shirts and cropped hair. She didn't look or act like moms of friends I had or any of the TV moms we saw growing up. I knew something was different about my family for years, but couldn't figure it out.

I found out about my mom being gay from high school gossip. A friend of mine called to tell me that another girl was saying my mom was gay. I was struck with fear that it could be true! I grew up in a rural area and was immersed in homophobic culture. Because I couldn't stand to deal with uncertainty,



Melanie with her husband JR.

I confronted my mom and asked her if it was true. She hesitated to answer and I think she was afraid of being rejected, so I quickly added that it didn't matter to me if she was or not, that it wouldn't change my feelings towards her. And with that, she came out to me. Suddenly, my whole upbringing, from the boy haircuts she used to give her daughters, her butch nature, and the strained marriage/upcoming divorce all made sense!

When I found out my mom was gay, I thought I must be gay too, especially since I was having feelings and a strong emotional attachment for a close girl friend. But I also had a steady boyfriend who I loved being with. I went into therapy to deal with a lot of childhood baggage. One of the things it did for me was to help me realize that I'm bisexual. And even though my mom and I are very much alike, I am not

exactly like her and am not a lesbian.

My mom isn't out to many people, which has always been hard for me. I don't want to hide who I am, and her being gay has shaped my life and worldview, for the better. It was the catalyst for me to face myself and deal with many issues, which I'll forever be grateful for! But I've had to hide her sexuality from people for eons now. And I'm much, much more political than my mother is. My husband (who has a gay male cousin and many LGBT friends) and I march in Columbus' Pride Parade almost every year. I carry a sign that says "proud daughter of a lesbian".

I wish we could all just love the people our hearts and bodies lead us to and I am feeling more able to not care what people think. I am organizing my 20th high school class reunion back home and I've been slowly telling people about my mom. And have been pleasantly surprised at the number of supportive comments I've received! It just goes to show that even rural people can be supportive and open minded.

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*Melanie Jones is a 38 year old daughter of an awesome lesbian mom. Her youngest nephew has spontaneously called his grandmother's partner "gamma" without anyone prompting him or overhearing anyone else say it. She lives in Columbus, Ohio, works at the Ohio State University and graduated with her Masters in workforce development and education on August, 2007.*

## CELEBRATION OF FAMILY DIVERSITY By Alston R. Drummond

**I** define diversity by recognizing a group that shares a core commonality while celebrating the unique differences of its membership. I have been blessed with a family who demonstrates and celebrates diversity in almost every way imaginable. My nuclear family is made up of my mother, my mother's partner, my younger brother, and me. My father and mother are divorced, but Daddy and his side of the family are still very close to my mothers and their family.

My mother and father are both African-American. My other mother is of Scots and German background. Both my mothers also have Native American blood -- Mohegan and Blackfoot. My extended family of grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins also includes citizens of Denmark, Great Britain, Canada, Nigeria, and the Bahamas, as well as children adopted from China, Vietnam, and Romania.

Religious diversity is another hallmark of my family. Most of us are Christian, but we worship as independent Pentecostals, African Methodist Episcopal, American Baptists, Anglicans, and Presbyterians. Our theological spectrum ranges from evangelical fundamentalist to Christian social activist. We also have several goddess worshippers and other pagans in the family. Six of us, including my mother's grandmother, my mother's partner, and both of her parents are ordained ministers.

While most in my family graduated from high school, several did not have that opportunity. In terms of vocations and careers, my family members hold very diverse positions. We are clergy, short-order cooks, barbers, professors, mill workers, mill owners, officers in the Navy and the Air Force, housekeepers, engineers, therapists, nurses, social workers, automobile executives, high school teachers, motivational speakers, secretaries, and house painters, just to name a few. Given the diversity

of educational levels and professions, it is not surprising that my family also represents all rungs of the economic ladder. The homeless, the working poor, the middle class, and the wealthy are found on both sides of my family.

When it comes to our political views, we have career military officers and war-protesting pacifists. We have staunch Republicans, liberal Democrats, Socialists, and independents. Most of us supported and have benefited from the Civil Rights Movement for Black Americans, and many of us support the civil and marriage rights of gays and lesbians. Family members with opposing views still treat each other with love, respect, and welcome.

In my family everyone is deeply loved, and there is room for everyone, whoever they are and whatever they are like. Our family gains visibility through the ways we celebrate our family diversity.

Somehow in small town South Carolina, the buckle of the Bible Belt, my interracial, lesbian-led family has managed to stand proud and fit in. We are active in sports, music, church, community volunteer activities, booster clubs, and neighborhood fellowship. People know us for who we are. They appreciate our goodness, kindness, and integrity. People see the true love, honor, respect and care that my mothers have for each other. They see how well-loved and cared for my brother and I are. It is almost as if people cannot help being happy when they see how happy and blessed my family is.

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*Alston graduated from high school in Spartanburg, SC last spring and will be attending Auburn University this fall to study engineering. He was very involved in Youth Voices - a student leadership group that impacts change in the local community.*

## CHAPTER UPDATE: COLAGE Salt Lake City By Cara Cerise

**B**rowsing on the internet last summer, I curiously typed "kids with gay parents" into the Google search field. I was trying to somehow find that I was not the only person in the universe with gay parents. That's when I discovered COLAGE, and soon found out I am definitely not the only one! I was so curious about the organization and I desperately wanted to find out how to get involved.

I saw the contact information for the Utah chapter of COLAGE and immediately picked up the phone. I dialed the number as fast as I could, stumbling over my fingers with great excitement. I anxiously waited for someone to pick up on the other line. They did finally, except I didn't get the information I was expecting. The voice on the other line told me that the chapter had been inactive for about a year or so. However, they suggested that I call the LGBT community center of Utah to speak with them about possibly reforming a COLAGE group. I was a little disappointed at first that there wasn't a group I could join, but shortly after, I realized I could restart a chapter and begin a new journey. I saw it as a great opportunity, and that's exactly what I did!

The recently re-opened COLAGE Salt Lake City was formed in October



2006. We are going strong and having a blast! Each month it seems we have a new family join our group. It is very exciting to watch and be a part of the growth of the COLAGE community here in Salt Lake City. Our first meeting was a pizza and soda social which was held at the LGBT community center of Utah. It was awesome and such a great way to get things up and running.

Since then we have done so much. We had the great opportunity of participating in the Utah

Pride festival and got to march in the parade. Our hearts were joyful and it was so important for all of us to feel the support of our families, friends, fellow Utahans, and allies. Other past activities have included a movie night, games night, pajama party, family barbeque, talent show, and swimming.

Heading into my senior year of high school, and coming up on our chapter's one year anniversary, I am filled with passion and excitement. This COLAGE group, even in its short time of being, has brought so much to my life. I am excited to see what this year will bring a little bit scared to possibly move away for college and pass on the torch, but confident that this chapter will keep going and continue to bring joy and support into other youths' lives like it has mine.

### TERRANCE Continued from page 1

didn't react too badly. My dad told me he already knew. He was just waiting for me to figure it out on my own.

My old friends stopped talking to me, so I found new friends. I deal with homophobia a lot. When I came out in school, it wasn't a big deal at first. I just acted like myself; I grew my hair out and started wearing make-up. I came out to my dad's side about a year ago because my uncle's wife passed away while she was in the hospital. Before the wake, I came out to the family. I had my long hair in long braids with extensions. I called my aunt and told her because I didn't want it be a big deal when they saw me. When I got there, the family looked at me like I was an alien. But I think it's funny when people look at me like that.

### JFU: How is coming out different or special in African American communities from any other?

I have lots of Caucasian friends who are LGBT. In pop culture and in most religions, it is generally accepted. But not in African American communities. You are an outcast and not accepted. It is different for me because of where

I live. Black men are supposed to be tough and strong, and if you are feminine, like me, there is a problem. In African American communities, people don't come out. So no one talks about it. By day, thugs make fun of me, but by night, they want to know if I have a boyfriend and if I need a ride home. They are curious.

Religious beliefs are so strong in African American communities and are promoting homophobia. My friends have gone to church and were told they were going to Hell for being gay. The church tried to convert them. It drives me crazy to think that people actually think like that.

### JFU: What advice do you have for other youth with LGBT parents?

If you love your parents, and they are LGBT, respect them and stand up for them. Stand up and tell everyone there isn't a difference between your family and mine. Be proud. That's what I would tell them.

*Terrance McGeorge lives in Pittsburgh and is an Americorps member who works with Beginning with Books. He is an active member of Young Adult Long Tables and the Dreams of Hope dance troupe and is currently helping produce an HIV Prevention and Awareness Fashion Show.*

## COMING OUT THROUGH FASHION!



What better way to come out about being a COLAGEr than sporting one of the cool new COLAGE tshirts?

On the front, these shirts turn the usually "that's so gay" taunt into the funny and proud proclamation that our families actually are gay!

Shirts come in gray with either teal or orange ink.

For more information or to order, contact [colage@colage.org](mailto:colage@colage.org).

# ONE DAY IT WON'T BE SO HARD By Caitlin MacIntyre

I still remember asking my mom why she and my dad were getting divorced. She responded, "Well, I don't know if you'll understand this, but your dad is gay."

Though only in 4th grade, I did understand. It didn't bother me because he was still my dad and I had already suspected it from the hushed phone calls and whispered conversations.

Yet, when I divulged the family secret to my two close friends, they seemed shocked, appalled. I knew after that I should keep it secret. It wasn't normal. If your father left your mother it was supposed to be for another woman.

After that I referred to my father's partner as his "friend" and I answered questions about my dad's sexuality with a confused and flabbergasted look. I didn't want to lie, but the truth seemed so hard. More than my fear of my classmates teasing me was my fear of what they would say about Daddy. I was proud of him, glad he was happy and in love, but I knew most people wouldn't share my enthusiasm. I could take it if they belittled and stared at me, but I felt fiercely protective of my dad and knew that in my small town being gay was not okay. The word faggot was carelessly tossed about and everything undesirable was quickly labeled as "gay."

As I grew older I regretted that I didn't tell anyone, that I wasn't out and proud about my dad's sexuality. I was proud of him; why couldn't I show everyone just how proud I was? In my senior year of high school I finally told my two best friends. It was liberating and wonderful. In college it became a part of my identity that I hid from no one. I let everyone know I had a gay dad and he had a partner of 8 years who was a second father to me.



I used his experience and mine to educate people about sexuality. I used his story to show them that homosexuality was not a choice and about the need for equality. I'm not going to act like everyone thought it was completely normal. People still act with surprise when I out myself, but instead of seeing it as an affront or a setback I see it as a valuable way to challenge their perceptions and help them open their minds. I'm finally out of the closet and I will never ever go back in. I will be visible and vocal. I will be an advocate and activist everyday in my words and actions for the rest of my life. While it would be easy for me to hide and to fit in, if everyone

in the GLBT community did that we would all be forced back into the stifling and painful closet we have fought so hard to liberate ourselves from. It takes courage and it isn't easy, but our struggle now may mean that one day it won't be quite so hard.

*Caitlin is originally from New Jersey but resides in Houston TX as a sophomore student Rice University. She is majoring in English and the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. Currently, Caitlin is planning the Houston vigil for Seven Straight Nights for Equal Rights, a nationwide effort led by straight allies in an effort to achieve LGBT rights.*

## COLAGE Word Find

See if you can find the following words and circle them in this fun word find!

- |         |            |         |
|---------|------------|---------|
| colage  | out        | fun     |
| rainbow | closet     | family  |
| pride   | acceptance | telling |

P B G E P O P S P L  
 F R P D F U N S B L  
 C L O S E T C R N E  
 N B C N L I O A T E  
 F E E T E L L I N G  
 A C C E P T A N C E  
 M N G L R A G B L L  
 I F E E I R E O N G  
 L O A C D L T W T A  
 Y L B O E E R W G E

# COLAGE EVENT

In Summer 2007, COLAGE met hundreds of youth with LGBT parents at incredible events. These are just a few highlights from Family Week in Saugatuck, MI, Family Week in Provincetown, MA

and Families at the River in Guerneville, CA. Thanks to all of the youth, families and volunteers who made these events more fabulous than ever!



Amber, Brenna, Kelsey, Sara and Hayley prepare for the first MI Family Week parade.



COLAGErs at the Saugatuck Bowling Party.



Trinity and Justice spread COLAGE love.



COLAGE teens enjoy a Michigan summer night.



New teen friends in Ptown.

We also want to thank our amazing partners Rainbow Families Great Lakes (MI Family Week) and Our Family Coalition (Families at the River) for their leadership and efforts with these events.



# SCRAPBOOK



Youth at Families by the River show their COLAGE pride.



Jake and Madison as Peter Pan and Tinkerbell in the Saugatuck COLAGE Drama Skit.



Alexis and Lani strut their drag king stuff.



COLAGE Crew represents at the Ptown dance.



The Camp COLAGE Yellow Team prepares for Field Day.



Skyler models his new COLAGE Tie Dye.

## IN GRATITUDE...

COLAGE wishes to thank the dynamic adults with LGBT parents who acted as COLAGE facilitators during the summer. We appreciate the enthusiasm, time, creativity, dedication and support you shared with COLAGE and all of our youth participants.

Amy Dorfman

Asha Leong

Avi Silber

Chester Densmore

Christine Bachman

Dakota Fine

Danielle Silber

Danna Cook

Debra Rosenberg

Dori Kavanagh

Doug Fenton

Elizabeth Castellana

Heliana Ramirez

Hope Steinman-Iacullo

Jamie Larson

Janet Stock

Jesse Carr

Jessie Voors

Julia Bean

Kelly Densmore

Keott Gomez Starnes

Kerry Cullen

Lauren Wheeler

Laurie Cicotello

Liam Cooper

Miranda McLaughlin

Monica Canfield-Lenfest

Nathaniel Obler

Nava EtShalom

Pamela Liebowitz

Ramzi Fawaz

Vanessa Moses

Wes Ridley

Whitney Moses

Yonah EtShalom



# ADVOCACY &

## Coming Out for Queerspawn

The terms “coming out” or “coming out of the closet” are traditionally used to describe the process of people of any age voluntarily becoming open and telling their friends and families about their sexual orientation or gender identity. At COLAGE, we recognize that kids of LGBT parents also have a unique coming out process. We make decisions every day about who, how and when to tell the people in our lives

that we have/had one or more LGBT parent/s.

Coming out is something that only you can decide how to do, or when to do. If you never want to tell anyone, you don't have to. If you want to tell everyone in the entire world, you can. These tips and tools are just a few things to keep in mind for youth COLAGERS who are thinking about coming out.

### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE COMING OUT

Check in with your parent(s) and see how they feel about being out. It can be really hard if you and your parents have different ideas about how out you want to be. Sometimes you would like to tell all your friends, but a parent isn't able or willing to be out. Other times it's you who would like to be quieter about your family and your parent/s who want to be really visible. Having open conversations with your family about coming out can help you figure out the best boundaries for everyone.

Some COLAGERS have found it easier to develop a friendship with someone first and then tell them. Someone who already knows and likes you is less likely to “flip out” when they find out about your parent(s). Others have felt that they like to tell everyone right at the start of a relationship so they never have to worry that someone will have an uncool reaction later.

Find allies (people who are LGBT-friendly or will support you) in your school, youth group, or community. Maybe there is a teacher who is out or another student who has an LGBT parent or is LGBT themselves. Maybe there is someone who is very supportive of LGBT issues. They can help be a cheerleader for you as you deal with coming out.

### WHEN YOU COME OUT

**You can tell in many different ways:** Invite people over to your house, and just answer questions honestly as they come up. Questions like, “Why doesn't your

dad's friend have his own bedroom?” or “Why are there rainbow magnets on your refrigerator?” can present the chance to talk with your friend about your parent(s).

Have a direct conversation. Decide what you want to say before hand. Practice in your head or with a stuffed animal. Then take a deep breathe, and go for it!

Use a more p u b l i c opportunity to come out; some youth have written essays in school about their families or spoken at assemblies.

Others have done media interviews as part of the COLAGE Speak OUT program. If you appear on the local news talking about your LGBT parent/s you might just let the media do the coming out for you!

You can use introductions to members of your family to get coming out over with. Just say, “This is my dad and his partner, James,” or “This is my mom and that's her date,” or “Him? He's my mother.”

Let COLAGE help! Sign up for our email lists and ask other COLAGERS for advice about how to tell. Get a pen-pal or come to a COLAGE event to make new friends with families like yours. Get one of the

fabulous COLAGE t-shirts to wear to school (or just around the house!)

### AFTER TELLING

Pat yourself on the back! No matter how it went, you just did a very brave thing! Congratulations on coming out.

If the person you told reacted badly, remember that it might take time to get used to new ideas. They might need some space to think things over and to realize that nothing about you has changed.

You have a right to be honest about your family, and coming out is never a wrong thing to do. But, you also have a right to privacy about your family. After you tell, people might ask you questions. You don't have to answer them if they are rude, too personal, or even if you just don't want to.

### DECIDING NOT TO BE OUT

It's ok to decide not to come out or to only come out to some people. This can be a one-time decision (I choose not to tell this person about my family) or a basic principle (I won't tell anyone about my family). There are hundreds of reasons that COLAGERS make the decision to avoid or postpone coming out.

“Not telling” can be really hard. Sometimes we might have to lie, or bend the truth in order to avoid coming out. We might have to pretend we only have one parent, or hide the books and magazines in our house, or avoid inviting our friends over. Just remember, you're not alone. We all, even the “most out” among us, have decided at some point



# ACTION

or another to make choices not to come out. Deciding to not be out does not mean that you do not love your family. Remember that you can always turn to COLAGE for help and advice.

Be open to changing your mind. If you've decided not to tell - that's ok! Maybe you don't have any friends right now who you want to tell, or maybe where you live is not very accepting. But as you get older, or if you end up moving, or making different friends, you might change your mind and that's ok too.

## **SOME OTHER THINGS ABOUT FRIENDS AND TELLING**

It should always be your decision about whether or not to tell. Unfortunately, sometimes someone else decides to tell for us. Maybe the person did not realize it was a secret, or did not know about "homophobia." Or maybe the person was trying to embarrass and hurt you or get attention. Since this sometimes happens, you might want to think ahead of time about what you will do if someone finds out who you did not plan to tell.

What if we tell our friend, and that is ok, but later they tell their parents and the parents have a homophobic reaction? This can be almost as hard as if the friend reacted badly. You might need to be creative to maintain that friendship.

One of the best ways to make friends you know will stick up for you, is for you to stick up for other people. This can be scary to do - but just remember how it feels when you are being teased. Wouldn't it be nice if someone put a stop to it, or said they disagreed? The next time you see someone getting picked on, stand up for them! It will feel good, and eventually someone might return the favor!

## **COMING OUT DAY**

October 11th is National Coming Out Day, an event that encourages members of the LGBT community to start conversations with their friends, family and communities about sexual orientation and gender identity. Thousands of LGBT people, COLAGers and allies have celebrated National Coming Out Day in schools, churches and businesses nationwide through workshops, speak-outs, rallies and other events aimed at showing the public that LGBT people are everywhere.

This year, National Coming Out Day falls on the 20th anniversary of the 1987 Gay and Lesbian March on Washington, and the unfurling of the AIDS Quilt on the National Mall. The very first National Coming Out Day was celebrated a year to the day later as a way of continuing the spirit of openness, honesty and visibility that the March and the AIDS Quilt presentation inspired.

COLAGers also celebrate the Coming Out Day spirit! This might be a day where you decide to tell that friend who you have been wanting to explain your family to. You could wear one of your COLAGE shirts to school or work. Or there might be a Coming Out Day event in your community that you can attend with your family or friends. If you are feeling like you want to do something bigger, plan an event with other youth with LGBT parents or the GSA at your school, write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper talking about your family or use your blog on My Space or Facebook to come out in a public way! COLAGE would love to hear from you what activities you participated in to celebrate- send us your stories and photos of Coming Out Day events! We are also happy to work with you to help plan coming out day activities. Just let us know what you need to make Coming Out Day fabulous!

The website for the Human Rights Campaign ([www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org)) is also a great place to look for Coming Out Day tools and resources.

# IT'S ABOUT THE SASS

Caroline Cox-Orrell

"It's all about the sass!" that's what we—a group of high school COLAGERS heard at the Do Something! Workshop during Provincetown Family Week. Our workshop that day was about radical cheerleading, a new kind of political activism that combines catchy cheers, sassy attitudes, and most importantly, meaningful messages. Instead of cheering for sports teams, radical cheerleaders cheer in protest or in support of ideas and movements. Radical cheerleading began in the mid-1990s, when Aimee and Cara Jennings, sisters from Florida decided to do something about political protests that were boring and often ineffective because of repetitive chants and way-too-serious attitudes. They began brainstorming cheers that would support the protesters, liven up political demonstrations, and reduce tension between protesters and opponents of the demonstrations.

At the Do Something! Workshop at Family Week, we learned about the history of radical cheerleading: who invented radical cheer, where and why it's used. We also learned a few cheers from other squads, stopping after each to discuss the issues that were addressed in the cheers. After learning a cheer protesting the War in Iraq, we discussed the war, the implications of the war in the US and in Iraq, and the concept of self-determination.

After learning a few cheers, we started to think about the cheer we wanted to write, as queerspawn. We talked about the queerspawn community and what we wanted to protest or support in our cheer. A lot of issues came up, one of which was "homonormativity" and the "model queer family," two white women and white, straight kids. This model is used to make queer families more relatable to others, but also leaves behind the many families in our community that aren't homonormative. This concept, along with discrimination against LGBTQ families and people became the issues in our cheer.

As a squad, The Ptown Puritans, we then began to write our cheer. We worked well together: some members finding rhymes and verses, others working out a rhythm for the chant, and still others brainstorming movements and gestures. At the end of our workshop, we had a finished and practiced cheer, all we needed was to add some sass and some attitude. The Ptown Puritans performed our sassy and radical cheer at the Family Week Show and Tell.

*Caroline Cox-Orrell is a 17-year-old social activist and high school student living in Newton, MA with her lesbian mothers. She is the president of her high school's GSA, works on the Board of GLSEN Boston and is currently in search of a rockin' radical cheer squad in Boston.*



## QUEERSPAWN RADICAL CHEER

The nation now is so uptight  
All queerspawn have got to unite  
The G-O-V's got hate and spite  
So us queerspawn gotta shed some light

### CHORUS:

Resist! Resist! The system that we're in  
Picture-perfect families don't let every one in  
X2

Families on TV have a mom and a dad  
My family's different and we sure are rad  
I see you shooting that documentary,  
but that's not everybody's family  
Families of color and KOTs  
Single parents and divorcés  
Second-gen's not what they want to see  
Resist the expectation that they have for me!

### CHORUS

If all our families come together as one  
That's the way it's gonna get done

### CHORUS

If all our families come together as one  
That's the way it's GONNA GET DONE!!

## UPCOMING COLAGE EVENTS

### FAMILIES IN THE DESERT

OCTOBER 5TH-7TH

PALM SPRINGS, CA

A weekend event for LGBT parents with COLAGE programming for youth ages 9 and up.

[www.familypride.org/desert](http://www.familypride.org/desert)

### PFLAG NATIONAL CONVENTION

OCTOBER 11TH-14TH, 2007

WASHINGTON, DC

COLAGE is pleased to present workshop sessions at this national PFLAG event.

[www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

### NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 8TH-10TH

HOUSTON, TX

COLAGE presents a workshop on creating safer schools for students with LGBT parents.

[www.nmsa.org](http://www.nmsa.org)

### COLAGE AT THE RAINBOW FAMILIES OF NEW JERSEY CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 10TH, 2007

MONTCLAIR, NJ

A one-day conference including a COLAGE track for youth ages 9-18.

[www.rainbowfamiliesnj.org](http://www.rainbowfamiliesnj.org)

### FAMILY WEEK JULY 12TH- 19TH, 2008

SAUGATUCK, MI

Co-sponsored with Rainbow Families Great Lakes this annual week provides community, empowerment and celebration for youth with LGBT parents and their families.

[www.rfgl.org](http://www.rfgl.org)

## TRU LOVED: VISIBILITY THROUGH FILM by Morgan Early

“So, your parents are, like, gay?” What a familiar question to anyone with gay parents. We have all had this conversation on myriad occasions, yet this topic can always carry a level of intimidation. It is difficult to predict what the asker’s reaction will be. One of the best things for me growing up was meeting other kids with gay parents who were asked the same questions. Connecting with people who have a shared experience is a fabulous remedy for anything, and fortunately this connection is not limited to daily life: it can also be forged in art.

This past July I had the privilege of working on the independent feature film, “Tru Loved.” I tackled several vocations as the wardrobe assistant/set costumer/behind-the-scenes filmmaker, while also playing a small speaking role as “punk girl.” Not only was this a perfect set-up for an actress looking for an education in the film world, but it was also an opportunity to contribute to telling an important and under-told story. The film is about a sixteen-year-old girl, Tru, who has gay parents. Tru’s family moves to a new town and she goes through the process of making friends, dating a very dreamy guy, and generally navigating high school life. On the set of the film, when people heard about my own gay parents, my home in San Francisco, and my involvement with COLAGE, the response was something like “Oh, like Tru!”

This simple response should not be underestimated: it is a perfect example of the importance of storytelling. Storytelling has been around for centuries for a good reason: it provides societies with identifiable characters whom we relate to. We love to hear about the lovesick Montague or little Olive with a dream of being a beauty queen. These characters allow us to understand points of view we may not have considered, feel less alone in our own experiences, and satisfy our curiosity about how other people live. Film, as well as theatre, intricately explores our relationships, interactions, and our most private thoughts. The audience identifies with characters based on similarities they perceive, however small: “I eat my french fries like that too!” or “My mother would always say that to me when I was 16.” What a fantastic medium, then, to contribute to the visibility of children with LGBT parents everywhere!

Consider my favorite scene in the movie. Tru goes to dinner with her new friend Lodell, and after some light conversation Lodell asks, “So is it true you have, like, two moms?” Any COLAGEr watching will appreciate how familiar this is: the



Morgan Early on the set of Tru Loved.

inevitable explanation about biological conception and living arrangements that feels awkwardly preemptive yet necessary. The scene accurately captures the many feelings involved; the sense of pride but also the slight rush of nervousness (which, by the way, I still feel sometimes at age 22!). It is the first time I have ever seen this situation, so familiar to my own life experience, depicted in a film for others to share and consider.

I feel so lucky to have been a part of the incredibly talented and enthusiastic team that made “Tru Loved.” It seems so fitting that the first feature film I have worked on addresses issues that have always been important to me. I think that after seeing this movie people will be less likely to say, “so...umm...how can your parents be gay?” Instead they will respond with an enthusiastic, “Oh, like Tru!” And that, fellow COLAGErs, is the beauty of storytelling. To learn more about Tru Loved, go to [www.truloved.com](http://www.truloved.com).

*Morgan Early is a recent graduate of UCLA who grew up in the Bay Area with gay dads and a lesbian mom. She helped create the COLAGE That's So Gay art show as a participant in the Youth Leadership and Action Program and also has volunteered at COLAGE events in Los Angeles.*

# COLAGE WISH LIST

Do you have access to any of the following items or services? Be a COLAGE fairy godparent and contact us! If you have any of these items to donate, please contact Jamon Franklin at [jamon@colage.org](mailto:jamon@colage.org) or 415-861-KIDS.

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| A television                 | Color Printer and Ink Cartridges.         |
| Digital Camera               | Air Miles or Plane Tickets                |
| Printing and Design Services | Database (software, systems or expertise) |
| A Couch                      |   |



# Announcing COLAGE's Scholarship Winners!

In 2007 COLAGE was thrilled to partner with the Joseph Towner Fund of the Horizons Foundation to provide undergraduate scholarships for young adults with LGBT parents through the Lee Dubin Memorial Scholarship. This year we received nearly 50 applications from COLAGERS all across the country! Each of our outstanding applicants is doing incredible work to promote equality and justice for children, youth and adults with LGBT parents in very creative ways. Our panel of volunteers chose four deserving winners:



**SARA BERGER** was born and raised in Mandan, North Dakota with two moms, a dad, four siblings, and a bundle of crazy pets. Currently a sophomore at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, Sara plans to double major in Neuroscience and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and is fully committed to continuing the fight for the LGBTQ+ community. She is a

member of the COLAGE Speak OUT program and volunteered with COLAGE during the 2007 Rainbow Families of Minnesota conference. "If it weren't for my unique (and unfortunately, often misunderstood) family, I wouldn't be the open person I am today. I consider myself the luckiest girl in the world for having such a wonderful family, and I am extremely proud of them."



**MARINA GATTO** is a sophomore at UC Berkeley studying Political Science and Ethnic Studies. Her involvement in politics started years and years before even applying to college! Since joining COLAGE at the age of 9, Marina has been a powerful advocate for LGBT families and their children. She has dedicated herself to educating individuals, policy makers, and the media on

the importance of anti-heterosexism and family recognition. She has participated in the COLAGE Bay Area chapter and the COLAGE Speak OUT program for many years and was featured in the In My Shoes documentary and on the COLAGE and Freedom to Marry Radio Tour.

**MARISA MARTINEZ**, originally from Colorado Springs, will begin her freshman year at Western Washington University in Bellingham this fall where she will launch her studies in art, psychology and writing. Marisa lives with her mother but has remained close to her gay father, who has encouraged and



counseled her throughout her life. After enduring serious and repeated harassment at her school, Marisa - with the support of her gay father - demanded justice for herself and others. She confronted her high school principal head-on and was successful in implementing a zero-tolerance policy for harassment as well as insuring that religious proselytizing would be equated with bullying at high schools in the future. Marisa says, "There is far too much criticism and hatred aimed at people of different lifestyles, and I want to help cultivate a world that is not merely tolerant, but actually loving and accepting of all."

**ELIZABETH WALL**, 18, a recent graduate of Lawrence High School is attending The College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio. She's from Lawrenceville, New Jersey, where she lives with her two gay dads and two dogs. As the leader of her high school Gay Straight Alliance and a co-founder of her local New Jersey COLAGE chapter,



Elizabeth has demonstrated an unstoppable commitment to social and political change. In her free time she loves music and hanging out with friends. She is extremely honored to be receiving this scholarship and wants to thank everyone from COLAGE.

# COLAGE NOTES

## STAFF UPDATES

This summer we had a lot of exciting staff changes. First we welcomed three interns to our team:

Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, **Ana Gordon-Loebl** came to San Francisco after finishing her second year at Hampshire College (where she is studying dance and social change). She interned at COLAGE through Hampshire's Reproductive Rights Activist Service Core. Ana enjoyed exploring the Bay Area in search of street art and the perfect SF burrito.

**Ruby Cymrot-Wu** is 22 and has two lesbian moms. Raised in San Francisco, she recently graduated from Smith College, in Massachusetts, and now is back in the Bay Area. She has volunteered with COLAGE for about 6 years and was so excited to finally be a COLAGE intern! She will now be stepping into a new leadership role as the new COLAGE Bay Area Chapter Coordinator.



Ruby Cymrot-Wu & Ana Gordon-Loebl

**Danielle Boudreaux** is 18 years old and is from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She graduated from Baton Rouge Magnet High School this past May and is enrolled at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge as a Pre-Veterinary Medicine major. She has three brothers, a step-sister, and a bisexual mom. In her spare time, Danielle loves to read, listen to music, watch movies, and spend time with family and friends. You can learn more about Danielle from her article about

growing up in the South with a bisexual mom on page 3.



Jack Ryder

We are also thrilled to announce the hiring of **Jack Ryder** as the new COLAGE Development Manager and **Lauren Wheeler** as the Interim Special Projects Coordinator.

Development Manager Jack Ryder was born in New Mexico and raised in Phoenix, Arizona. He majored in Communication at Arizona State University, and worked 8 years in the corporate world as a marketing specialist for the financial services industry. He began working with youth development agencies in Arizona more than 14 years ago, after coming out to parents who were less than supportive. It was then that he became passionate about LGBT civil rights. He has been extremely active ever since - serving on boards, chairing fundraisers, producing events, and building a solid network of relationships with a diverse plethora of organizations.

**Lauren Wheeler** recently joined the COLAGE team as the Interim Special



Lauren Wheeler

Projects Coordinator. Lauren's parents split up when she was a baby, and she was raised by her grandmother and by her mother, who came out as a lesbian when Lauren was five years old. Lauren was raised in Chicago, the Bay Area, and Miami Beach, FL and attended Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. Lauren is a DJ, dancer, and poet, having competed twice at the National Poetry Slam and had her work appear in *Lodestar Quarterly*, *Other Magazine*, and *365 tomorrows*. After spending the last four years as a video game producer, Lauren is excited to move onto greener pastures at COLAGE.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

Thank YOU for your feedback & suggestions and special thanks to the Arcus Foundation!

COLAGE has been making great progress on our strategic planning process which will lay out our organizational priorities for 2008 through 2012. This summer, COLAGE conducted 35 individual interviews, 8 focus groups, 2 community visioning sessions and posted an on-line survey. We are very grateful for and encouraged by all the feedback and suggestions we received from more than 350 members of the COLAGE community—youth, parents, adult COLAGERS, funders, organizational partners, and leaders of the LGBT and broader social justice movement— who participated in this environmental scan. The board and staff look forward to finalizing our strategic plan by the end of 2007 and will publish an executive summary of the plan in Spring 2008.

In addition to our many generous members, donors, and funders, we especially thank the Arcus Foundation for granting \$25,000 to COLAGE so we could dedicate adequate time, expertise and resources to this important organizational reflection, assessment, visioning and planning project.



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☆☆ **Renew Your COLAGE Membership Today!** ☆☆

# Celebrate COLAGE's 17th Anniversary!

**Join the COLAGE Support Our Community Campaign**

**October 1st - 31st**

This year COLAGE turns 17. In honor of this great accomplishment, we are embarking on our most ambitious community fundraising campaign to date.

*Get started at:*

[www.COLAGE.kintera.org/SOC](http://www.COLAGE.kintera.org/SOC)

## **SIGN UP TO BE A CAMPAIGNER!**

Participants will ask at least 17 friends to contribute at least \$17 to support the fabulous efforts of COLAGE.

- *Learn valuable fundraising skills*
- *Raise money in support of COLAGE*
- *Celebrate National Coming Out Day and Halloween*
- *Celebrate and advocate for yourself, your family and your community.*

To learn more contact Jack Ryder,  
COLAGE Development Manager  
[jack@colage.org](mailto:jack@colage.org) 415-861-5437 x105