

A NEW AGE OF

BY MICHAEL ANTHONY

ACTIVISM

L.A.'S LGBT SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS ARE WORKING TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Project Angel Food

Physical sustenance is just as vital as emotional support, and Project Angel Food delivers both of these to men, women and children affected by HIV/AIDS, cancer and other life-threatening illnesses. A dedicated network of volunteers delivers nutritious meals “prepared with love” and made with fresh ingredients by professional chefs with the assistance of registered dietitians. Each volunteer delivers 5-10 meals in their own car to assigned home addresses—the goal is not only to deliver a much-needed meal, but also to deliver compassion and help reduce the terrible isolation that many people living with HIV/AIDS often experience. Since the group’s launch in 1989, this program has packaged and delivered more than seven million meals. Anyone is welcome to participate—just once or on a regular basis.

angelfood.org

Trevor Project

A lifeline was born with this organization, to promote acceptance of LGBTQ youth and to aid in crisis and suicide prevention among that group with nationwide, 24/7 crisis intervention. Today, in addition to operating the suicide prevention hotline, Trevor Project provides online support to young people through the organization’s website, as well as lifesaving guidance and vital resources for educators and parents. In Los Angeles, the organization’s life-saving work is supported by members of a diverse network of socially conscious, up-and-coming young leaders called Trevor NextGen that continue to inspire the L.A. community. The Project’s Summer Evening Soirée is coming up on July 30; visit the website or join Trevor NextGen L.A. on Facebook to get involved.

thetrevorproject.org

AIDS Project Los Angeles

AIDS Project Los Angeles is a group focused on combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic in L.A. It is dedicated to improving the lives of people affected by the disease, as well as reducing the incidence of new HIV infections. Moreover, the group pushes for equal representation in public policy for this often underrepresented group. APLA offers much-needed services to its clients—such as one-on-one career counseling and job placement and benefits experts who provide individualized support on health programs and insurance options that the public may not be aware of—and guidance to those most in need in their time of need.

apla.org

California Men’s Gathering

From personal growth workshops to pool parties and theater outings, this group celebrates the male persona without putting its members in a gender box. It’s a place where men who may have not experienced male bonding growing up—perhaps due to small town homophobia or family alienation—can meet and connect with other men on a level deeper than what the bar/club scene offers. Through seasonal extended weekend retreats, men can explore different ways of looking at life and expand concepts of self while having a lot of fun at the same time. Group members—literally in the thousands—come from all over the state of California, but the group regularly gets interstate and international visitors. CMG is primarily made up of gay and bisexual men, but any male over 18 is welcome.

thecmg.org

Gay Elder Circle

Gay liberation pioneer and Jungian psychologist Dr. Don Kilhefner, President of the Gay Elder Circle, explains about this new group: “The Circle was organized to allow older gay men, many of whom have been active in creating and sustaining the gay community during the past 40 years, to continue contributing, but now as aware elders. It is based on the traditional understanding that life is divided into four stages—youth, adult, elder, ancestor—each with its own roles and responsibilities.” Events include regular conferences and symposia, weekend and one-day retreats, as well as the formation of ongoing special interest and support groups that identify and honor those doing altruistic work out in the LGBTQ community. A special kick-off event titled “The Gay Elder: Archetype of the Spiritual Father” will be held on July 31 from 1-4 p.m. at Fiesta Hall in WeHo’s Plummer Park.

gayeldercircle.org



Marriage equality, gender bias, gay teen suicide. Today, it is more vital than ever that we speak up and speak out for change—in our community, in our city, in our country. While simply “being out” is a great first step in putting a face on the gay community, many grassroots organizations are taking LGBTQ altruism to the next level. Cities around the United States are booming with gay activist outlets, and Los Angeles is no exception. Whether they be seasoned or evolving, we celebrate just a few of these SoCal organizations for the work they do.

LifeWorks

LifeWorks at the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center is the premier mentoring program in the city of Los Angeles. Both one-on-one and group mentoring opportunities are available for those looking to provide guidance for LGBTQ youth aged 12-24. LifeWorks’ primary goal: “To help LGBTQ youth to realize their goals and dreams with a safe space, positive and affirming role models, and workshops and activities that are fun and educational.” Emphasis is placed on education, self-respect and the importance of a positive role model.

lifeworksla.org

100 Gay Men

100 Gay Men is an ever-growing volunteer group in Los Angeles that aims “to harness the unique talents, resources and energies of adult gay men for the betterment and continuing evolution of our diverse LGBT communities.” Guided by the wisdom and experience of the Gay Elders Council, they work in a grassroots manner via various projects to support gay youth—which they firmly believe are the future leaders of our community. They also pride themselves on the unique gifts of their members of all ages; early this year, they were instrumental supporters of the LGBTQ-enthused *Rise Up & Shout* show for artistic teens and aspiring artists.

100gaymen.com



The Wall Las Memorias

PFLAG

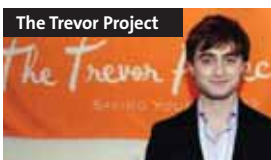
An all-volunteer organization, the mission of the group is to further acceptance in both their immediate families and the community at large for parents and friends of lesbians and gays. Most of its members have a direct connection to someone who identifies as gay—a son or daughter, a parent or sibling, a best friend or even a parent. Los Angeles, along with its sister chapter in New York City, founded the PFLAG organization and now provides advisement and assistance to more than 500 independent chapters nationwide.

pflagla.org

Los Angeles Service Club

“You only get what you give back” is the motto that Los Angeles Service Club members live by. It aims to bring together like-minded people who dedicate themselves to raising money, awareness and support for various causes throughout the greater L.A. area. The group meets monthly; and in the past they have done everything from helping to build a room for a sober house to organizing a bowl-a-thon to raise money for homeless teens or even participating in a day of games on the beach to help a camp for kids living with HIV and AIDS. This year, they will be instrumental in publicizing and promoting the infamous Halloween party, raising money for the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center.

thelosangelesserviceclub.org



The Trevor Project

Gay For Good

Gay for Good is exactly that—gays that do good by volunteering their time to various social welfare and environmental service projects. The group consistently chooses worthy local causes, and its members work towards its success; although they do fundraise, they pride themselves on their ability to contribute their time, energy and passion to various causes. The organizations that Gay For Good pair with are not always ones that are traditionally associated with the LGBTQ community—this group’s goal is to make L.A. a better and safer place for all individuals.

gayforgood.org

In The Meantime Men

In The Meantime is more than an activist organization; it is a community—a safe space where African-American gay men come to celebrate and heal. Simply, they pride themselves on “creating unity and affirming our common bond.” The group boasts dozens of unique and effective programs to inspire and liberate its members. Mylife engages, educates and empowers black same-gender-loving and bisexual men in an effort to reduce sexual risk behavior and the spread of HIV/AIDS among black men ages 18-29; Brothers Reaching Brothers Social Discussion Group is a weekly forum for the discussion of zeitgeist issues affecting its members; Kick Back is a “drop-in space” for young black SGL and bisexual men to discuss any and all issues in a safe environment—just to name a few.

itmm.mylifemystyle.net

Project Angel Food



The Wall Las Memorias

Founded on World AIDS Day in 1993, the project works to honor or those who have died of AIDS and to end the cultural silence, shame and stigma around the disease while inspiring its members to enact social and artistic change as the AIDS Monument did nearly two decades ago. The project flourished, organizing the local Latino community—including seniors, high school students, clergy, elected officials, business and labor unions. On Dec. 1, 2004, the nation’s only publicly funded AIDS monument was dedicated in front of 1,500 people. In the last 17 years, the group has engineered new programs aimed to educate and prevent the spread of the disease amongst both Latinos and the L.A. community at large.

thewallslasmemorias.org

API Equality

API Equality-L.A. was founded in 2005 and has since been the leading voice for the gay and lesbian Asian and Pacific Islander communities of Los Angeles. A mix of veteran activists and those new to the realm of social change, the group truly encompasses all colors of the rainbow, as diverse as the Asian American community itself. During election season, API reaches out to the community and has one-on-one conversations with thousands of people to encourage debate and conversation about such topics as marriage equality “to create a society that celebrates the loves and lives of all people—free from discrimination and injustice.”

apiequality.org