

ORLANDO YOUTH ALLIANCE

**OYA!**

**ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2017**



#LOVEISLOVE #ORLANDOSTRONG #ONEPULSE



WE ARE ORLANDO

## President's Message



2017 continued to be a year of resolve. As our community continued to heal from the Pulse tragedy, we persevered in the face of adversity and uncertainty. We continued to make our voices be heard as our nation took steps backwards from supporting our transgender youth, servicemembers, and brothers and sisters. And we supported other communities as they healed from their own tragedies.

And in the face of these national and local heartbreaks, OYA continues to provide the resources and support for our Central Florida LGBTQ+ youth to thrive. We facilitated over 125 support group meetings throughout the year; hosted 24 Friday night drop-ins to provide a safe and social setting for youth to gather; supported 12 engaging events for our youth to celebrate themselves; provided grants to fund the creation and ongoing missions of six GSAs throughout greater Orlando; and provided six scholarships to LGBTQ+ youth to support their academic pursuits.

On behalf of our Board, volunteers, and over 100 Central Florida youth with whom we have the privilege of working, thank you for your continued support as we pursue our mission to facilitate in the development of LGBTQ+ youth and provide a safe space for them to find the support they need to thrive.

With thanks,

**Daniel Niccum — President**

**Michael Slaymaker — Chief Executive Officer**

## Mission

The mission of the Orlando Youth Alliance and its chapters is to provide a safe space for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth in Central Florida.

### Basic Overview of OYA

The Orlando Youth Alliance has offered a weekly peer-to-peer support group for LGBTQ youth in Central Florida since 1990. Today, three weekly groups are offered: Orlando, Lakeland and Longwood. Monthly social, educational and recreational activities occur to further help our youth to develop a core group of friends and peer supporters. In addition to the support group and activities, OYA provides LGBT History & Culture classes, scholarships, career exploration and mental health referrals. Numerous professionals have spoken to our youth about their careers and the options that await them. Developing this nucleus of friends is the key to never feeling alone. Since LGBTQ youth are three times more likely to commit suicide than their heterosexual classmates, it is vital that we provide the services of OYA to our area youth.

#### The impact of OYA:

Over the past 27 years we have helped 1,600 youth and not a single one has committed suicide.

## Contact Us

### We look forward to hearing from you!

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Voicemail: 407-244-1222  
info@orlandoyouthalliance.org

[www.orlandoyouthalliance.org](http://www.orlandoyouthalliance.org)  
[www.seminoleyouthalliance.org](http://www.seminoleyouthalliance.org)  
[www.lakelandyouthalliance.org](http://www.lakelandyouthalliance.org)

## Board of Directors

### President

Daniel Niccum

### Secretary

Dustin Baetz

### Treasurer

Wesley Howell, CPA

### Chief Executive Officer

Michael Slaymaker, MHR

### Board Members

Patrick Howell, Esquire  
Jeff Speicher, DVM  
Ginger Malcom  
Dr. Bahiyyah Maroon  
Russ Kasim  
Carole Conroy

### Youth Ambassador Board Members

Cody Kennedy  
Emily Mound  
Samantha Fuentes



## Babes in Bonnets

Carmella Marcella Garcia's Babes in Bonnets 2017 was the most successful yet, raising more than \$25,000 to support the Orlando Youth Alliance. Parliament House and returning emcees Miss Darcel Stevens and Blue Star returned to host an auction for extravagant bonnets and exciting prizes donated by our friends in the community. OYA youth once again created and modeled their own bonnet, joined by some of Florida's most fabulous drag performers. Thank you to the Parliament House and all who attended and supported the event!



## Come Out with Pride

Orlando Youth Alliance volunteers, board members, and youth attended the event. Many of the youth in OYA took part in walking in the parade and also helped table at Pride speaking to other youths about our organization and how they can get involved. We all had a wonderful time at Pride and many of the youth who attended it was their first time.



## \$14,000 Awarded in Scholarships

The Orlando Youth Alliance awarded six scholarships to area youth. Recipients of the scholarships were:

**Emily Mound** (Seminole State College)

**Samantha Fuentes** (University of Central Florida)

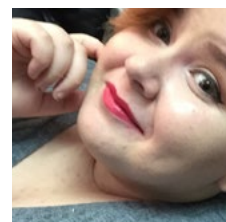
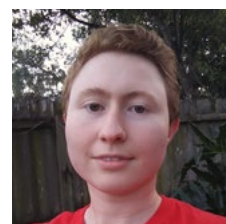
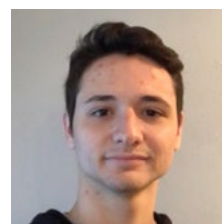
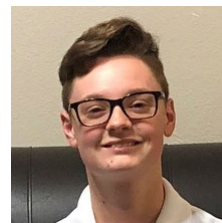
**Cody Kennedy** (University of Central Florida)

**Allen Barrett** (University of Central Florida)

**Thomas Williams** (University of Central Florida)

**Maggie Tracy** (Seminole State College)

The OYA Scholarship Program is grateful to **Bill Neighbors** and **Tim Warzecha**, the **Walt Disney Company Foundation**, **COME OUT WITH PRIDE** and the *Better Together Fund* at the **Central Florida Foundation** for their gifts to help fund a major portion of the program. Over \$14,000 was awarded. OYA has been providing financial assistance for education to its members since 2009.



## GSA Grants

The Orlando Youth Alliance in partnership with GLSEN (the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network) awarded \$500 grants to area Gay Straight Alliance clubs at area high schools. Here are the schools who received grants:

Leesburg High School

Lakeland High School

Titusville High School

Cypress Creek High School

Colonial High School

Lake Nona High School

## GINGER MALCOM'S GSA GRANTS



The idea for these mini-grants came from our board member, Ginger Malcom. Ginger lost her battle with diabetes in December 2017. In her memory, the OYA Board has officially named the program – the Ginger Malcom GSA Grant Program.

## Delegation from China

Members of OYA met with a delegation from China visiting the U.S. through the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. Included in the six person delegation were Mr. Chengjiang Ye, executive Director of the Zhitong LGBT Center, and Mrs. Ying Zhou, Brand Promotion Manager for PFLAG China. Topics of discussion included fundraising, organizational logistics, cultural and governmental differences and similarities between our two countries, and the particular challenges involved in assisting LGBT youth.



## Habitat for Humanity

In November, youth members helped build a house for Habitat for Humanity.





## Social & Recreational Activities

### Waterskiing

In August, 17 youth had a fun-filled day at Buena Vista Watersports, including jet skis, paddleboards, and water skiing!



### Holiday Party

In December, 15 youth joined OYA for our annual holiday celebration, including cookie decorating, making gingerbread houses, and enjoying holiday movies together.



### Halloween Party

In October, 21 youth joined OYA for our annual Halloween party, including pumpkin decorating, cookie decorating, and a costume contest! Our spirited youth arrived in everything from coordinated costumes to one-of-a-kind makeup creations!



### Bowling

In October, 12 youth joined us for a Sunday Funday of Bowling and lunch in Altamonte Springs!

### Cocoa Beach

In July, 11 youth joined us for a Cocoa Beach day, including badminton, volleyball, and lunch! Our youth were proud to be themselves and enjoy some fun in the sun!



### ...and Wekiva Springs!

## Ginger Malcom

The OYA family was saddened at the passing of our long-time friend and Board Member, Ginger Malcom. A self-proclaimed "professional volunteer", supporting LGBTQ+ youth was her passion, working with not only OYA but several organizations throughout Central Florida as a prodigious advocate for LGBTQ+ rights. Ginger's bright smile and can-do attitude will surely be missed.



## Prime Timers

On February 25, Orlando Youth Alliance, CEO, Michael Slaymaker, spoke to the Prime Timers of Central Florida. Michael noted that a couple of members had left OYA in their will or trust. He encouraged all of them to remember the youth of OYA. After the presentation, Vice President Jerry Danese and President Ken Barnard presented OYA with a \$300 donation. Thank you, Prime Timers, for your support of our youth!



## Special Presenter: Commissioner Patty Sheehan

Commissioner Patty Sheehan came to speak with OYA about public service and local issues regarding a variety of topics. The Commissioner also answered questions from youth about her time in public office. We talked in depth about equality and how our community has improved over the years. Overall the youth enjoyed talking to her and were very appreciative of her taking the time to speak with them.





## Lakeland Youth Alliance

The Lakeland Youth Alliance once again participated in the Christmas Parade, giving the LGBTQ group great visibility. In addition to the support groups, LYA participated in the Orlando Youth Alliance Family Reunion at Walt Disney World. Discover more at [www.lakelandyouthalliance.org](http://www.lakelandyouthalliance.org)

## Polk Pride

A year ago, Polk County Commissioners declined to consider a proclamation recognizing Polk Pride week in June. In 2017, the county changed course and acknowledged LGBTQ Pride Week at the county administration meeting. Kerri McCoy, president of Polk Pride, worked with Commissioner Todd Dantzler to make the proclamation a reality. The photo below is of Lakeland Youth Alliance youth members, Polk Pride and PFLAG volunteer holding the Proclamation.

Polk Pride is a collaboration of Lakeland Youth Alliance and PFLAG of Polk County. Polk Pride week ran from June 14-18. It was the biggest LGBTQ festival in Polk County on record.





## Hooray for Volunteers!

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization. Each year we roll the marketing suitcase from county to county to staff the "marketing booth". Thank you to all the volunteers and youth who helped spread the word of our wonderful organization.





## OYA Family Reunion

Special thank you to Walt Disney World and Disney PRIDE for their generous gift to make the Orlando Youth Alliance Annual Family Reunion a fun and meaningful day for the LGBTQ youth of Central Florida.



**THANK YOU!**  
**WALT DISNEY WORLD**



## OYA 2017 Donor Listing

### Over \$5,000

Central Florida Foundation -  
Better Together Fund  
Orlando Dental Group  
Walt Disney World

### \$2,500 - \$4,999

Don Granatstein & Susan Unger  
Jason Lambert  
Modern Woodmen  
Sandy Neubarth  
Daniel Niccum  
The Hammered Lamb  
The Walt Disney Company Foundation  
Tim Warzezcha & Bill Neighbors  
Steve Watkins

### \$1,000 - \$2,499

Dustin Baetz  
COME OUT WITH PRIDE  
Mendi Cowles  
Jorge Cruz & Maggie Kennedy  
(JCruzStyle )  
Dr. Dan Giaquinto & House of Health  
RANGER'S PET OUTPOST  
AND RETREAT®  
Darcel Stevens  
Reeves United Methodist Church  
Deborah J. Rives  
John Ruffier  
Frank Santos & Dan Dantin  
Brian Schlosser  
Michael Slaymaker & George Bridges  
Southern Nights  
Baby Blue Starr  
Stonewall Bar Orlando

The Parliament House  
Watermark Media  
Paula Yoo

### \$500 - \$999

101.9 AMP Radio  
Jim Bowden  
Amy & Darrell (Chip) Cantley  
Disney EARS to You  
Embellish FX  
Tim Gough  
Shannon Harper  
Hyatt Regency Orlando  
Maggie Kennedy  
Harriett Lake Family Trust  
Billy Manes  
Jason Marks  
Matt McKnight  
Renaissance Hotel at SeaWorld  
Daniel Rencher  
SeaWorld  
Jacqueline Siegel  
Sam Singhaus  
Jeff Speicher  
Tim Evanicki Productions  
Universal Orlando Resort  
Ben Johansen & Tim Vargas  
Marv Villiard

### \$250 - \$499

Russell Allen  
Robert Carney (Paint Mix Art Studio)  
Gary Lambert Salon  
John Gianitsis  
Hamburger Mary's Jacksonville/Daytona

Hamburger Mary's Orlando  
Michael Hollman  
Tiffany Hsieh  
Ginger Malcom  
Mark S. McLaughlin  
Network for Good  
Orange County Government  
Orlando Gay Chorus  
Outback Steakhouse OIA  
Prime Timers of Central Florida  
SAVOY Orlando  
Ron Schorsch & Bernd Hilbert  
Edd Sinnett  
Wilfred Souchereau & Patrick Caraher  
The Orlando Fringe Festival  
The Venue

### \$100 - \$249

Gary Ashland  
Kimberly Besuden  
Jim Brower  
Cardinal Casket Company  
Chad Brown Counseling & Consulting  
David Clarkson & Bruce Jensen  
David Dean & Tison Pugh  
Sam Ewing  
Florida Art Therapy Association  
Kelly Greenwood & Wiebe Middendorp  
Jeff Henderson  
Jeff Horn  
Ted and Dan Jones  
Gary Lambert & Shawn Hunt  
Longwood Hills Congregational Church  
Del Marcel



Rafael Pinero  
Mark S. Powers  
Walter Presha  
Nikki Price  
Don Price  
Skip Stewart & Kevin Kelly  
Axavier Strick  
Max Watzman, D.O.  
Scott Will  
Daphina Williams  
Phillip & Judy Wood  
Bill Woods  
Richard Zajac

### Up to \$99

Robert Adams  
Darryl Barnes  
Matthew Beardman  
Jeff & Bryan Bevins-Spitler  
Janet Brashear  
Michael Burlow  
Marcus Calvin  
John Capó  
Mitchell Colson  
Carole Conroy  
Eddie Cooper  
Kirk DaVinci  
Andrew Davis  
Tony Edge  
Madison Geisler  
Wendy Hewitt

Patricia Hickman Hoare  
Nicole Higgins  
Hippie University  
Scott Holland  
Reginald Hovis  
Patrick Howell  
iHeart Media  
Tanisha Iman  
Jess Iwans  
Pamela Jette  
Talise Johnson  
Amanda Kenner  
Peach Layvett  
Glorimar Lugo  
Marriott  
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Edward McNeely  
Josh Meitin  
Leonel Melendez  
Makayla Michaels  
David Morton  
John Munera  
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Maria Ruiz  
Thommy Sandvick  
Dorae Saunders  
Amberly Scott  
James G. Shepp  
Drew Sizemore  
Randy Slade  
Kelly Stewart  
Sybil Storm  
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Target Corporation  
Addison Taylor  
James Thompson  
Alexia Valentino  
Kenneth Vinal  
Christi Wallace-Clarke  
Eric Wright  
Bill Yahner & Sammy Goldstein



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ORLANDO YOUTH ALLIANCE



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