



Spring 2020 Newsletter



A message from the GMF President

John Ellis

We are pleased to report that the year end fundraising and our annual "Celebration" fund raiser in Fort Lauderdale were very successful. As a result, our financial position exceeds that of last year although the market correction due to the corona virus will affect that. As we plan for the annual allocation for the grant and scholarship awards, it seems reasonable we will be able to match last years amount of almost \$250,000. We want to thank all who made donations and also thank those who attended "Celebration 20" in Florida. Without your support we would not be able to make these awards.

In July of this year we will be holding our annual summer meeting in Burlington Vermont. Not only is this location a great place to visit, but we also have grantees nearby what will enable members to visit and see first hand how some of the grant funds are used. We encourage our donors and friends to attend and learn about the Foundation plans going forward. Additional detail are in a following article below.

One of our goals this year is to implement our regional director plan. Unfortunately it has been slower than we hoped as some issues have made accessing and updating our NEON data base system difficult, but these issues are being resolved and we are working on the plan.

Finally, I expect you all know that Cliff Pettit has been in Houston for treatment. He is now back home recuperating. I know I speak for the Foundation in wishing Cliff our best for a healthy and positive ongoing future.

OVER VIEW OF GMF FINANCES

Ken Thomson, Treasurer



Aside from a small amount of cash deposited with Bank of America, the bulk of the Foundation's net worth is invested in a portfolio of mutual funds, exchange-traded funds ("ETFs"), and cash with Charles Schwab & Co. Our Investment Policy Statement ("IPS") does not permit us to own any individual stocks or bonds.

The income from our investment portfolio averages hundred of thousands dollars each year. Our operating costs are so low, that a small portion of this income pays 100% of the Foundation's overhead expenses. Part of it goes to the grants and scholarships that we award each year. And part of the annual income gets invested in the portfolio. As the portfolio grows, so does our ability to increase grant and scholarship funding year after year.

Bequests and other large gifts become part of our investment portfolio, further ensuring the future growth of the Gamma Mu Foundation.

100% of ordinary contributions, from donors like you and me, goes right out to current grant and scholarship awards. The IRS requires that the Foundation give away at least 5% of our net worth each year. Right now, that's about \$150,000 to \$200,000. per year.

Daily market swings in excess of 10% are unprecedented, but we have over \$400,000 in cash on hand. We can afford about two years' worth of grant and scholarship awards plus overhead, before we would need to liquidate any of our investment holdings. By keeping our investments intact, while continuing to do the good work of the Foundation, we are positioned to rebound when the COVID-19 pandemic subsides and markets recover.



NEW BOARD MEMBER

Mark Hendon

Mark and his partner of 38 years, Dr. Douglas Cheatham, reside in Dallas Texas. Mark in his 38 career has moved across the country 8 times. He has been with the same company since graduating from College and has guided his company through 5 mergers, with the latest being Sprint and T-Mobile.

Along with his support of the Gamma Mu Foundation, Mark has been involved for 13 years with fundraising for AIDS Services of Dallas through organizing his team and opening his home to the annual NO-TIE event.

He is interested in taking a long-term view with the Gamma Mu Foundation: for grant making and community engagement strategy as well as investments and financial stewardship. He seeks to anticipate what might be different one, five, 10 or even 20+ years from now. He foresees that LGBTQ+ community needs will evolve. He asks "Will a boom in the LGBTQ+ aging population mean a future strain on our community and prompt a refocus for the Foundation?"

These are some of the priorities that he will work with the Board and focus on for the next five years.



"Celebration 20"

"CELEBRATION 20" was very successful with 140 donors and friends attending at the new venue in Wilton Manors. There were close to 50 out-of-town guests, all of whom were invited to a Saturday evening event at John Ellis's home. Many thanks to John for hosting this event as well as his help in planning for the entire weekend. The weekend included a tour of a local Packard car museum. The Sunday event was held in a new location utilizing both indoor and outdoor areas. This year the weather cooperated. The event netted close to \$41,000 for the foundation. **Thank you to all donors and attendees!**



YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK!

GOOGLE FINALLY PULLS 'EX-GAY THERAPY' APP AFTER NATIONAL OUTCRY FORCES THEIR HAND

BY ALEX BOLLINGER
LGBTQ NATION

Google has removed a conversion therapy app from the Play Store after pressure was put on them by HRC. The app has links to articles that said they would help queer youth change their sexual orientations, including one listed under "Youth/Young Adults" with the title "Keys to Recovery from Same-Sex Attractions"

The organization ***TRUTH WINS OUT*** tried to get Google to remove the app for months after flagging it for Apple, Google, and Amazon. Both Apple and Amazon swiftly removed it, but Google refused to engage with activists or even the multiple politicians and celebrities call on them to take action.

"We are delighted that Google finally backed down and deleted a dangerous app that targeted LGBTQ youth with toxic messages of guilt and shame," said ***TRUTH WINS OUT*** Executive Director Wayne Besen.

The Gamma Mu Foundation has supported ***TRUTH WINS OUT*** with a grant to support the important work they do of monitoring anti-LGBTQ organizations and documents their lies and exposes wrongdoing. They specialize in turning information into action by organizing, advocating and fighting for truth, integrity, and equality for sexual minorities.

Plan to join Donors and Friends at the Gamma Mu Foundation Annual Summer Meeting in Burlington Vermont

The Annual Summer Meeting of the Gamma Mu Foundation will be held ***July 11-12, 2020*** in beautiful Burlington Vermont. All donors and friends of the

Foundation are welcome to attend. Detailed information will be sent at a later date.



GRANT RECIPIENT

Four Corners Rainbow Youth Center Durango Colorado



The 4 Corners Rainbow Youth Center's mission is to offer a safe, non-judgmental, and visible space for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning youth, families and allies in their community.

The centers interim report to the Gamma Mu Foundation

"This had been a great school year so far. We are proud to say that support from the Gamma Mu Foundation has enabled the 4 Corners Rainbow Youth Center to continue current programming, and it has allowed us to expand operations to support LGBTQIA+ youth in Durango and surrounding areas. We have already exceeded our goal of increasing attendance by 20% for the school year. We successfully continued drop-in center on Mondays. We successfully implemented a second drop-in center. We successfully continued our "Tea Time" groups once per week. We added two new school-based LGBTQIA+ clubs. We completed one queer sexual education series. We completed 10 hours of community training, which included *expanding* outside of Durango to other rural Colorado towns."



Shopping on AMAZON Smile does make a difference.

Amazon has donated \$169,850,767. to charities registered on AMAZON Smile. *The Gamma Mu Foundation* has received \$993.51 from AMAZON for donors and friends buying through AMAZON Smile, so please remember to shop through AMAZON Prime and choosing *The Gamma Mu Foundation* as your favorite charity.

Federal Court Settlement Ends South Carolina Ban On Talking About LGBTQ People In Schools

By Alex Bollinger March 2020

The state's law only allowed schools to talk about LGBTQ people in the context of diseases. A 1988 law in South Carolina bans schools from discussing "alternative sexual lifestyles from heterosexual relationships, specifically "homosexual relationships." The law allows for LGBTQ people to be discussed "in the context of instruction concerning sexually transmitted diseases," presumably to reinforce the association of LGBTQ people and disease.

A coalition of LGBTQ organizations filed a lawsuit this past February to

get the state to stop enforcing the law. "The state law sends a message to students the "homosexual relationships are so shameful or dangerous that they can only be discussed in a negative context," said Julie Wilensky of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, one of the organizations that sued South Carolina.

The Gamma Mu Foundation supports a number of organizations that provide Public Education through community conferences to educate students, educators, family and providers that cover a range of topics relevant to LGBTQ young people and professionals who work with them.



Recipient of the Phillip Papel Memorial Scholarship

Laura Ackerman attending Harvard University and Texas Tech to pursue a MA of Business Management: Data Science

"Before I managed to free myself from human trafficking, I was the "black sheep" in my family. I was picked on relentlessly and, at times, even tortured for being a good person. Beyond this, I was also picked on for physical and mental symptoms of the illnesses and disabilities that I had then and continue to face. As a result, I want no other human being to have to go through what I went through. I want to stand beside those who are currently suffering with disabilities - not so that I can be a voice in place of theirs, but so that I can make their voices louder. In addition to being discriminated against due to my disabilities I was also tortured and abused for being trans. I have learned that being trans is something that deserves to be celebrated and shouted from the rooftops, not punished and degraded as I once was. Lastly, I have been discriminated against heavily due to being from a southern, rural part of the country and having a southern accent. I am currently working on owning my voice and using it to confront stereotypes and to shatter barriers."

"At Harvard, I am studying for a Master's in Management as well as a Master's degree in Data Science. I hope to use my degree to gain greater fundraising resources for LGBT populations and human trafficking survivors, particularly those with disabilities. In addition to my business work, I am also working on a series of nonfiction books to share my story of abuse, human trafficking, and the resultant disabilities both mental and physical that I have overcome - and the ones that I am still overcoming. I hope to aid others in their recovery through my honesty, bravery, and vulnerability. Through honesty and community, I hope to foster a greater respect for the greatness in each of us, and to foster a world in which everyone is not just respected, but celebrated and honored for their unique differences."



GuideStar awards The Gamma Mu Foundation it's highest rating!

GuideStar, the largest non-profit rating organization, has awarded the Gamma Mu Foundation it's highest rating for transparency.

How does this help the Foundation?

- Demonstrates that we are an organization that is focused on measuring our progress and results.
- Gives potential funders information they crave, so it's good for fundraising.
- Shows our improvement and results year over year.
- Provides a concrete alternative to donors evaluating us using our overhead ratio.



Join the great group of donors who volunteer time to the operations of the Gamma Mu Foundation.

The Foundation welcomes anyone who wishes to participate in the operations of our great organization. Many donors and friends of the Foundation have expertise that could be a benefit to the Foundation. As we set up our Regional Directors, please do not hesitate to contact your local Director or any member of the Board of Directors for information on how you can volunteer and contribute your time and knowledge. **Anyone interested in becoming an evaluator for either Grants or Scholarships, please contact Doug Morton (denverdoug@aol.com) for Scholarships or Peter Harvey (pharvey@sbcglobal.net) for Grants.**

PLEASE USE THE WEBSITE TO MAKE DONATIONS

Our **Foundation** is receiving an unprecedented number of requests for Grants and Scholarships and we are only able to fund a small fraction of our requests.

Please consider making an **"Extra"** donation during these uncertain times so that the **Foundation** can fulfill more requests.

The **Foundation** is an **all volunteer** organization and every dollar that you donate is awarded to current Grants or Scholarships.

PLEASE BE CAREFUL AND STAY HEALTHY

[Visit our website](#)

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE A CHANGE IN YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION OR A CHANGE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD

