As we head into summer, we welcome the start of returning to more normal life after COVID-19 is getting under control.

Last December, it was suggested the Foundation embark on a "Virtual Celebration 21" in lieu of having to cancel our annual Ft. Lauderdale winter event. It was also decided to move the Virtual event to a spring date.

We scheduled four days of Zoom calls in different time zones. Local hosts opened the calls and then grantee and scholarship recipients were featured to explain how their awards helped their organization and how the scholarships helped. Our main goal was to have members see and visit friends virtually that they haven't seen during the pandemic as well as learn how the Foundation impacts the recipients of our Grants and Scholarships.

Cliff Pettit joined every call and took the opportunity to tell everyone what will happen with Gamma Mu Social as we move beyond the restrictions of the past year.

The calls were not billed as "fundraising" but the donations were never the less far and above what anyone expected. The results of this campaign were donations of $172,000, an amount only exceeded by the 50/50/50 event in Washington for the 50th anniversary of Gamma Mu. As a result the Foundation will substantially increase the awards being finalized at this time.

On behalf of the Board, I want to thank our local hosts, all the members who joined the calls, and of course all who donated during this drive.

The success of this event was largely because of three members: Bobby Meehan who designed the graphics, web site design, and
"managed" the events, David Andrews who took the Foundation social media exposure to a new level, and John Block who managed all of the Public Relations and communications to the members.

Future Foundation events will include our July summer meeting in Burlington Vermont and the fall meeting at the Ashville fly in.

As always, we appreciate and rely on your ongoing support in these difficult times for non-profits, your donations are critical for the Foundation going forward.

Please enjoy your summer and be safe and healthy.

2020-2021 Scholarships

This year the Gamma Mu Foundation received 202 qualifying applications for scholarships.

The applications are in the review process at this time and the scholarship winners will be notified shortly.

The following are excerpts from some of the reviewed applications that highlight the students and the review process for these scholarships.

From an applicant in rural New Hampshire:

Please describe your financial situation in relation to obtaining your education

"Due to the pandemic, my financial situation has destabilized, which is partly why I am applying for this scholarship. My father was the breadwinner of our household and lost his job in October due to the pandemic. His industry was hit hard by COVID-19, and so even after applying to several companies every week, there have been no responses. On top of this, I took a gap year between my sophomore and junior year as I have an immunocompromised member of my household and feared exposing them to the virus. Due to this, my $550 per month student loan payments will be starting this October, which I will have to factor into my budget for the next two years of college. Returning to my rural hometown, I had also returned to discrimination I had believed would remain in a previous chapter of my life. This scholarship had reminded me how my experience is not solitary, many gay men experience this if they grow up in a rural area."

From an applicant in rural Ohio:

Please describe any LGBT clubs or organizations you have belonged to and any personal positions of leadership you have had.

"As an alumni of Jackson High School located in Southeastern Ohio, I did not have a Gay Straight Alliance. In fact, there were no GSA's in my area. In the fall of 2018 as I began my collegiate journey, I helped my former rural high
school launch its Gay-Straight Alliance. The following year, I also organized and executed a fundraiser to create a safe-place in my former high school's library. Because I know the importance of visibility, I also spoke with my former high school's Gay Straight Alliance and I serve on an alumni panel. Additionally, I am a member of HeForShe at Columbia University. I also served as the Co-Chair of Diversity in Inclusion for University Life at Columbia in 2018-19. I am currently the Chair of membership for University Life. Sharing my experiences as a gay young man hailing from rural Appalachia with such organizations as IBelieve and my local GSA has allowed me to pay it forward, so-to-speak.”

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**A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GAMMA MU FOUNDATION**

*Martin Culbreth*

**Gamma Mu Foundation Board Member**

The concept of a Foundation with the purpose of pooling the charitable donations of Gamma Mu Fraternity members was born in 1987 and Gamma Mu Foundation was incorporated in 1988 as a Florida not-for-profit Corporation. Federal IRS 501c3 status followed in 1989. Thirteen Gamma Mu members comprised the Foundation’s incorporators and served as the initial Board of Directors. They represented the geographical diversity still present in today’s Board. They also represented professional diversity as attorneys, CPAs, realtors, businessmen, doctors, and corporate executives. Then and now, the Foundation is all volunteer and members, directors, and officers are precluded by the by laws from receiving any personal compensation.

The early Foundation had two major goals: to provide financial assistance grants to assist gay men with HIV/AIDS in rural parts of America and to maintain a fund of monies for the unmet needs of the future. Until 1992, all members of Gamma Mu were also Foundation members. The predominant source of Foundation income came from individual donors becoming Cliff Pettit Fellows (CPF). After 1992, only active CPFs (those making annual donations) are Foundation members. By 1992 we had 52 CPFs, the Perpetual Fund was $102,000 and 8 grants has been awarded totaling $15,500. Today there are over 650 CPFs.

In 1998, in keeping with the initial goal of supporting future unmet needs, the Foundation reviewed granting policy considering the changes in those affected with HIV/AIDS which were fewer and fewer gay men. In 1999 we provided our first non-HIV/AIDS grant to a GLBT and questioning youth group in Charleston, SC. In 2000 we provided our first two scholarships to gay men and our first Research and Public Education grant. We had three areas of granting plus a scholarship program. While we have continued to fund core HIV/AIDS efforts, we have greatly increased funding to organizations in Community Services and Research and Public Education as well as to scholarships for gay men. More recently the Board has expanded the scholarship program to include other members of the LGBTQ+ community. These awards, of which there are currently two, are based on directed donations and individually Board approved.

To date, the Foundation has awarded 464 grants to 175 unique organizations totaling over 3-million dollars. Since creation of the Scholarship Program 213 scholarships have been awarded totaling $394,000.

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LGBTQ+ symbols are now flying from Bosnia-Herzegovina to Vatican City

Pride flags are flying at U.S. embassies across the world during this year's Pride month following a cable from Secretary of State Anthony Blinken that lifted a ban put in place by the Trump administration.

Blinken’s cable noted Pride displays should be at the discretion of the embassy and that decision should take into account if the local LGBTQ+ population would be negatively affected by such actions, reported The New York Times (https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/23/us/us-embassy-pride-flag.html)

During his confirmation hearing, Blinken had promised to rescind the Trump’s policy on the Pride flag, according to ABC News

Now, even embassies in countries with populations who hold strong anti-LGBTQ+ attitudes are displaying Pride flags to support equality.

The Twitter account of of the U.S. embassy in Vatican City posted a photo of a flag hanging on its building. In the accompanying tweet the embassy wrote, "The U.S. Embassy to the Holy See celebrates #PrideMonth with the Pride flag on display the month of June. The United States respects the dignity and equality of LGBTQ+ people. LGBTQ+ rights are human rights"

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the U.S. embassy draped a rainbow flag from its roof and flew one under the American flag for June. The Balkan country held its first Pride parade in 2019 after years of failed Pride events due to anti-LGBTQ+ violence.

The embassy in Sarajevo tweeted, "We support the increased visibility and empowerment of queer women, transgender and other gender diverse people, and all LGBTQI+ communities. #YouAreIncluded."

Gilbert Baker, an American artist, gay rights activist and U.S. Army Veteran created the flag in 1978 as a new symbol for the gay and lesbian political movement at the suggestion of his friends and colleagues, including Harvey Milk, the first openly gay elected official in California. Milk was assassinated later that year. According to Baker's website, the colors of the LGBTQ flag each have a meaning: red for life, orange for healing, yellow for sunlight, green for nature, blue for harmony and violet for spirit.

Baker died at the age of 65 on March 31, 2017, though his rainbow flag remains an iconic, powerful symbol for LGBTQ pride.
YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK!

This year the Foundation had Grant Applications from 64 organizations. 30 of these Organizations have applied for grants in the past. 27 have received at least 1 grant, implying that they scored high in their past evaluations.

The Foundation received 202 applications for Scholarships.

The exceptional success of our "Virtual Celebration 21" and the generosity of our donors over the last year will allow the Foundation to fund the largest awards in our history.

This fiscal year, pending Board Approval, we are on track to an increase in Scholarship and Grant awards to an unprecedented $400,000 from $220,000 last fiscal year.

FOUNDATION COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

DID YOU KNOW?

IN THE LAST CALENDAR YEAR THE GAMMA MU FOUNDATION HAS HAD 26 CAMPAIGNS

9870 EMAILS HAVE BEEN SENT

THE AVERAGE OPEN RATE IS 52%

THE AVERAGE CLICK-THROUGH RATE WAS 6%

THE FOUNDATION CONTACT LIST GREW BY 4%

EMAILS OPEN BY DEVICE: 36% MOBILE 32% DESKTOP

The Gamma Mu Foundation Annual Summer Meeting/workshop in Burlington Vermont
July 17 - 18, 2021
The Annual Summer Meeting of the Gamma Mu Foundation will be held *July 17-18, 2021* in beautiful Burlington Vermont. All donors and friends of the Foundation are welcome to attend. (Recommend arrival on or before Friday July 16)

**Agenda for the weekend:**

**Friday, group happy hour.**

**Saturday, Morning meeting including Zoom presentations.** (information for joining the Zoom presentation will be sent prior to the meeting)

**Saturday noon, group lunch for all attendees.**

**Saturday afternoon, meet and greet with 2 local grantees.** (Vermont Cares and Outright Vermont)

**Saturday evening, group happy hour.**

**Sunday morning, Group brunch followed by new business.**

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**GRANTS SPOTLIGHT**

**EmpowerMT. Missoula Montana**

By Peter Harvey  
Chairman, Grants Committee

EmpowerMT is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization that began in 1998 as a volunteer-run chapter of the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) at the University of Montana. They have grown over the years, adding staff, and expanding their work across Montana and now become their own entity since 2016. The Organization is focused on empowering individuals targeted by prejudice and mistreatment, and they have developed a leadership development program and comprehensive course curriculum to reduce prejudice, prevent violence, and resolve conflict. Over 50,000 participants have received support and leadership development, learned skills to interrupt oppression, prevent violence, and resolve conflict, as well as developed strategies for building just systems.

EmpowerMT has been a recipient of Gamma Mu Foundation funding twice in 2019 and 2020 to help fund a strategic expansion effort into rural and tribal areas of Montana with the overall goal of building safe spaces and leadership capacities of LGBTQ+ youth and supporters. They were designated the lead organization for the Montana Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) Network which helped launch school based GSA’s in Helena, Butte, Glendive, Hamilton, Missoula, Alberton, Frenchtown, and Pablo. The Montana GSA Network has also been instrumental in helping schools re-work and pass comprehensive anti-bullying and LGBTQ+ inclusive policies; and over the past 4 years, have worked to make Montana more inclusive, defeating 2 anti-transgender bathroom bills, and advocating for statewide gender and sexuality inclusive Non-Discrimination policies.

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Shopping on AMAZONSmile does make a difference.
About 200 people gathered at the outdoor Sylvan Theater on the grounds of the Monument on June 5, for a rally and march to promote the debunked belief that they changed their sexual orientation from gay to straight through faith in Jesus Christ.

The event, which organizers called Freedom March, was led by an organization called CHANGED, which says on its website that it provides support for men sexually attracted to the same sex or who are "uncertain of their gender" who seek away from those characteristics. More than a dozen people who self-identified as having changed their sexual orientation or gender identity spoke with a four-member band playing background music. A male vocalist sang religious hymns, creating an atmosphere of an Evangelical Christian Church. "It is about going from lost to saved, it is not about going from gay to straight," said a man who identified himself as a minister named Joshua.

Among the speakers were Ken Williams and Elizabeth Woning who were identified as co-founders of CHANGED or the "Changed movement" I'm a father of four and I'm a former LGBTQ identified person," Williams told the gathering.

Like many of the speakers, Williams offered a prayer in which he said Jesus Christ saved him and many others by guiding them away from "temptations" leading them to same-sex attractions they do not want.

Among those attending the event as observers were Wayne Besen, executive director of the LGBTQ advocacy group Truth Wins Out, which since 2006 has waged public awareness campaigns opposing the "ex-gay" movement.

Besen said he believes his group has been successful in debunking what he and other LGBTQ advocacy organizations have long pointed out - that attempts to change someone's sexual orientation or gender identity through so-called conversion therapy are strongly opposed as being harmful by all of the nation's major medical and mental health professional associations, including the American Psychiatric Association and the American Medical Association.

Besen said widespread reports of how conversion therapy, including religious oriented "counseling" programs seeking to change people's same-sex attractions have led to serious mental health problems, including suicide, led to the disbanding of several prominent "ex-gay" organizations including Exodus International about five years ago.
But Besen said CHANGED, the group that organized the June 5 event, reflects what he believes is an effort to revive the "ex-gay" movement through the use of sophisticated social media campaigns that he says will put many vulnerable people, especially young LGBTQ people at risk.

"So, we're seeing a new and improved ex-gay industry right now." Besen said. "And that's why we're upping our game too, in fighting them with our new campaigns."

"you can't 'pray away the gay' and efforts to do so inevitably lead to denial, depression and despair," Besen says in a statement released by his group. "Our videos will debunk the lies peddled by the Freedom March and other 'ex-gay' programs in an effort to educate and save lives," he said.

TRUTH WINS OUT in one of the many organizations supported by grants from the Gamma Mu Foundation.

New 2021 Cliff Pettit Fellows receive new engraved glass award.

Steve Daszuta, Kenneth Barnes, Roger Ogden, Christopher Drake, William Steele, Michael Kovner, Jean Doyen de Montallou, Roger Rutkowski, William Rutkowski, Bill Britt, Lynn Love, Richard Salerni, Michael Noel, Harold Tennenbaum, David Riach, Ray Malo, Dan Rendleman, Steven Crocker, Donald Jolly, Mark Hayward, Mike Napoli, George Thorne, Bret Mather, Bill Hayden, David Andrews, David Hocuhberg.

Congratulations to these donors who join over 650 other Cliff Pettit Fellows!

To become a Cliff Pettit Fellow, a donor must have contributed a cumulative minimum of $1000. To remain an active Fellow requires a minimum donation of $350/fiscal year.

ONCE AGAIN THE GAMMA MU FOUNDATION RECEIVED THE HIGHEST RATING FROM GUIDESTAR NON-PROFIT RATING
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. Contact 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 (palmspringsdoug@gmail.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 Grants or Scholarships.

PLEASE BE CAREFUL AND STAY HEALTHY
PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE A CHANGE IN YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION OR A CHANGE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD