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# ***HAPPY HOLIDAYS***

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## ***A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JOHN ELLIS***

On behalf of the Foundation Board of Directors, please accept our best wishes for a Happy Holiday season and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

Our Fall Appeal Letter was sent to all donors and friends of the Foundation and to all who have responded a heartfelt "THANK YOU." To those who have not responded, please consider supporting the Foundation during these difficult times of COVID.

During January we will begin the process of setting up and planning for the next round of scholarship and grant awards.

Doug Mortin and Peter Harvey (committee chairmen) will be soliciting applicants for the awards as well as recruiting evaluators of the award applications.

Being an evaluator is a very rewarding experience and gives firsthand knowledge of the caliber of grantees and scholarship winners. In addition to the insight gained, committee members are involved in the decision process of the awards and have input on the guidelines for future awards. We encourage donors to join the team for this very important process.

We are very thankful for the generosity of our Donor base for a very successful 2021. The awards in grants and scholarships this last year reached a record total of \$400,000! In addition, the actual awards were increased giving winners a more generous amount toward their goals.

2021 will be a challenge to follow, but we look forward to meeting or exceeding our goals of increasing our funding to better fulfill the needs of our applicants.

The Foundation is an all-volunteer organization. All funds donated are allocated to the future awards. There are NO salaries or corporate overhead. The Foundation is a 501c3 so all donations are fully tax deductible.

We have currently set Saturday March 19, 2022 for the "Celebration 22" Foundation event. We have reserved the Historic Richardson property in Wilton Manors, Florida as the venue. Please save the date. As plans become finalized we will announce details of the weekend.

*On behalf of the Foundation Directors, please accept our "Best Wishes" for a wonderful Holiday Season and New Year.  
Thank you for your ongoing support of Your Foundation!*



## ***SPOTLIGHT ON A 2022 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT***

***Three time Gamma Mu Foundation award winner publishes best selling book.***

Ryan Joseph Allen is a Gamma Mu Foundation 2022 Post Graduate Scholarship recipient. He is also the Executive Director and Founder of LOVE MUST WIN and his organization has received two Grant Awards from the Gamma Mu Foundation.

Ryan is just finishing his dissertation for his doctorate in education (ED.D) degree from Xavier University in Cincinnati, focusing on post traumatic growth after religious trauma within the LGBTQ+ community. His goal is to LEAD the LEADERS and show others how to impact the community and world through kindness, acceptance, and love.

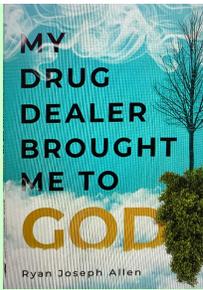
Ryan is full of gratitude and appreciation to the Gamma Mu Foundation for supporting him to complete his doctorate as well as supporting the individuals in rural Kentucky involved in LOVE MUST WIN.

"The money is vital to continuing the work my heart has called me to. My familial roots are Appalachian and I have worked hard to break generational poverty that at times our family has experienced. But, even more important and longer lasting than the financial support is the feeling of love, support, and affirmation from men across the nation that I have never met. You are changing my life and in return I hope to help others."

## ***MY DRUG DEALER BROUGHT ME TO GOD***

BY Ryan Joseph Allen

Ryan Joseph Allen's life was on a downward trajectory. As a child, he felt different from other kids and struggled to fit in. Even at a tender age he contemplated suicide. In



his teenage years and as a young adult, he hid his true self and numbed his emotional turmoil with alcohol, drugs, and self-destructive behaviors. When he summoned the courage to share his secret and come out to a close friend, her response added another layer of self-hatred. How could he love and accept himself as a gay man when he was taught that God and the Church considered it wrong?

In "MY Drug Dealer Brought Me To God", Allen recounts his quest to find meaning, self-acceptance, and his life's purpose. He battles addiction, the heartache of disappointing, toxic relationships, and alienation from his family. One day his co-worker, roommate, friend, and drug dealer, Marie, shares her belief that God made everyone for a purpose and wants us to be ourselves. The conversation ignites Allen's new understanding of how faith can be inclusive, while stepping into his own definition of God.

Becoming a parent and the desire to be a positive role model for his daughter is a turning point. With God as the focal point of his spiritual journey, Allen comes to understand that change has to start from within. He breaks the cycle of family trauma and recognizes his true mission: to teach, support, motivate, and lead other people to love. He learns to balance his faith while affirming and being a warrior for the LGBTQ+ community. Allen's honesty and courage in telling his story is an inspiring message to us all that everyone has a story to share, and within sharing or collective stories we can all grow and heal.

"My Drug Dealer" reached Best Seller in four categories and #1 New Releases in 9 categories.

Additional info/resources/podcasts are available at [Ryanjosephallen.com](http://Ryanjosephallen.com)

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***SAVE THE DATE!***

**March 19, 2022**



**"CELEBRATION 22 LIVE" FOR 2022**

**WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT OUR ANNUAL "CELEBRATION 22" WILL ONCE AGAIN BE "LIVE" IN FT. LAUDERDALE!**

The event will once again be at the Historic Richardson House in Wilton Manors, Florida on March 19, 2022.

The Gamma Mu Foundation's "CELEBRATION" event has raised \$667,749 since it's inception 16 years ago! It has been the highlight of

winter events for numerous attendees, both local and from out of state.

*Detailed Information about "CELEBRATION 22" will be sent as plans are finalized.*

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## **Website Development Update**

Bobby Meehan

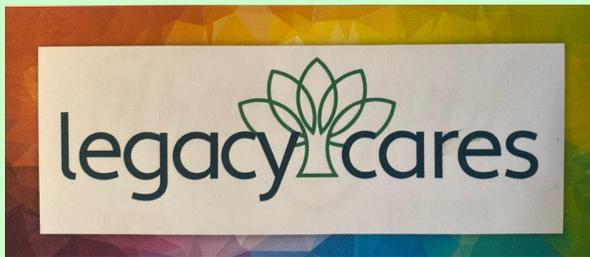
New for 2022: With more people accessing information with mobile devices, the Gamma Mu Foundation will focus more on the mobile user experience. The focus also will further simplify the PC and laptop experience.

The website will feature a new, improved giving experience with a dedicated, permanent, easy-to-remember URL link to be used in all electronic and printed materials, as well as in conversation. Also for next year, an improved focus on the Foundation's core mission and purpose, which is to award scholarships and grants to LGBTQ+ youth and organizations serving the LGBTQ+ population in rural and underserved communities.

Improvements will include a faster navigation experience as well as quick, concise descriptions for mobile devices. These updates will be coordinated with the Grants and Scholarships committees to better integrate the Foundant application portal for a one-stop user experience. The verbiage for many of the website's pages will be consolidated. Also in the works is a downloadable handbook that preserves the original narratives while providing a thorough resource guide for Foundation volunteers, fellows, board members, scholarship and grant applicants, friends, family, and other stakeholders.

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## ***SPOTLIGHT ON A GRANT RECIPIENT***

***LEGACY CARES  
Dallas Texas***

***Your Donation to the Gamma Mu Foundation at work!***

### **Mental Health Counseling**

Legacy Counseling Center provides affordable, quality mental healthcare and emotional support services to hundreds of men and women challenged with HIV or AIDS. The center offers individual, group, and family counseling by fully licensed professionals. The agency also provides a 24-hour emergency hotline available to anyone facing suicidal or other crises situations related to their diagnosis or current medical condition.

### **Individual Therapy**

Legacy provides one-on-one private therapy sessions with licensed professional counselors who are specially trained in areas of specifically related to mental health issues of persons living with HIV and AIDS.

### **Group Therapy**

Legacy offers group therapy sessions both during the day and evening. These weekly support sessions provide a powerful, enriching experience that help HIV-positive people contend with many unique issues surrounding HIV and AIDS.

### **Substance Abuse Program**

A specialized practice of the Counseling Center, the Substance Abuse Program provides both intensive and supportive outpatient substance abuse treatments as well as ongoing relapse prevention services for HIV-positive individuals struggling with alcoholism and other chemical dependency issues.

### **Nine-Week Intensive Outpatient Program**

10 hour per week program that provides recovery support through mandatory three-hour group sessions three times per week combined with one hour of individual counseling sessions per week.

### **Nine-Week Supportive Outpatient Program**

Provides group and individual counseling regarding relapse prevention planning, education, and life skills development

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***THE FOUNDATION ACKNOWLEDGES THE GENEROUS  
DONATIONS IN "MEMORY/HONOR OF" THIS FISCAL***

## **YEAR**

Ray Julson IMO Steven Dunlap  
Martin Culbreth IMO Robert Nolen  
Bob Tracy IMO Bill Ewing  
Bob Tracy IMO Bob Faust  
Bob Tracy IMO John Chapman  
Bob Tracy IMO Frank Campisi  
Bob Tracy IMO Bob Yeager  
Bill Britt IMO Bob Baxter  
Gordon James IMO Rich Lisenbee  
Finn Longinotto IMO Lai Cao  
Wayland Jenkins IMO Victor Barrett  
Murry Vise IMO Gordon Mann  
John Block & Chuck Kuglen IMO Gordon Mann  
Gina Koepl IHO Bryan Koepl  
Ray Julson IHO Cliff Pettit  
Bob Tracy IHO Douglas Morton

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### **11 WAYS LGBTQ+ RIGHTS IMPROVED AROUND THE WORLD IN 2021**

BY Emily Bashforth

Though 2021 presented many challenges for the LGBTQ community, it was also a year of hope and progress. In several countries, new legislation was introduced while, in others, regressive laws were scrapped. New policies decriminalized homosexuality, provided protection for trans people against discrimination and made it easier for the community to access healthcare.



*The Israeli High Court ruled that the amendment to the Surrogacy Law, enacted in 2018, will be amended.*

The Israeli High court cleared the way for more same-sex couples to start families through surrogacy by amending a 2020 ruling. Previously, a surrogacy law stretched to single women but excluded gay couples, and the High Court ruled this year that it "disproportionately harmed the right to equality and the right to parenthood" and was unlawful

### *Switzerland votes to approve same-sex marriage*

Swiss voters approved same-sex marriage in a nationwide referendum. 64.1% of voters accepted the reform, and none of the 26 Swiss cantons came out against it. The referendum was most popular in Basel City, with 74% voting in favor.

### *Spain signed an executive order to allow free IVF treatment for women in same-sex relationships*

Free IVF treatment was extended to both single women and those in same-sex relationships in Spain. The move was also part of the Spanish government's drive for equality, which has seen a record number of women appointed to the Cabinet.

### *Chile approved same-sex marriage by an overwhelming majority*

Same-sex marriage equality finally became a reality in Chile in a landslide vote after four years of inaction. Both houses of Chile's Congress authorized the measure with overwhelming majorities. This made Chile the eighth Latin American country to allow same-sex marriage.

### *New Zealand made it easier for trans people to update their birth certificates*

It is now easier for trans people in New Zealand to update their sex on birth certificates. A new law passed means they can make changes without providing evidence of a medical procedure.

### *Canada banned conversion therapy*

Canada made providing, promoting, or advertising conversion therapy to children, consenting adults, and non-consenting adults, a criminal offense. The bill makes it illegal to profit off the practice and covers trying to change either a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual or to change a person's gender identity to cisgender.



***Help the Gamma Mu Foundation  
help others as you shop***

***Amazon Smile is a program that returns a percentage of sales to non-profits as designated by the purchaser. As you shop, help our Foundation at the same time by buying through "Amazon Smile"***

***Go to: [www.smile.amazon.com/](http://www.smile.amazon.com/) and log in as you usually would to Amazon. Go to "Your Account" and select "pick or change search" and select the Gamma Mu Foundation as a favorite charity and when you shop a donation will automatically be made with no cost to you.***

***Tell you friends and family !***

amazon smile

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***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 so that the Foundation can fulfill more of our requests.

**The Gamma Mu Foundation is an *all volunteer* organization**

DONATE



Gamma Mu Foundation | P. O. Box 23520, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307-3520

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