



Autumn 2023 Newsletter

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A message from the GMF President

John Ellis

As you read this newsletter, your Foundation is in the process of funding this year's awards for grants and scholarships. Awards this year included 32 scholarships and 21 grants totaling over \$300,000.

During the next few months, we will be launching our fall funding appeal drive and hope you will repeat your generous support so we can continue making the awards to these deserving students and community service organizations.

We are also in the process of putting together a new **DONOR INFORMATION SURVEY** which will allow you to give us your input about the future activities of the Foundation. Your input is very important to us, and we encourage you to respond when you get the survey email.

Our **Annual Meeting** will be held on ***Oct 2 as a ZOOM call***. During this meeting we will be electing directors as well as giving updates

on the Foundation, followed by a board meeting to elect new officers. We encourage our donors to attend this meeting and a link to join will be sent out when the time is finalized.

Please also note, as an all-volunteer organization, we always need and encourage our members to participate in the workings of the Foundation. If you are interested in joining one of the committees or possibly a board position, please reach out to us. Best wishes for a very enjoyable fall season.

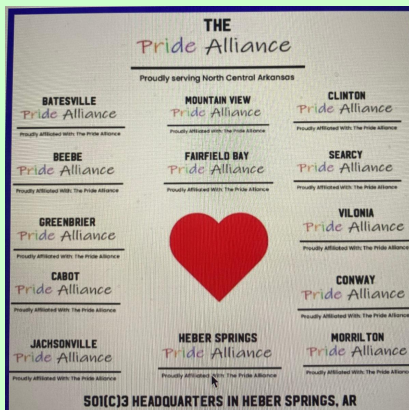
Fiscal Year 2023 Scholarships

Forty Five Scholarships totaling \$115,000



Since the inception of the Scholarship Program in 1999, the number of awards and the amount of the awards has dramatically increased. This year we were able to fund \$115,000 for 32 scholarships.

We currently have 14 named scholarship awards. These named awards are by donors who have contributed the \$50,000 threshold necessary to name a scholarship award in perpetuity. Each named scholarship is for \$5,000. The remaining 18 scholarships are for \$2,500 each.



***THE IMPACT YOUR DONATIONS
HAVE ON THE RURAL LGBTQ
COMMUNITY THROUGH THE
GAMMA MU GRANT PROGRAM.***

***A LETTER TO GAMMA MU
FOUNDATION FROM HEBER
SPRINGS PRIDE ALLIANCE***

Heber Springs Arkansas

Thank You - We are deeply grateful for the support and generosity of Gamma Mu Foundation - it will make a difference in the lives of many. We promise to be good stewards not only with the funding, but with your trust.

Heber Springs Pride Alliance was founded when myself and my partner moved to Arkansas from Colorado. Upon moving I joined some various forums and inquired about various cities that we

considered settling in. When we finally settled in the Heber Springs area we learned of (2) individuals that recently had died by suicide - separate incidents, but were related in the fact that both individuals died as a result of the atmosphere, lack of community, and being LGBTQIA. Finding out this information, we immediately created a group on Facebook specifically for LGBTQIA in the area - at this point our home wasn't even built, but we began to build community, and find as many resources as possible to provide to individuals in need.

To help grow The Heber Spring Pride Alliance - I started with leaders. We went to numerous churches and shook hands with pastors, bishops, and clergy - surprisingly they were very easy to speak with and welcomed us to the community - nearly all of them said the tough part for us and our mission would be the deep-rooted histories of families and their pass down of family value, and their traditions in the area - many of which have never left much further than the county line, and this also includes the hate.

After working on leadership, we decided to create a business base. We began to speak to local businesses. We became certified in Safe Zone training - and we distributed materials to help educate local business - we provided this information along with a sticker that the business could place in a window or next to the register - we created a toned-down sticker not only to create a safe zone for LGBTQIA, but for all minorities. We said "We understand what we are asking, and if you do not feel comfortable enough to place in your window or at your register - then please start next to the time clock and incorporate the training into your organization and new hire programs". Shortly after we began to receive a few pictures from around town of "Look what I found in our small town".

As June neared - we wanted to fly our rainbow colors - so we thought what could we do to have the colors out flying around town.. So, we sent spinners that were a cascade of rainbow to about 40 local businesses, along with some various pride and ally stickers, and catered to each individual business; like rainbow cardboard coffee koozie to our local coffee shop to put around cup. It may not have been a pride flag, but several businesses flew our spinners and we knew we were being represented and so did our Facebook page community.

We decided to have a foundation of resources we gathered, knowledge of community leadership, and now have ally's of some of the local businesses that we would now focus on the LGBTQIA individual and trying to connect - and make The Heber Springs Pride Alliance known. What could we do to fit in the community, and provide a safe haven to gather and assemble? How about the beautiful lake and the amenities that it has to offer - let's look at hosting a LGBTQIA campout.

We located an affordable group campsite - and we began to spread word of our campout around all the Arkansas LGBTQIA groups. This wasn't going to be a typical campout - It was themed and we lined up a movie night, a game show host to recreate the

couple's game, we had drag bingo, we had a magician / juggler, and even a comedian. When the event finally arrived, we had nearly 100 people from all over the entire state - it was an incredible time. This really sealed the deal of followers and our heartfelt mission, and we had multiple individuals begin to identify themselves as wanting to be a bigger part of the mission and join our organization. This is when we started the ground work for the 501(c)3.

We have such a wonderful and diverse board here at the Heber Spring Pride Alliance. The amount of experience we have is actually mind blowing. As the Alliance has grown we have identified multiple needs. Being not only a rural city, but a rural county we knew we had a lot of challenges ahead of us. Many areas of the community often have no ambulance to respond to 911 calls - which you would think is unheard of in this day, but not here. Bigger cities have resources that are very specific for example this organization will help with HIV and testing - and that is about all they do, whereas this organization may focus on Transgender individuals, and that is all they do. We in our area and for almost a hour away surrounding us - we are it.

The Heber Springs Pride Alliance has worked to obtain CLIA waiver to provide limited testing such as HIV, HEP C, Glucose Screens, Pregnancy Test, and even test for some STI - amongst a variety of other health and wellness screening to help connect individuals to their health and a friendly provider. Our board members have been thru various certifications, and thru several online trainings to provide identified needs the best that we can - we even have some specialty services like smoking cessation, diabetic education, or one on one health coaching. We also have some available harm reduction and overdose and naloxone training. We currently offer these to anyone - and look at it as a way of building with community partners and with the community itself.

We plan to grow to 8 active groups. This year Arkansans faced a battery of anti-LGBTQIA legislation, so this helped to focus on immediate needs first and foremost. The first group we started was Transitions. This group is a structured group that veers toward questioning, non-binary, and transgender individuals, this group has steadily grown each month. The second group we started was a general social group - meeting at a new activity each month, I now have played frisbee golf as a result and actually absolutely loved it. We have started an HIV testing and counseling - and have continued past that to have a regular HIV Support group; Equalize Together. We have two educators on our board, one of which has been working in the industry for 35 years, and is now in administration for a very large city - so this has led to provided Main Street a group for 7-11yo, and Youth Alley for 12-17yo, both of these we plan to have beginning in the fall - her specialty has aided in creating IEPs for those in need, among other educational services, and help to create and fight for inclusivity at all schools.

In our community we help in multiple ways - a primary goal is to continue to build with the community and not against it, We have

connected not only the LGBTQIA to resources, but local individuals with identified needs as well. We continue to provide group safe zone trainings. We have a 20ft screen and plan to host community health fairs and pair with other community providers to not only have a health fair - but to watch a film for free in the park. We have special events and bring in outside guest speakers when possible. Finally, we do community give back - a project each quarter, we have outreach for homeless (as many are LGBTQIA), we have a health closet with equipment available for use, we have a community LGBTQIA Library since many from our library tend to disappear.

We have come a long way in just our first year - and we hope to grow. Although we may be trained, certified and ready for many of these items - some we lack the resource itself. We have such a limited supply of HIV test kits that we currently can only offer as requested, and have a limited number of naloxone kits to distribute - and so forth with other items as well. For a grassroots foundation, every dollar is huge. We will continue to press forward and provide as much as we are possible capable of.

We are rounding our second annual ENCORE LGBTQIA Campout - needless to say we have grown an incredible amount - and this warms our hearts. We know and have been told several times that "you saved my life" - So know that your funding will help towards that important mission.

Thank you so much for helping, have a wonderful day,

Sincerely,

Nicholas Batchelor
Co-founder and Executive Director
Heber Springs Pride Alliance



A Gamma Mu LGBT Robin McDonald Memorial Scholarship Recipient

IAN LEACH - \$5,000 – attending NYU Law to pursue a Juris Doctor.

My name is Ian Leach and I grew up in Newport, Michigan, a farming community nestled squarely between the much denser areas of Toledo and Detroit.

The tightly-knit community and "traditional values" of the area meant that my identity as a gay man often felt like an unwelcome contrast to those around me. While I was able

to find some community by the time I left my high school, I consistently felt that I was different from my peers and frequently felt “othered” as a gay man in a place where no one came out. I was lucky to have a great support system in my mother who supported me amidst a family that would not affirm me coming out.

In 2013, shortly after graduating high school, my world shattered. I lost my mother to an aggressive form of brain cancer, leaving me in a household that could not give me the same love and support.

I started my educational journey at a local community college in my hometown, getting involved in the Gay-Straight Alliance as a Chair of the organization and, with the help of the group, starting my hometown’s first Pride Prom for LGBTQ+ high school students.

As a first generation college student, without a roadmap that many of my peers may have had, I soon found myself transferring to the University of Michigan, where I worked nearly full-time to support myself. I became involved with the Spectrum Center, UM’s LGBTQ center on campus, and Mock Trial, which helped affirm my interest in the law.

Following my time in Ann Arbor, I moved to Madison, Wisconsin, working as a project manager at a healthcare software company and leading the organization’s LGBTQ+ Employee Resource Group. In my free time, I played hockey with the Madison Gay Hockey Association, and became the Vice President of the organization.

I am now a second year student pursuing my law degree to work in LGBTQ advocacy. This past summer, I interned with Oasis Legal Services, where I assisted LGBTQ+ clients with their asylum cases. At NYU, I am the Political Action Chair of OutLaw, the LGBTQ+ student group of the law school, and the Co-President of the First Generation Professionals organization.

I am determined to carve out a path that not only honors my mom’s memory of her love and support, and also extends and defends the rights and protections of all queer individuals. I’ve seen the crushing weight of legislation that seeks to erase or invalidate our existence, and felt the pain of being “othered” in rural communities.

I’m thankful for Gamma Mu Foundation’s support over the past two years and with a named scholarship this year. It helps fund incidental educational expenses like books and other fees that are unavoidable. I hope to be a supporter of this organization in the years to come!



The Number of LGBTQ People is Rising. So?

Jane Coaston
The New York Times
July 24, 2023

What's the correct number of lesbians? Gay men? Bisexuals? Trans people? Is there a number that is too high? Too Low? Just right?

Every year, Gallup releases a survey of how many Americans identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. The 2023 edition found it was about 7 percent. That percentage has held relatively steady over the past three years, but it is about double the percentage in 2012 (3.4%). Perhaps most notably, the number of transgender Americans has increased, as has the number of people who identify as nonbinary

A lot has happened over the past decade, a lot if it to the benefit of LGBTQ people. This is the time in American history to be LGBTQ, with the proviso that the bar for such achievement is incredibly, unspeakably low. Marriage equality is now the law of the land, and more people know someone who is trans now than they did a few years ago. Many people now live in public, too, sharing their lives on social media with strangers. There are more visibly LGBTQ people because there are more visible people, period.

But that visibility has produced a very strange complaint from some critics. LGBTQ people are OK in theory, they seem to argue, but there are simply too many of them.

LGBTQ people are, of course, no strangers to public antipathy, the voices that seem to see the rising number of LGBTQ people as a sign of a deeply decadent culture or even a dying civilization. But what makes this form of criticism novel is that it focuses on quantity rather than quality.

Even seemingly straightforward descriptions of the statistics can get overheated quickly, something as ephemeral as following a trend (like bisexuality, according to some outlets) or as widespread as a social contagion.

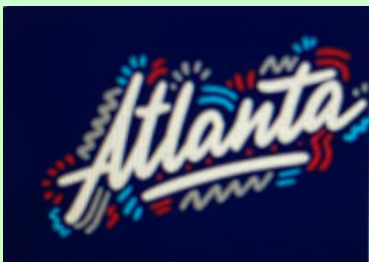
The increase in visible trans people is factual, of course. There are more out trans people - and trans young people - today than there were 10 or certainly 20 years ago, which makes sense, given that 20 years ago even the idea of legalizing same-sex marriage on a national level was a wedge issue so contentious that it may have helped tilt key races. But treating the increase as a diagnostic craze of cause for concern implies the that there is a trans set point of sorts, a correct number of people who are permitted to be trans.

When I asked K.J. Rawson, an associate professor of English and women's, gender and sexuality studies at Northwestern University and the director of the Digital Transgender Archive, if he'd noticed this phenomenon of the "too many trans people" trope, he told me that it reminded him of the sideshow era of the 19th and 20th century, when so-called freaks could proliferate and thrive, provided they stayed within the circus tent.

Then, he said, there is an idea that "a certain amount of gender transgression was spectacularized. As long as it's still in that realm, it's OK, and it's entertainment." But, he told me that when LGBTQ people stop being sources of entertainment and start being neighbors, coffee shop owners and even teachers, "I think that then those are the moments where you start to see far more anxiety about how much power these spaces can generate."

There's been an objective increase in the number of visible LGBTQ people in the past decade. But the discomfort with that visibility isn't an objective fact of life. There is no maximum number of people on earth who can be trans before we face civilizational ruin or planetary collapse. This is the first time in American history that gay and trans people have been able to live as themselves in any real way, with jobs and marriages and dogs and cats and visibility. And when others panic about rising numbers and fret about causes people to be trans (or queer in general), the not-so-hidden message is that repression might be necessary to stop them, as if the temptations of trans life were too alluring otherwise and might entice "normal" people too much.

Yes, more people are trans now than were a few years ago. And that's ...normal.



*The Gamma Mu Foundation
Summer Meeting/workshop was
held August 14 in Atlanta Georgia*

The Summer Meeting of the Gamma Mu Foundation was held at the Embassy Suites in Atlanta Georgia.

The working group meeting took place in Atlanta on August 14, 2023.

The 14 person workshop was convened to discuss the findings of the 24 interviews with top donors conducted from late June to the beginning of August. The findings of these interviews, along with the subsequent discussion, will aid in the development of the Gamma Mu Foundation Member Survey.

THE MEMBER SURVEY WILL BE SENT TO EVERY GAMMA MU DONOR SHORTLY. IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT THE BOARD RECEIVE AS MUCH INPUT AS POSSIBLE TO PLAN THE DIRECTION OF THE FOUNDATION INTO THE FUTURE.

Using the survey results, the Board will be able to build on the Foundation's strengths and identify areas for advancement.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 GRANTS

***This Fiscal Year \$195,000 in Grants
were awarded.
There were five named awards.***



The Source LGGBTQ+ Center - *Vanden Heuvel & Greeson Award*

New Mexico Community AIDS Partnership - *The Richard Karpowich Award for Research and Education*

Colorado ManReach - *The Gamma Mu 50th Anniversary Award*

Alzheimer's Association, Minnesota-North Dakota Chapter, Edina, MN. - *The Jones-Kahle Award In Honor of Martin Culbreth.*

Green Mountain Crossroads.- *The Gordon Mann Memorial Award*

GAMMA MU FOUNDATION ANNUAL & BOARD MEETING

John Ellis is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Gamma Mu Foundation Annual & Board Meetings

Time: Oct 2, 2023 05:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

04:00 PM Central Time

03:00 PM Mountain Time

02:00 PM Pacific Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87072166388?pwd=WTRJOWdsNzBRS HdvczNCTG5tSk50Zz09>

Meeting ID: 870 7216 6388

Passcode: 221297

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A MESSAGE FROM THE GAMMA MU FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

The Board of Directors thank you for the role you are playing in strengthening the LGBTQ+ community. As a donor to the Gamma Mu Foundation we are reaching out in hope that you will continue your commitment to supporting our Foundation in the *Fall Appeal*.

THE GAMMA MU FOUNDATION HAS RECEIVED 4 MILLION DOLLARS SINCE IT'S INCEPTION AND AWARDED IN EXCESS OF 4 MILLION DOLLARS IN GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS WHILE MAINTAINING A HEALTHY INVESTED CORPUS.

With your help, the Gamma Mu Foundation will play an even bigger role in 2024 and beyond. The earlier your financial support, the more our Foundation can invest in helping non-profit groups and student scholarships in the LGBTQ+ rural community.

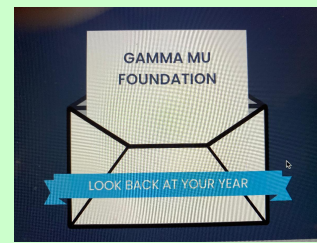
Please consider signing up for a recurring monthly donation.

Together we have a giant opportunity to continue to make outstanding financial contributions to those in our community who most need our financial support.

We invite all donors and friends to join the Gamma Mu Facebook Page.

GMF Facebook Page

WHAT YOUR DONATIONS HAVE DONE OVER TIME !



Since the Gamma Mu Foundation was formed 34 years ago, awards have been made for **\$4,448,242**. The highest amount ever awarded is Fiscal Year 2022 at \$400,000.

Grants

Grants have been made for **\$3,6720.242**.
In 1990 the first two grants were awarded at \$750 each.

Scholarships

Scholarships have been awarded for **\$776,500**.
In 2000 the first scholarships awarded at \$1000.



***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.

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.***

[Visit our website](#)

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



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

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