



Lesbian and Gay Community Appeal Foundation Grant Recipients 2003



Fall 2003

Thanks to generous donors like you, the LGCA Foundation was able to provide much-needed funding for projects supporting individuals and groups that enhance the development of the LGBT communities in the areas of education, health, human rights and arts and culture.

Here is a list of grant recipients for 2003:

Planned Parenthood Toronto, TEACH

To support "The Stories," a project addressing homophobia among youth in Toronto.

Buddies In Bad Times Theatre

Toward production costs of retrospective theatre series celebrating BIBT's 25th anniversary.

Inside Out 2003 Queer Youth Digital Video Project (QYDVP)

To increase awareness of the QYDVP at Inside Out by distributing a video to key audiences.

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)

To deliver a series of workshops in the Toronto region, which will be used to enhance partnership and mentoring among agencies working with LGBT newcomers.

Counterpoint 2003

To support the Counterpoint Community Orchestra to cover ongoing costs of their performances.

The Hardworkin' Homosexuals

To support Cheap Queers, a three-night cabaret series during Pride Week that features actors, writers, musicians, singers, dancers, poets, comedians and film/video artists.

Lesbian Gay Bi Youthline

To provide training for volunteers who take calls to youth phonenumber.

Metro Association of Family Resource Programmes

To develop and produce a resource manual on serving LGBT families, parents, caregivers and children.

Voices of Positive Women

To support a project which aims to increase the quality of life for lesbians living with HIV.

Multicultural Women in Concert

To support a cabaret bringing artists from diverse communities together to celebrate queer womyn's sexuality and eroticism.

Asian Community AIDS Services- Conference for Queer East and South East Asian Youth

Toward costs associated with a conference for Queer East and South East Asian Youth.

Halton Pride Organization

To support the Halton Pride Picnic an annual event in its 4th year that brings together the LGBT community of Halton.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

• Toward a pilot study of mental health issues among lesbian biological mothers and co-parents;
• To fund stage and sound equipment for Free Zone, an alcohol-free area at Pride Day 2003.

Family Services Association of Toronto, The David Kelley Program

To fund an 8-week course for gay men considering parenthood.

The 519 Church Street Community Centre

• "Bad Names Hurt" Verbal Harassment Awareness Project

Toward the production of postcards that raise awareness about homophobic verbal harassment to

LGBT people and the services of the Anti-Violence program at the 519;

• Trans Positive Art Poster Series

Toward the creation of trans positive poster and visual material that reflects the diversity of trans people's lives;

• AIDS Vigil

To expand outreach and promotion of the vigil to specific ethnic communities and areas across Ontario.

Jo Si Malaya/Philippine Students Activists Workers Artists (SAWA)

To support a multi-lingual photo/text exhibit sharing stories by Tibo/Lesbian/Gay/Bsexual/Trangender/Transexual people of Philippine descent.

Supporting Our Youth (SOY)

• Express - Newcomer & Immigrant Queer Youth Drop-In

Toward design & printing promotional materials; program costs and honorarium for website maintenance - all related to group gatherings or outings as part of the Express group;

• Mentoring and Housing Program

Toward broad outreach and promotion of the mentoring and housing program to both youth (specifically more isolated youth) and potential adult volunteers;

• Cowrie Zine Project

To support the Black Queer Youth (BQY) Initiative to produce a zine.

Your dollars support our community.
Please send in your 2003 donation before December 31st.

The Appeal Launches Leadership Circle for the Future

LGBT communities throughout the Greater Toronto region share a common need for continued financial support and the Appeal is launching a new leadership circle in order to better meet this demand and raise the level of philanthropy in our communities. With an annual gift of \$500 you will be counted and recognized as someone who supports the broad range of social service, health, educational and arts projects so important to a healthy and dynamic community.

Your leadership gift will make a significant difference to the Appeal and the many organizations we fund. Today, we count on more than 250 donors and around 40 volunteers to help strengthen and celebrate our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities. And we'd like to grow even stronger, to make an even greater difference in communities throughout our region.

We invite you to join us as we launch our program of growth and become a leader in our LGBT communities! ✨

Making a Difference

Program Helps Youth Make Connections

When Javier Ortiz arrived in Canada three years ago from Colombia, he was pretty much on his own.

As a 17 year old, not only he was struggling to establish a life for himself in a new country, but also with coming out as a gay youth. "I wasn't comfortable with who I was at the time, so I had a lot on my mind dealing with that and everything else," he says.

While surfing the Internet one day, Javier came across the website for Supporting Our Youth (SOY), which at the time was offering a 12-week support group called Express for queer newcomer youth. He ended up taking part in the last six weeks of the group meetings and he says it helped him immeasurably.

"It was a place where I could feel comfortable," says Javier, now 20. "No one was looking at me like I was different because my English wasn't good. I was making mistakes, but no one was judging me. I was just trying to make connections in the gay community and meet some friends, and not trying to divide my life into two parts - gay and not gay."

Express was just the start; Javier also accessed a variety of supports through SOY's other programs including the mentoring and housing project. As a result, Javier has been matched up with an older adult who serves as a role model for more than six months now. Javier also has his own apartment. "Before, I was renting a room and I couldn't be out because I thought I might get kicked out. I'm happy where I am now," he says.



Javier Ortiz accepts the City of Toronto's Youth Advocate Award for Innovation on behalf of Supporting Our Youth earlier this year. SOY was recognized for making a positive difference in young people's lives in the city.

Javier is just one success story of the many projects funded by the Lesbian and Gay Community Appeal Foundation. In 2003, the LGCA funded the Express project, the Mentoring and Housing project and the Black Queer Youth Initiative. The Appeal funded 19 other projects in 2003 for a total of \$30,000, thanks to the generosity of donors. Projects range from providing a series of workshops for gay men who want to become parents to supporting a queer women's cabaret celebration at Pride.

Javier is looking forward to furthering his education next fall. He's considering a career in social work and perhaps medicine. He currently works part-time at SOY, providing administrative support and also working on graphic production for some brochures. "I was lucky to get the support I got," he says. "I don't even think about what if I didn't. I wouldn't have as many friends as I have now, so my life would be completely different." ✨

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The deadline to submit LGCA grant applications is January 10, 2004. For more information, visit our website.

LGCA Looks Forward to Growth

This has been an incredibly exciting year for the Appeal. Our Board of Directors has worked hard over 2003 to develop a strong new plan for growth into the future. After 23 years of raising and distributing funds within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual/transgendered communities, we have realized that there is much more potential in our community to increase our ability to fundraise and make grants to organizations that support our communities.

As part of our plan to grow, the Appeal received a grant from The Ontario Trillium Foundation to support our next phase of growth. We will hire a full-time staff person this November to support the committees of the Board as we work to grow our annual fundraising campaign, establish a permanent LGBT community endowment, and ultimately, grant out more funds to our vital community organizations.

The Board of Directors also decided to strengthen the Appeal in the areas of governance, human resources, communications, fundraising and allocations. We are now at a significant turning point, as the needs of Toronto's LGBT communities continue to grow and diversify. Our funding requests show that there are significant funding gaps for all kinds of projects, including LGBT youth, LGBT newcomers to Canada, a growing gay and lesbian seniors community, the queer homeless population, and health issues facing gay men and lesbians. We also value the importance of supporting the growing number of local queer artists and filmmakers who help make Toronto a vibrant and exciting place to live. It is our vision that The Appeal, its volunteers and donors will respond enthusiastically to these needs. As part of our plan for growth, we are also launching a new leadership circle for donors who support the Appeal's growth with donations of at least \$500.

We hope that you will join us in this exciting new phase of the Appeal's development in Toronto! ✨

— DOUG KERR, Co-Chair

Your contribution to the LGCA Foundation has real community impact. In 2003, the LGCA funded 22 projects that enhance the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered/ transexual and two-spirited individuals in the areas of education, health, human rights, arts and culture. These are just a few examples of how your donations make a difference.

Queer Women's Cabaret a Singing Success

More than 150 people were treated to performances by some of the city's leading edge queer women artists at "OPEN MOUTH 4," a Queer Women's Cabaret, held at the 519 Church Street Community Centre during Toronto's Pride Weekend celebrations.

"The event was a complete success," said Bee Sack, of Multicultural Women In Concert, the organization that put on the event, thanks in part to LGCA funding. "There was an incredible energy in the room as performer after performer dazzled the audience. Many people expressed as they were leaving that they thought the event was important and incredible. It was also a great way for people to network with other queer/trans women of colour."

OPEN MOUTH is the group's fourth annual celebration, showcasing local artists from queer & transgender communities and two spirited communities. The cabaret is multidisciplinary, featuring musicians,

poets, spoken word performers and dancers.

While the theme of the cabaret was eroticism, performances also covered other topics such as racism, classism, sexuality and safe sex.

"The cabaret offered an evening of entertainment as well as community education," said Sack. "Artists performing are renowned for their creative ways of facing the barriers in society." Among this year's lineup was: Karleen Pendleton-Jiminez, Chicana Butch Writer; Trish Salah, Trans Lebanese Poet; Maewon, all Asian Lesbian folk band; Nancy Cooper, Chippewa writer, Virma Marguerite, Lesbian Caribbean writer, Julia Gonsalves, Folk Musician, and Grisel Severino, Latina Drag King.

Sack said there was record attendance at this year's show, which drew an especially large crowd of young queer women of colour. Encouraged by this year's success, MWIC has plans for an even bigger and better show in 2004! ✧

Orchestra Hits High Note With LGCA

Counterpoint had another exhilarating season in 2002-03, and has begun its 20th season this fall, thanks in part to LGCA funding. Counterpoint is the only community orchestra in downtown Toronto, and established with mostly gay or lesbian members, it has always been an inclusive orchestra providing the opportunity to perform fine classical music in a climate of diversity. The orchestra has enjoyed phenomenal growth and has had the pleasure of performing regularly with both well known and rising musical talents. Its next concert is Saturday November 29th at 8pm at St. Luke's Church at Sherbourne and Carlton. For more information on the orchestra, check out www.ccorchestra.org



Soloists Paul Willis and Galina Bugaeva perform with the string section of Counterpoint Community Orchestra.

Trans Youth Use Art to Educate

Trans Youth Toronto! is a drop-in for TS/TG/Intersex/2 Spirited and questioning youth under the age of 26 which meets weekly at The 519 Church Street Community Centre. The program was started in 2001 as an offshoot of general trans programming at the 519 because it recognized a gap in services specifically for trans youth. As a result, it started up a weekly drop-in that would be youth-run and would be a place where trans youth could be safe and just be kids, says executive director Alison Kemper.

The Trans-Positive Art Poster project is in response to the fact that youth really enjoy arts-based programming and that there were no positive images of trans youth that could play a part in

counteracting transphobia in places like youth shelters, schools and other social service agencies. The LGCA grant provides funding to assist TYT participants in developing posters with positive trans images and messages.

"Having trans-positive posters up is integral to creating an inclusive, warm, inviting atmosphere that allows trans people to know which particular social services are working at making certain their services accessible," said Kemper, adding that it also lets other service users know that trans people may be using that service, and offers an opportunity for discussion and education around trans issues. The project also enhances self-esteem and feelings of worth. "Having positive messages about trans lives posted in social service agencies might also dispel some myths about trans people and reduce some of the discrimination and harassment that trans people often face while attempting to access social services," said Kemper. ✧

LGCA Supports Newcomer Queer Youth



Express, the newcomer and immigrant youth project at SOY (Supporting Our Youth), continued its string of successes in 2003, thanks in part to funding from the LGCA.

Last year, it launched its fabulous zine, *Fresh off the Boat*, and created its first video production this past spring "My Name is Javier" – both chronicling the experiences of newcomer youth. It also held a fun and fabulous retreat up in the near north, to offer mutual peer support. Participants have come from more than 20 different countries and the project aims to help them make friends, connections for work, gain their legal status in Canada, have access to SOY's mentoring program, as well as gain more knowledge about Canada and Toronto that will help them build their life in the city.

"It's a very inspiring experience, as a newcomer myself, to see those young people who arrive in Canada with much less than what I had

when I arrived, much younger than me, and with much less support, but yet seeing them full of enthusiasm and determination to achieve their goals," said Suhail Abualsameed, the project's co-ordinator. "Knowing that the program is having such a great influence on their success makes me proud of them and of this wonderful SOY initiative."

Express is developing a partnership with another agency to expand the youths' horizons and experience beyond the Church-Wellesley community, as well as continuing to work with other organizations and initiatives such as the Gay Men's Health Week with the AIDS Committee of Toronto, the Culture Link Youth Conference, and many others. "We will be trying to expand our scope of outreach and bring visibility for the program where young queer newcomers have no access to such information," said Abualsameed. ✧

LGCA's Annual Spring Fling



Something to celebrate: Scott Ferguson, Executive Director of the Inside Out Film Festival, an LGCA grant recipient, celebrates with LGCA donor Andrew Chang and LGCA Co-Chair Doug Kerr.

Spring Fling was generously sponsored by Wettbar, Altitude Baking, Ashley's Fine Catering and Dominion.

In June, the LGCA Foundation held its annual Spring Fling where more than 70 donors and supporters met some of the people the LGCA has supported through grants.

The event was kicked off by members of Fruit Cocktail, longtime supporters of the LGCA and featured a performance by Counterpoint Community Orchestra. Guests also heard from grant recipients who described the importance of LGCA funding. "This was a great way for the LGCA to celebrate with donors and grant recipients our collective achievement," said LGCA Co-Chair Doug Kerr. "Our donors were keen to learn about how their contributions make a difference in the LGBT community – from supporting individual artists who enhance our community's cultural scene to social service organizations that provided much-needed services." ✧

Program Helps Dads-To-Be

A unique program supported in part by the LGCA Foundation is helping gay men yearning to hear the patter of little feet.

Daddies & Papas 2B is believed to be the first of its kind in North America, providing information and support to gay men who are considering parenthood through an 8-week course. The first session was held earlier this year with 20 participants and another one is running this fall. It has been such a huge success there's currently a waiting list of men wanting to participate.

"There's a lot of gay men out there trying to figure out how to bring children into their lives," said LGBT Parenting Network coordinator Rachel Epstein. The course offers information on all forms of adoption, co-parenting options and surrogacy arrangements. The workshops feature guest speakers, including gay and lesbian parents who share their experiences, as well as lawyers and other professionals to discuss issues related to gay parenting. "It's a lot of practical information and the opportunity to talk to other gay men," said Epstein. "There's a network being created for men looking for information."

The project is modelled after the highly successful Dykes Planning Tykes program which has been running since 1997. Daddies & Papas 2B is co-sponsored by the LGBT Parenting Network, David Kelley Services, Family Service Association of Toronto and the 519 Church St. Community Centre. The project received a grant in 2003 from the LGCA. ✧