

ReVision

re (ri) *n.* 1. anew, again **vision** (vizh 'a) *n.* 1. the manner in which one sees or conceives of something.



Making our world safe for ALL youth

The mission of Project YES is to prevent suicide and ensure the healthy development of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth by initiating dialogue, providing information and creating support systems.

Things are Happening In North Georgia

VITAS® Course

At the invitation of Hugh Westbrook, Project YES recently spent a full day with the executive staff of VITAS. One participant wrote:

"The management of VITAS Healthcare Corporation recently learned through Project YES' communication course the value of getting to "yes" without compromising your purpose. The topics of safety and support for gay and lesbian youth and that of providing hospice care often evoke strong emotional responses. Through hypothetical scenarios, the managers learned that the basic communications skills demonstrated during the course can be applied to most any divisive situation. VITAS thanks Project YES for educating our staff on the issues of gay and lesbian teens as well as providing new insight on holding discussions on hospice care."

- Keith Montgomery, VP of Corporate Communication

"This is exactly what I was taught in seminary – it's grace."

- Rev. Bob Miller, Director of Education and Training



Hugh Westbrook and the executive staff of Vitas® Healthcare

Dahlonega is located in Lumpkin County, an area with highest suicide rate in Georgia. This was our third visit to **North Georgia College and State University (NGCSU)**, where in 2000 alone there were three student suicides. It's hard to believe we began our work there only a year ago, and since then, exciting results are beginning to unfold.



Picture-perfect North Georgia



Faculty Department Chairs at NGCSU



Elementary Student Teachers in North Georgia

After this visit, four faculty members met to form a task force. They formed **"NGCSU Project Dignity"** with a written constitution, by-laws, officers, and sections. One section, **"Inclusive Community Alliance"** will focus on gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. Another, **"Harassment Prevention Alliance,"** will encompass a broad reach including gender, race, orientation, ethnicity, religion, and other personal characteristics. A third section, **"Suicide Prevention Alliance,"** focuses on suicide prevention. The organization was created and its constitution ratified on May 3, 2001, by eight faculty members within a week of our visit.



Middle and High school student teachers in an interactive exercise

"It certainly opened conversation that will begin to bring about change. Thank you for opening the door for us, helping us to make connections, and putting in our hands the tools we need to begin this very important journey. ☺"

- Betty Greene, Psychology Department at NGCSU

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Community Care Program Soars



From a slow, unsure beginning nearly two years ago, the Project YES Community Care Program is now taking off like an eagle. In the last few months, funding from the **Knight Foundation**, **Rosie O'Donnell For All Kids Foundation**,

United Way of Greater Miami, as well as many individual contributions enabled us to fully launch this program. **Deborah White, Psy.D.**, will serve as the Program Director, **Barbara Byrne, LCSW**, the Training Specialist, and **Sally Dodds, Ph.D.**, will be the Program Evaluator.

They are all exceptional professionals committed to this program, and bring many years of counseling and therapeutic experience. The program will focus on providing safe homes for our youth and professional interventions to facilitate family reunification. Together, we can find solutions for youth who are at risk of homelessness due to their sexual orientation.

Jacqueline Charles, a Miami Herald reporter, wrote a story about the program, and our office was flooded with over 60 calls. Supporters expressed interest in providing safe homes, as well as offering donations like tutoring, transportation, and future job and housing opportunities.

We would like to thank all of our partners for making this program happen. Together, our community will enable homeless, neglected gay youth to find support with their families, receive



Deb White, Community Care Program Director



Barbara Byrne, Community Care Training Specialist

counseling, and graduate from high school to become healthy young adults.

If you want to enroll in the Caregiver Training Course, or would like to support this program in other ways, please call our office at 305-663-7195.

Miami-Dade County GSA Conference

We are thankful for **Ellen Fike, TRUST** Counselor at **American Senior High School**. She is a true champion for all youth, and works tirelessly on behalf of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender youth and their allies. She organized a citywide conference for all Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) Clubs. Energy and enthusiasm filled the rooms as students met and connected from each school. We were honored to have **School Board Member Betsy Kaplan** to share in the festivities. The first workshop, "Dealing With Your Own Prejudice" was facilitated by the **Miami Southwest Peace Ambassadors**. This was followed by two breakout sessions "Positive Ways of Communicating" by **Project YES** and "Handling Harassment" by **Pridelines Youth Services**. There was also a representative who shared resource materials for **GLSEN**. We want to thank **Delilane Café** for providing lunch and acknowledge their consistent support for the programs that serve our youth.

By Allison Tinney, MAST Academy Student:

Unity. Acceptance. Power. The First Annual Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) Conference was a chance for kids all over Miami to safely join under the meaning of these words. We participated in workshops designed to better our understanding of ourselves, our supporters, and our history.

Being immersed in the spirit of alliance that day was empowering. Being somewhat timid I never really participated in a GSA meeting prior to this event. The conference made me see just how important it is to have these groups in school.



Counselors and students



One hundred youth and counselors were in attendance

It offers a peer support system for kids that are not protected, that need a guiding hand, that seek a part of themselves in others. GSA strengthens students and give them a chance to fight back. I saw kids just like me, some shy than others, but all smiling in the safety of support.

This was another first for GLBT students in the Dade County Public School System. We need these organized events to help show us just how many peers and teachers are behind us in our lives. I thank Project YES for hosting the First Annual Gay-Straight Alliance Conference and for bringing us together in the spirit of unity, acceptance, and power.

American High School Presentation



Ellen Fike, TRUST Counselor American High

Project YES spoke to the faculty of American High on an early release day in May. The presentations generated lively discussion about teacher vs. parental responsibilities. Eight teachers

volunteered to form a task force to meet with the **American High School PTA** to begin a collaboration with parents and teachers



Faculty of American Senior High School

working in partnership on this topic. We thank Ellen Fike for inviting us to American High.

SAFE-T Course

By Joseph Zolobczuk, Director's Assistant

Project YES shared a **Student Alliance For Empowerment Training (SAFE-T) Course** with 15 Miami-Dade High School Students in April. The SAFE-T Course is a condensed, one-day communication course for students. The course enables youth to begin communicating positively, creating new possibilities – not wasting time in arguments and fighting.

Club sponsors and counselors interested in bringing the SAFE-T Course to their students or youth group, call Project YES at 305-663-7195.

Kiaora and Grant Award Recognition



Ed Williamson, Nikki Korval, Bob Oldakowski, Martha Fugate, and Carol Williamson at the Spring Kiaora Event

Ed McAmis & Gerson Gonzalez continue as **Kiaora Visionary** members this month, contributing \$10,000 for general support and an additional \$5,000 for our bold, new Community Care program.

We welcome **Tim Dugan & Meredith Birrittella** as new **Kiaora Champions**. They donated bicycles and helmets for our auction, and Tim is a consistent volunteer for Project YES.

We also welcome **William & Nancy Rollnick** as new **Kiaora Mentors**.

We thank renewing **Kiaora Mentors Gary Bremen & Roger Boone, Walter F. Goodman & Robert A. Flanders, Lee Brian Schragger, and Chesterfield Smith**, as well as **Judy Mercier** and **Juan Urquiola**, who renewed through **United Way**.

A special thanks to **Michael Wohlfelder & Albert Eldridge** for hosting our Spring Kiaora Event in their beautiful home and renewing as **Kiaora Mentors**.



Bob Oldakowski, Dr. Michael Wohlfelder, Martha Fugate, Connie Barden, and Albert Eldridge at the Spring Kiaora Event

Communication Course 24

By **Brian P. Winfield, Communications Director - Equality Florida**

I traveled from Tampa to the Communication Course knowing little about Project YES, other than a brief look at the web site. On Saturday evening, my life partner asked if I thought I was getting a lot out of the course. I replied, "It's an interesting and even exciting communication model." The model provides clear instruction for speakers on how to listen carefully and proactively take responsibility for moving the audience.



Participants of the 24th Communication Course at Project YES

Thank you for providing a new skill to add to my "tool box." I look forward to using your communication model for the benefit of everyone in my community. And I would be happy to represent Project YES in Tampa if there is ever a need.

The next **Communication Course** will be **Saturday and Sunday, July 14, 15**. To register, call or email our office at **305-663-7195 / email@projectyes.org**



Prof. Brad Stocker hosted three speakers from Project YES for his ESOL Class at Miami-Dade Community College, Kendall Campus.

MAST Academy

Project YES presented at a school-wide symposium for MAST Academy. Thanks to Dr. Julie Hood and the GSA Club, students had



MAST Academy Students

the opportunity to discuss and explore the issues of gay and lesbian youth, and the impact homophobia has on all students.

Switchboard of Miami Training

It was a full circle completion to have Switchboard of Miami come to Project YES for a training workshop. When Connie and Martha began Project YES, Switchboard was the agency that offered space for meetings in the first year. In May,



Switchboard of Miami Staff

we hosted 12 Outreach Educators for a full-day workshop, which opened up new opportunities for us to collaborate. Two participants also returned and completed our communication course.

“As educators, the Communication Course enhanced our listening skills and communication techniques. This novel approach also reminded us of the importance of communicating in a way that is inclusive of all youth.”

- **Monica Riviera, Outreach Educator**

Kiaora Society

Kiaora Society members donate \$1,000 or more to Project YES annually.

Visionary \$10,000 or more

Gill Foundation
A.D. Henderson Foundation
Itleson Foundation
Jonathan Lewis & Roberto Posada
John T. Macdonald Foundation
Ed McAmis & Gerson Gonzalez
New World Symphony
Rosie O'Donnell For All Kids Foundation
The Ruth Anderson Foundation

Champion \$5,000 or more

Greg Baldwin & Jose Castro
Dade Community Foundation
Dade Human Rights Foundation
Tim Dugan & Meredith Birrittella
Espirito Santo Plaza
North Dade Medical Foundation
Joseph H. & Florence A. Roblee Foundation
Carol & Ed Williamson

Leader

\$2,500 or more

Connie Barden & Martha Fugate
Nellie Barrios
Citibank FSB
Bob Cole
Coral Gables Congregational Church
Cordis Corporation
J. Bryan McCullar
Robert Oldakowski & Luis Mendoza
Karen Raben & Andrea Pernick
Jacques Soukup
William Vaughan

Mentor

\$1,000 or more

Nancy Allen
Architectural Alliance
Lang Baumgarten
Paula Black
Gary Bremen & Roger Boone
Brickell and Partners
Jerry Chasen
City National Bank of Florida & The Abess Family
Douglas DeBoer & Howard Kurzweil
DeliLane Café
Dupont Pharmaceuticals
Walter F. Goodman & Robert A. Flanders
FrameWorks
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William & Nancy Rollnick
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Howard Perry Rothberg, II & Paul A. Scolieri
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Janice & Howard Scholl
Lee Brian Schragger
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The Rev. Frank Smith & Isabelle Hill
Mark Steinberg & Dennis Edwards
Juan Carlos Urquiola
Kevin Veilleux & Jimmy Mourra
The Rev. Marta S. Weeks
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Upcoming events

The Communication Course—Saturday & Sunday, July 14, 15
We invite you to become a speaker or volunteer for Project YES. Please join us for the next Communication Course, July 14 & 15. Call Joe or Marra 305-663-7195.

Upcoming Community Meetings are the second Thursday of each month at our office. Everyone invited!
Thursday, July 12 at 3:30–5PM and Thursday, August 9 at 3:30–5PM

Special announcements

Update on Meetings with the Boy Scouts

We have been a part of the ongoing dialogue with the Boy Scouts and other community leaders, and we are happy to report some of the results.

The **Executive Board of the South Florida Boy Scout Council** has agreed to:

- Not become involved, or take sides, in local, regional, or national political campaigns or referendums, including the Miami-Dade Human Rights Ordinance debate
- Object to and prosecute anyone using BSA identification to imply endorsement of a political agenda
- Not request or accept government money for traditional Scouting programs
- Have their staff and board participate in a one-day diversity training

We feel this is a substantial beginning, and thank the **United Way** for hosting this important dialogue.



By *Eva Leivas-Andino, Program Manager*

Project YES participated in a panel presentation organized by **Florida International University Gay/Lesbian/Straight Alliance** during gay pride week. Tables were set in the Pit, a crossroads of several huge halls, stairs, entrances and exits in the middle of one of FIU's biggest buildings.

As I started to report on gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth issues, young and old, teachers, students and visitors began to congregate around us and pay careful attention. It was the perfect place for us to be, out in the open, under the bright Florida sun, amid the hustle and bustle of a crowded university.



By *Eva Leivas-Andino, Program Manager*

Project YES conducted a workshop this month at **Children's Psychiatric Center North** for their therapists, supervisor psychologists, licensed clinical social workers and senior staff.

Elsie Miranda and I were warmly greeted by **Ellen Wood** and introduced to the participants. We were inspired by their level of commitment to all families and their willingness to learn more and really make a difference for gay and lesbian youth and their families. They were energized by the presentation and a second workshop has been requested.

Welcome New Board Members



Marty Harris

Project YES is excited to welcome two new members to the Project YES Board of Directors.

Marty Harris, President of SCP Commercial Printing is a resident of Boca Raton.

Marty has been an unwavering supporter, printing our Welcome Posters, and playing an invaluable part in the success of our fundraiser.



Douglas DeBoer

If you attend our Community Meetings you already know **Douglas DeBoer**, who always shows up to contribute. His commitment secured the support of Arvida Realty, awarding Project YES funds

to purchase a PowerPoint projector.

We are extremely proud of our Board and are delighted to have Marty and Doug join our outstanding team.