

ReVision

re (ri) *n.* 1. anew, again **vision** (vizh 'u) *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.

Giving Back to the Community

A long line of excited children had already formed by the time we arrived in Little Haiti. The children were eager to receive new book bags and school supplies from Project YES to start their school year in style.

100 book bags with school supplies were provided by the **GLOW Project** to assist children in Miami-Dade County. Each year, GLOW makes such a donation in an effort to dispel myths and stereotypes about gay people.

The **CHARLEE Program** learned of the initiative and contributed an additional 50 book bags to benefit Haitian students.

Marlene Bastien, Director of Fanm Ayisyen (Haitian Women of Miami), was delighted that FANM was the recipient of this year's donation. FANM's staff and volunteers have continually inspired Project YES as role models with unwavering commitment to the social, political, and economic empowerment of their community.

Florida PTA Leadership Conference

Project YES presented the latest information on harassment in a workshop at the Innisbrook Leadership Conference in Tampa for the Florida State PTA.

- 160,000 youth skip school out of fear of being harassed each day
- # 1 reason students bring a weapon to school is to protect themselves from a bully
- 66% of youth involved in school shootings have been bullied
- One school-related killing in USA every 7 school days
- 4 out of 5 students harassed about orientation are identified as heterosexual
- Gay males account for more than half of male youth suicides

Thirty PTA leaders engaged in a very spirited discussion on the issue of sexual orientation. The realization of how difficult this topic is for parents was truly sobering. Even parents who have gay or lesbian youth preceded their comments with a cover statement about moral and religious positions. Several PTA members suggested the best way to include the issue was to categorize it under the broad heading of "harassment" and not mention the words "gay" or "lesbian." Religious conflicts and the judgments of others combine to keep parental concerns silent. We hope this workshop will help PTA leaders step forward and open dialogue in local PTA units across our state.



Haitian children and parents excited to receive new school supplies

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Baptist Health Systems CEU Training

By Nina Topp

I smiled my first real smile when I was 20 years old. I had lived for so long in a deep depression that I had begun to think that maybe I was just different—maybe I just wasn't capable of being happy and free like everyone else. Anti-depressants helped little, and the doctors and therapists I saw only frustrated me. But when I discovered that I am gay, everything made sense and my depression disappeared.

Of course, the coming out process was difficult, but once I discovered my true self, I knew I was going to be all right. My story has a happy ending, but it came after many years of unnecessary suffering. Of the many doctors and therapists I visited, not one of them broached the issue of sexual orientation.

This silence among health care providers is one of the reasons that Baptist Health Systems invited Project YES to conduct a sensitivity workshop at South Miami Hospital.

This workshop reached over 40 clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, mental health therapists, and nurses.

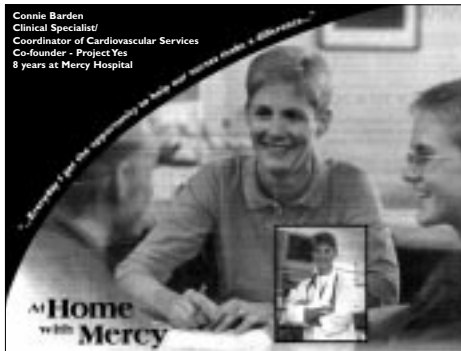


Eva Leivas-Andino, addressing social workers and nurses at SMH

“ Thanks for your support of what turned into a very successful educational event... the evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. ”

-Tom Pietrogallo, LCSW, Assistant Director of Social Work Services, South Miami Hospital

Our Board's National Nursing Leader



Mercy Hospital Advertisement featuring Connie Barden

Connie Barden, co-founder and Board Vice Chairperson of Project YES, is now President-Elect of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN). Connie works as a Cardiovascular Clinical Nurse Specialist at Mercy Hospital in Miami and has been a critical-care

nurse for 26 years. In 1999, she was elected to the National Board of Directors of AACN. Asked to submit her candidacy for President, Connie ran as the first openly-lesbian candidate of this organization and was voted in as President-Elect last July.

AACN is a professional organization that serves as the primary source of information and education for nurses who care for critically-ill patients. With 65,000 nurses and a 30 million dollar annual budget, AACN is the world's largest nursing specialty organization.

During her time as President, Connie will serve at the key spokesperson for this organization across the country.

Connie insists she still has time for Project YES. "Until our world is safe for ALL youth, I will be involved and supportive of Project YES."

“ I am always proud of Connie's enormous talents, but I was bedazzled by the courage she displayed and the candor she insisted upon while running for this office. I am looking forward to sharing the joy of our lives with the thousands of nurses Connie will participate with on this journey. ”

- Martha Fugate, Director, Project Yes

A Note From Naomi Tutu



Naomi Tutu

"We need more programs like Project YES that work with young people in the communities of which they are a part. We need programs like Project YES that remind us that

we all have a responsibility as parents, teachers, clergy, counselors, and friends to ensure the safety and dignity of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender youth."

Project YES is grateful for Ms. Tutu's encouragement and her inspiring work.

Safe Schools Summit

Project YES youth representative, Adrian Gonzalez, spoke at the 2001 Safe Schools Summit in Orlando and met with Florida Rep. Ken Gottlieb to discuss the "Dignity for All Students Act."



Florida Rep. Ken Gottlieb and Adrian Gonzalez. Photo: Jerry Perez

Calling Speakers

We have found a solution! Hundreds of speakers have been trained in our Communication Course and are ready to make a difference. We have struggled with how to contact all our volunteers when we have speaking opportunities. A new addition to our website is now set up to alert all speakers of opportunities.

Log on to our website at www.projectyes.org, click on the **Calendar** link at the top of the page, and check out what we're doing and where we're going to be. The calendar is updated daily, so check in regularly and let us know when you're available to speak, observe, or assist.

Your voice has the power to create motion.



Counseling Special and Diverse Populations Class at STU.

God As Love Celebration Luncheon

God As Love hosted 30 religious leaders who gathered to celebrate accomplishments and expand inclusiveness on gay and lesbian issues. **Rev. Dr. Marta Burke** announced that **120 individuals and 17 congregations** have signed Affirming Stands, signifying a commitment to gay youth. Along with reviewing current results, leaders were asked to look at policies and statements of inclusion from their denominations. Project YES assured the leaders that the resources of Project YES are available to support them and challenged them all to put forth their most creative ideas.



Religious leaders gather at Project YES to create the next step

The floor was then opened for brainstorming and the following ideas were generated:

- Create non-discrimination policies in churches, religious schools, and campus ministries
- Review national statements from each religious community regarding the Boy Scout discrimination policy
- Let the Boy Scouts know your stand
- Invite Project YES to make a presentation at your church or synagogue
- Offer the Communication Course to leaders, parents, and church youth
- Offer educational workshops for leaders of youth ministries
- Invite youth speakers from Project YES to share with youth ministries
- Create a church-to-church network of youth leaders
- Youth retreats
- Publicize churches and synagogues that offer Holy Unions
- Conduct parent support and education seminars

We ran out of time at 2 PM, and after thanking everyone, we concluded the lunch with our favorite question: **“What is Next?”**. To be continued...

St. Thomas University Presentation

I wish to extend my appreciation as well as that of the students in “Counseling Special and Diverse Populations” at St. Thomas University, for your “eye-opening” information and very personal sharing. Some comments from Course reflection journals included:

- “I wondered what someone 21 years old could teach me...thank you.”
 - “I appreciated Jason’s honesty and willingness to be vulnerable.”
- Cheri Marie Smith, LMHC-Adjunct Professor, School of Social Sciences and Counseling, St. Thomas University.

Kiaora Society Donor Update

Project YES would like to thank **Southern Country South Florida**, a country western dance club that raised over **\$7,000** in support of our work, two-stepping into the **Champion Level** of Kiaora.

We would like to thank **Robin Wolff** and **Kathy Gregory** for renewing their contribution with matching funds through **Prudential Financial** as **Mentors**. Also renewing as **Mentors** are **Howard Perry Rothberg II**, former Project YES board member **William Vaughan**, and our volunteer extraordinaire **Robert Longstreth**. We also welcome **Gordon Rhodes** as a new **Mentor** to Kiaora Society.

If you would like more information on how you can contribute to making sure the work of Project YES continues, please call us at **305-663-7195**.



Project YES participated at Coral Gables Congregational Ministry Fair and shared our work with new members in the local faith community.

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
Jonathan Lewis & Roberto Posada
John T. Macdonald Foundation
Ed McAmis & Gerson Gonzalez
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
Miami Beach Police Department
North Dade Medical Foundation
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Southern Country South Florida, Inc.
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Leader

\$2,500 or more

Connie Barden & Martha Fugate
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Cordis Corporation
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Robert Oldakowski & Luis Mendoza
Karen Raben & Andrea Pernick
Jacques Soukup

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
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Juan Carlos Urquiola
William Vaughan
Kevin Veilleux & Jimmy Mourra
Tim Wagoner & Victor Garcia
The Rev. Marta S. Weeks
Lori Weens-Hertz
Kathleen Wells & Donald Dillport
Steve Werner
Robin Wheatley & Jeffrey Newton
Dr. Michael Wohlfelder & Albert Eldridge
Robin Wolff & Kathy Gregory
Prudential Financial
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Special announcements

Project YES Community Meetings
Thursday, November 8, at 3:30 PM
Thursday, December 13, at 3:30 PM

Communication Course
Open enrollment for Sat. & Sun., January 19 & 20
Call Marta or Joseph at 305-663-7195

Upcoming events

Broward Student SAFE-T Course-Opportunities to assist.
Call Joseph at 305-663-7195

For upcoming events and speaking opportunities, go online to www.projectyes.org and click the Calendar link.

Now More than Ever

By Martha Fugate

Now more than ever we are aware of what it is like to not feel safe. As we struggle to look for solutions, not merely retaliation, we are overwhelmed with the task before us. The problem contains enormous complexities and any hope of quick answers is soon entangled in additional complicating factors. Knotted and complex layers of involvement entwine many people, nations, and ideologies. It becomes almost incomprehensible when you add the myriad of components such as geography, poverty, education, hunger, and endless others. How do you rid the world of one someone, yet protect another standing nearby? How do we create a safer world for everyone?

Our mission is to protect gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth. This also leads us inextricably to the entire community. This is an

unexpected blessing of our work, for without it, surely we would have worked single-mindedly doing only what we wanted done. When people feel threatened or afraid they lash out or attack in the direction of the perceived enemy.

When affronted by attacks, we all react instantaneously and automatically, releasing our hurt and anger. Doing what comes naturally and what we want is easy; the hard work is going beyond reaction and working to find a way through, to another. Staying the course of a purpose large enough to find win/win solutions for all is hard, challenging and courageous work.

Today, more than ever, we embrace the importance of our work and commit to the model we use to accomplish it. You can count on us to continue unrelentingly with our efforts to create a safer world for all people.

Citibank Homebuyer Workshop

By Joseph Zolobczuk



Citibank mortgage and banking professionals led the workshop

One of the great hallmarks of the American Dream is the opportunity to own your own home. Yet in a society of primarily heterosexual

relationships, the systems are built around the institution of marriage. People who are gay and lesbian often discover that finding their place in

'Americana' can be trying and difficult.

Recognizing the unique challenges faced by the gay and lesbian community, Citibank conducted a free Homebuyers Seminar at Project YES last month.

We thank Citibank for bringing their resources to Project YES.

If you have questions for Citibank regarding banking and mortgages, please call Emilio Vazquez, Vice President Coral Gables Financial Center at 305-669-5554.