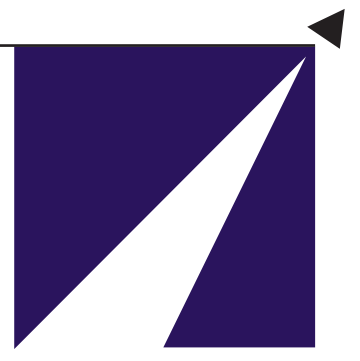


ReVision



P R O J E C T

YES

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

Making our world safe for ALL youth

Making Georgia Connections



Future teachers at Georgia College & State University open a new dialogue with Project YES

Milledgeville, the home of Georgia College & State University, was the first stop on a week-long journey through Georgia, which connected Project YES with hundreds of students and faculty across four college campuses. We were fortunate to find two extraordinary youths from the gay support group who volunteered to be our speakers.

“On conservative campuses in Georgia, gay and lesbian youth face strong, but silent opposition. Facing an audience of 140 students is intimidating, especially knowing you're going to tell them a secret that society has unjustly asked you to keep. Many were surprised to hear how poorly we are treated by our peers and parents. They were also surprised to hear that our stories don't differ so much from their own,” said college student Bo Shell.

Next, we traveled to Gainesville College where the entire student body was invited to an open dialogue in the auditorium.



Gainesville College welcomes Project YES

“Nestled at the foothills of the Georgia mountains, Gainesville College has many students with different religions, nationalities, and sexualities, but there are

and every single one of them stayed. That shocked us! We thought at least a few people would get offended and leave before the end!”

We completed our week in Dahlonega, Georgia, with a communication course at North Georgia College & State University, hosted by the Dean of Education. Visiting faculty and students from nearby Piedmont College also attended.



Dahlonega, Georgia

“This experience helped me grow. I made connections with people on a new level. I feel empowered to actually make a difference in my school,” said university student Beth Newton.



Students engage in gender discussion at Gainesville College

“Soon the audience was raising hands and asking questions about what they can do to prevent the cycle of hate. By introducing the concept of purpose, people who would have never supported us realized the back-and-forth banter of who's right and who's wrong totally ignores the real issues. Project YES challenged everyone in the presentation to respect students' right to safety, and by the end, I doubt any one of them will ignore it again.”

very few open or accepting views on gays. The concerns of gay students are left to a small group of six or seven students and three faculty members who meet once a week in a classroom behind closed doors. Project YES finally broke down that barrier,” said college student William Mellette.

“How many people would attend a meeting during their lunch hour on a topic that many find offensive or taboo? We couldn't have been more surprised when over 150 students and teachers showed up,

Leadership in Action

The first Leadership in Action course shared the secrets of our success at Project YES... a different way of being centered around powerful communication.

“I had no idea what to expect or if I was even ready for the challenges that lay ahead. I left the seminar focused and attentive to one goal: making a difference in my community,” said FSU student Taryn Wharwood. “Without Project YES leading by example, I would not have known where to begin. I believe that I now have the necessary tools to make my goals a reality.”

continued on page 2

Visit www.projectyes.org to access upcoming speaking engagements, educational workshops, and online donations.

Project YES Community Meeting
Thursday, February 12, 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
Everyone's invited!

Leadership in Action

continued from page 1

The day was invigorating and the camaraderie and support shown by all participants was inspiring.



Kevin Pastor, William Villanueva and Paul Scarpita

Watching new young leaders identify and overcome the fears that have stopped them and fully express their inspiration was most gratifying.

"I once considered myself a religious person or maybe in some way I still am. I was always involved in my church serving the community, visiting the sick or helping out at youth group. Once I knew that I was gay, I knew that my church wouldn't accept me. However, I still want to serve God, and I realized that's what I want to do at Twentysomethings. Here, we give youth a place to go, instead of the clubs and bars, where they can be safe, have fun, and meet a whole bunch of new friends," said Paul Scarpita, board member of Twentysomethings, a non-profit youth organization.

Discussion Impacts Hispanic Residents



Eva Leivas-Andino speaks to residents of Fellowship House

Eva Leivas-Andino presented in Spanish to the Hispanic residents of Fellowship House. Their thoughtful questions and kind attention reminded us that the topics of orientation and gender pervade every ethnicity, every language, and every community. Call us to schedule a presentation for your group in either English or Spanish.

Reaching Juvenile Justice Employees

By Sara Saffarian, Project YES Youth Speaker

It is difficult to walk into a room full of 60 strangers not familiar with the topic of gay and lesbian youth. It's even more intimidating to share your personal story when you don't know how they will react. When the Juvenile Justice employees learned how they can save lives, they wanted more information.



Sara Saffarian speaking with Department of Juvenile Justice employees

As I told my story, they were touched by my pain. The crowd that at first struck me as homophobic and disinterested, was now asking questions about my life and how they can help other kids.

What touched me the most was when people came up to me after the presentation, handed me a tissue, and stayed to ask more questions.

"People are only afraid of what they don't know," Martha said to me once.

I'm happy to be able to educate with Project YES even if it is simply sharing my personal experience.



DJJ Allapatah training session

Episcopal Dialogue

By Martha Fugate

I had the pleasure of watching leadership in action in our continuing work with Bishop Rev. Leo Frade and Bishop Rev. James Ottley and the



Southeast Florida Episcopal Diocese. It is one thing to know the right choices in a theoretical situation, and it is quite another to be a leader when the stakes are painfully and precariously balanced around the survival of that which you love – your church and the people in it. These two courageous men are leading an extraordinary dialogue for Episcopal faithful in our community. It is a privilege to be able to work in partnership with them.

Central Florida YES Makes Strides With Communication

Exciting results are emerging at Central Florida YES where the Project YES communication course was recently offered to parents, clergy, youth and teachers. The Orlando County School District awarded continuing education credits to the six participating teachers.

"The incredible stories of pain and suffering were certainly eye openers for me," said an Orlando school teacher.



Orange County school teachers participate in course



First Congregational Church of Winter Park

The First Congregational Church of Winter Park hosted the course in their state-of-the-art media room. We were inspired by both the commitment and enthusiasm of the people who participated. Identifying the next steps to expand the work of CFYES, they made declarations to approach the Chamber of Commerce, PTA chapters, schools, clergy groups and local foundations.



Lissa Curtis-Weakley, Director of Central Florida YES, with Joseph Zolobczuk

"My first thought was, 'Why would I need that? I know how to communicate.' I learned to listen first and not judge. Now I am not afraid, and am able to be with people I would usually run away from."

- Central Florida youth

Kiaora Society Updates

We are extremely grateful for the generous philanthropic vision of incoming **Board Chair Tim Dugan** and his partner **Meredith Birrittella**. Sourcing our donor challenge, their commitment generated a total of **\$44,500**.



Tim Dugan, Martha Fugate and Meredith Birrittella

Jonathan Lewis continues his remarkable **Visionary** support contributing through the **POLE Foundation, Jonathan D. Lewis Foundation and Helen & Joseph Lewis Philanthropic Fund**.

We welcome **Jonathan and Tina Kislak** as new **Kiaora Society Visionaries**. We are deeply grateful for Jon's extraordinary support and friendship.

Invited by managers Alfredo Barbery and Rosamaria Franchy, Eva Leivas-Andino visited the Citibank Financial Centers in Coral Gables and Key Biscayne to talk about the work and mission of Project YES.



Key Biscayne Citibank Financial Center

Thank you, Citibank Florida, Alfredo and Rosamaria!

We thank our good friends **Visionaries Ruth and Jack Admire** and the **Ruth Anderson Foundation** for our recent grant award. We also thank the **Shepard Broad Foundation** and the **Funding Exchange** for their financial support. The **Cobb Family Foundation** also joined the Kiaora Society, made possible by **Charles E. Cobb, Jr.**

We welcome **June Raben**, mother of Dr. Karen Raben, as new **Kiaora Mentor** and new Citibank friends **Daniel Carriazo, Arlene Gómez & José Rodriguez** and **Ernesto Gonzalez**.

We thank renewing **Mentors Randall Gluss, Edward McIntyre, Robert Longstreth, Tim Wagoner & Victor Garcia**, and incoming board member **Emilio Vazquez**.



Coral Gables Citibank Financial Center

The **North Dade Medical Foundation** has awarded Project YES a grant to make North Miami a safer place for all youth. We are deeply grateful for their ongoing support.



John Cathe, MD, Chairman of Grant Committee at North Dade Medical Foundation, with Eva Leivas-Andino and Sandra Giblin

Communication Solutions Course

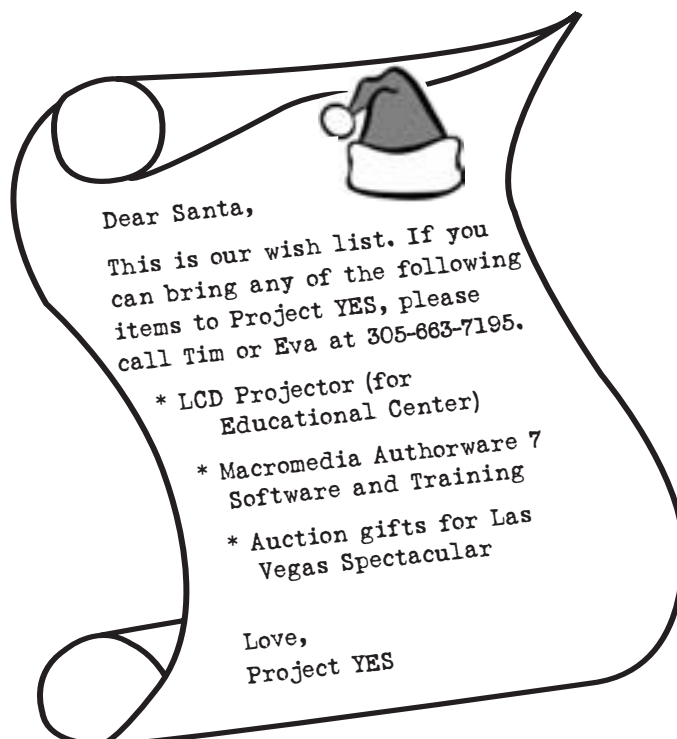


Participants in the September communication course

Call **305-663-7195** now to register for the next Communication Solutions course, or sign up online at projectyes.org/register.

“Coming from San Francisco, I didn't expect to see such diversity in one room. A gay police officer, a concerned mother of her gay son, a reverend, youth ministers, fathers, grandmothers, everyone with one shared passion that brought us all to this room, gay related or not: to help our youth grow in a safe space so that they can be who they are without fear or in harm's way.”

- Student Participant



Kiaora Society

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



Visionary

\$10,000 or more

Tim Dugan & Meredith Birrittella
Jonathan & Tina Kislak
Jonathan Lewis
Ed McAmis & Gerson Gonzalez
Peter Pilotti & Joseph Rodano

Champion

\$5,000 or more

Greg Baldwin & Jose Castro
Stephen E. Herbits
Bill Ross
Jacques Soukup
Rev. Marta S. Weeks
Carol & Ed Williamson

Leader

\$2,500 or more

Connie Barden & Martha Fugate
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Paula Black
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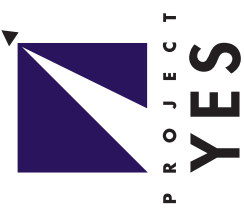
\$1,000 or more

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Samuel Spencer Blum & Milenko Samardzich
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5275 Sunset Drive
Miami, FL 33143
www.projectyes.org



5275 Sunset Drive, Miami, FL 33143
Ph: 305-663-7195 Fax: 305-663-7197
www.projectyes.org

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High Schools Invite Project YES to Speak



Thanks to Brenda Benitez, LMHC, Eva Leivas-Andino had the opportunity to speak to the students of Miami Springs Senior High School. The dialogue we created together and the questions that followed reminded us of the need for students to address these topics in a open forum.

"I learned today not to judge a person by how they look or act. I see now that when we make fun of people, it can really cause pain for no reason."
- Miami Springs High School student

Project YES offers accredited workshops available to students, parents, and professionals. Visit www.projectyes.org for upcoming course dates and times.

Cathy Cline and Sara Saffarian visited Turner Tech High School to share their experiences and talk about Project YES. There was one person that wanted to know everything and how she could help... the president of the Turner Tech High School GSA. The students shared their stories of how it can be difficult with their families. Some were out to their parents, some were not. Everyone wanted to make the world better for teens, starting with their own high school.



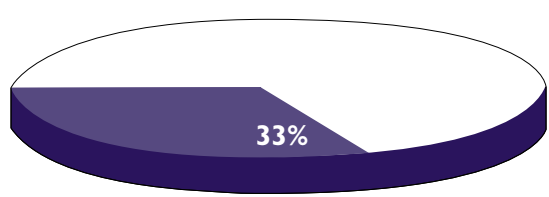
Turner Tech High School students

Our Vision

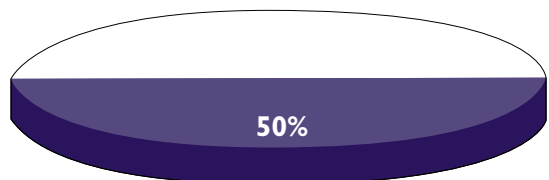
A community in which gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and all youth develop as healthy individuals free of suicide, violence and discrimination.

Our Mission

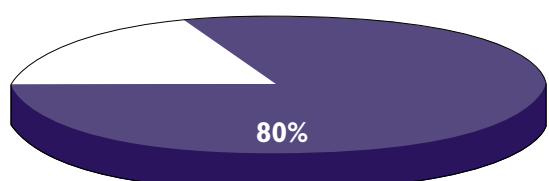
To prevent suicide and ensure the healthy development of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth by initiating dialogue, providing education and creating support systems.



33% of all teenage suicides are committed by gay and lesbian youth.



50% of gay youth are rejected by their parents when their orientation is discovered.



80% of all youth harassed in school for being perceived as gay are heterosexual.

CAU Presentation Explores Gender

"What is it that makes you gay and me not? What's the difference between someone heterosexual and homosexual?" asked a perceptive psychology student.

The youth speaker answered, "There is no difference. We use labels to reflect cultural divisions and attempt to fit individuals into neat categories. We don't know why people are attracted to same sex partners anymore than we know why people are attracted to opposite sex partners."

Thanks to Dr. Carol Clark, these and other questions were explored by the Project YES speakers and the graduate class at Carlos Albizu University. If you would like to bring these conversations to your classroom, please call Project YES at 305-663-7195.



Students attend the presentation at Carlos Albizu University

For citations and additional statistics:
www.projectyes.org/research