

news notes: from the carolinas, nation and world

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Programs need more funding

RALEIGH — North Carolina AIDS Director Jacquelyn Clymore (pictured) said in an interview on Dec. 1 with Chris Fitzsimon on NC Policy's Watch's "News & Views" radio show that although AIDS patients today are experiencing longer and better lives, more treatment and research funding is still needed.

At this time last year, Clymore reported that the state's AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) would have to put a cap on how many it could serve in 2011, thus necessitating the need for a waiting list. It now has more than 6,200 individuals on its roster, with 106 more still on standby. The program dispenses anti-retroviral medication.

The University of North Carolina on July 18 released details from a landmark HIV prevention trial, the HIV Prevention Trials Network 052 study at the 6th International AIDS Society Conference on Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention in Rome.

Clymore shared these findings stating that if those who are HIV positive were to receive early treatment and care and would take their medications as directed that they reduce their transmission rate by 96 percent. It means that their viral load is so suppressed that they do not transmit virus to their uninfected partners.

"This study represents the culmination of many years of work, and we are thrilled by its success and by the opportunity to share these data with our colleagues and the public," said Dr. Myron Cohen, J. Herbert Bate Distinguished Professor of Medicine at UNC and principal investigator of the study.

"This is the best news we've seen in years since AZT came out years ago," Clymore added. She also said that it was the most effective prevention tool and was powerful.

ADAP is funded jointly by state and federal monies and is designed to provide a resource for low income residents. Gross income must be at or below 300 percent of the federal poverty level. It is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services. It provides other lists of resources for those with HIV/AIDS, like information on the Ryan White Fund, legal and bilingual information services, local health departments and AIDS service organizations, as well as programs for those who are incarcerated. It also lists pharmaceutical assistance programs from a variety of programs and manufacturers.

For more information, visit ncpolicywatch.com to listen to the entire interview.

— L.M.



Charlotte

Scholarships offered by PFLAG

SALISBURY — Four \$1,000 scholarships are being offered by the Salisbury/Rowan Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) for the 2012-12 academic year, *The Salisbury Post* reported.

Rowan County lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students and/or their straight allies are eligible. Applicants may be private, public or home-schooler seniors.

Scholarships are awarded on an annual basis to honor four champions of LGBT equality. They are: the Anne Stanback-Charlotte Kinlock Scholarship; the Founder's Equality Scholarship (which honors the chapter's founder Michael Clawson); the Linda Ketner Community Service Scholarship; and the Bob Page-Dale Frederiksen Business Scholarship (which honors Replacements, Ltd. of Greensboro's founder and CEO and his life partner).

The Autumn Soirée helps to fund the scholarships, along with other supporters. Scholarship Advisory Committee Chair Carol Williams-Swoope shared that students do not have to go to a four-year school to qualify. Community colleges or trade schools are also included in the offering.

Deadline for application is March 14, 2012. Notification will be made by April 14, 2012.

To obtain an application or for more information, call Williams-Swoope at 704-212-2215, email cwilliams138@carolina.rr.com or

visit salisbury-pflag.org.

— L.M.

James seeks re-election

CHARLOTTE — Republican Mecklenburg County Commissioner Bill James announced on Dec. 2 that he intends to seek a ninth term on the board. James and other commissioners are up for re-election in 2012.

In his announcement, James indicated that he will support an anti-LGBT state constitutional amendment banning marriage, civil unions and domestic partnerships for same-sex couples.

"Next May's primary election will include a Constitutional ballot amendment to limit marriage to 'one man-one woman,'" James said. "I fully support this and hope that you will vote YES."

Last year, James made waves when he compared gay people to pedophiles. The outrage over his comments spread nationally, leading to a petition campaign that collected more than 20,000 signatures. Though censure was discussed by his county commission colleagues, they later scrapped the idea in favor of a weak "equality resolution" for which James himself even voted.

— M.C.

Non-profit featured in documentary

CHARLOTTE — Campus Pride, a locally-based, national non-profit organization that works with LGBT college and university

students, is featured in a new documentary scheduled for release next year.

"Legalize Gay: The Civil Rights Movement of a Generation" features interviews from a diverse array of young adult leaders and established LGBT community organization leaders, including Campus Pride's Shane Windmeyer, current Pennsylvania State House candidate Brian Sims, former U.S. Rep. Gabby Giffords intern-turned-hero Daniel Hernandez and others.

The film is scheduled for release on the national, gay and lesbian cable network Logo next year.

A portion of the advanced screenings proceeds will benefit Campus Pride.

For more information about the film, visit CampusPride.org/LegalizeGay.

— M.C.

Triangle

Center adds funding goal wish list

RALEIGH — The LGBT Center of Raleigh has surpassed its \$10,000 Fall Fundraising Campaign goal by \$75.

In addition to the \$10,000 one-time donation goal, the center hopes to meet a \$2,500 challenge in pledges for monthly recurring donations. At press time, the group has raised \$1,275.

Board Treasurer Les Geller said that they want to meet the objective by year's end. The funds will be used to cover basic operational costs and overhead. Salaries comes from other resources. They had hoped to reach the pledge challenge by Nov. 30, but that did not happen.

For more information or to make a contribution, visit lgbtcenterofraleigh.com and click the "donate" button.

— M.C. & L.M.

OutRaleigh event announced

RALEIGH — Volunteers and staffers with the LGBT Center of Raleigh announced on Dec. 1 that their annual OutRaleigh festival will be held on May 5, 2012.

Organizers say the event's date is significant, coming just three days before the scheduled vote on an anti-LGBT state constitutional amendment that would ban marriage, civil unions and domestic partnerships for same-sex couples.

"At a time when North Carolina is in the national spotlight, let's make America's LGBTQ and ally communities proud, and quash bigoted legislation with pride, fortitude, and solidarity," the group said in a release.

The group says they will be expanding the festival's footprint in 2012 and include more entertainment, children's activities and vendors.

For more information, visit outraleigh.org or lgbtcenterofraleigh.com.

— M.C.

CMF seeks donations

RALEIGH — Crape Myrtle Festival has announced its CMF32 Holiday Drive for 25 campaign. It hopes to raise \$25,000 to provide support for those who are living with HIV/AIDS.

Contributions can be made either online or by mail. One time or reoccurring payment methods are available.

Visit crapemyrtlefest.org and click over to the donations page to pledge support or download the sponsorship form and mail to Crape Myrtle Fest, Inc., P.O. Box 12201, Raleigh, NC 27605-2201.

— L.M.

Wolfson says legislation will tie hands

CHAPEL HILL — Executive director of the national Freedom to Marry, Evan Wolfson (pictured), had an opportunity to share his views on "Why Marriage Matters" and the impending anti-LGBT constitutional amendment with students at the University of North Carolina School of Law's Center on Law and Government on Nov. 28.

This referendum, which will be on the ballot in May 2012, bans marriages, civil unions and domestic partnerships and would "tie the hands of future generations," he said.

The current measure will be an electoral, not a legislative, decision. A troubling prospect, Wolfson said.

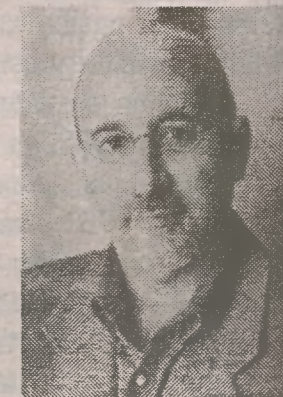
"Can you get the majority to vote with the minority?" Wolfson asked, adding that it was a "tall order" and that the responsibility has to be to get the voters out that are persuaded to vote against the measure.

Wolfson also spoke with NC Policy Watch and Equality North Carolina on Nov. 29. The subject was "Crucial Conversation: What would the marriage discrimination amendment really mean for North Carolina?" Other speakers included University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Law Professors Maxine Eichner and Holning Lau, as well as Stuart Campbell, executive director of Equality North Carolina.

Recent polls suggest that even though the referendum has significant support, there is growth among North Carolinians who express that they are okay with legal recognition of same-sex couples.

For more information or to view the videos, visit goqnotes.com/13505.

— M.C. & L.M.



Regional

Ski weekend on horizon

BLOWING ROCK — In its fourth season, the Summit 2012 Gay Ski Weekend will be held Jan. 19-22, 2012.

Tagged as a premier travel vacation and winter event in the Southeast, it welcomes attendees from across the region.

Lodging will be available in the downtown area and at two properties closer to the slopes. Visit the event website to view room packages which include black diamond passes, as well as costs.

Two types of passes are available for those who wish to enjoy the festivities, but will not be staying at the event resorts.

For more information, call NC High Country at 855-234-6242, option 5, email barb@gonhighcountry.com or visit ncgayskiweekend.com.

— L.M.