

# news notes: carolinas. nation. world.

compiled by Lainey Millen | Matt Comer

## Charlotte

### Conference features 'Project Runway' winner

CHARLOTTE — The Annual United States Conference on AIDS was held during early September and local advocates and healthcare workers were able to attend and represent the Charlotte area.



Advocates from all over the U.S. joined together to share experiences and learn from each other during the educational conclave. Included in the contingency was Different Roads Home CEO and President Dale Pierce.

"The atmosphere was one of revitalization of the spirit of what we do," he said.

Pierce added, "One of the themes that came out of the conference was that as great as the *Affordable Care Act* may be for those with HIV, we still have to advocate for more changes and make sure the focus does not shift off of education and prevention."

A spotlight on HIV/AIDS in the south was targeted during the conference.

Conference-goers were able to meet Denver, Colo.-native Armando Thomas "Mondo" Guerra, a winner of "Project Runway All Stars." During his time on the reality show, he revealed his HIV status.

Guerra spoke at the conference's main plenary and reminded everyone about being aware of one's HIV/AIDS status, as well as being true to dreams and desires, no matter the circumstances. He tirelessly works to educate the public about the issues surrounding HIV/AIDS.

In other news, Different Roads Home is seeking Ryan White Memorial Scholarship Fund applications. Deadline is Nov. 1. Recipients will receive the awards at the 4th Annual Evening of Hope & Inspiration on Nov. 23.

The Good Road Project is in search of mentors who can share their experience with those who have received a positive diagnosis and "is having difficulty coping with illness, and/or struggling with treatment, knowledge and adherence. Training for the post must be completed before pairing with a mentee. Email [kstrong@differentroadshome.org](mailto:kstrong@differentroadshome.org) to learn more. An application is available online.

info: [nmac.org](http://nmac.org), [mondoguerra.com](http://mondoguerra.com), [differentroadshome.org](http://differentroadshome.org).

— L.M.

## Triad

### Foundation to host fundraiser

WINSTON-SALEM — The Adam Foundation will hold its 24th Annual Adam Festival on Nov. 2, 7-11 p.m., at the Milton Rhodes Center for the Arts, 251 N. Spruce St.

This year, attendees will be able to enjoy the "big top" with a fun circus atmosphere, meet the 2013 grant recipients and enjoy food, dancing, silent and live auctions, door prizes and more.

Monies taken in for the event will fund the 2014 grant cycle.

All festival sponsors who contribute \$250 or more through Oct. 31 are entitled to receive tickets to the event as part of their sponsorship package. They are listed on the foundation's website.

A pre-party for sponsors will take place by special invitation on Nov. 1, 6-8:30 p.m., at Sawtooth School for Visual Art, 251 N. Spruce St. It comes complete with heavy appetizers, drinks and other treats.

Tickets are \$80/advance and \$15/students which are available online and \$85/at the door. info: [adamfoundation.org](http://adamfoundation.org).

— L.M.

### Law students lend hand

WINSTON-SALEM — The Associated Press reported that Wake Forest University gay and lesbian law students availed their services for free at Winston-Salem Pride on Oct. 19.

They were joined by friends as they dispensed legal help to who needed it with regard to completion of healthcare power of attorney forms. info: [wfu.edu](http://wfu.edu).

— L.M.

## Triangle

### Robinson addresses religion issues

RALEIGH — Bishop Gene Robinson, who was the first openly gay Episcopal bishop, was at North Carolina State University on Oct. 14 speaking on the subject of God Believes in Love, Straight Talk about Gay Marriage at Witherspoon's Campus Cinema. This event was part of the school's Diversity Education Week.

*The Technician* reported that during his introduction, the university's Center for Leadership, Ethics and Public Service Vice President Dani Lechner presented Robinson with an honorary Role Model Leader Award.

During his address, Robinson shared that "thirty years ago, most Americans would have told you that they didn't know anyone who was gay... And now, there isn't a family left in America who doesn't know one family member, one coworker or one classmate who isn't LGBT."

He added that society had advanced and evolved, thus making it possible for the LGBT community to be more accepted. He also said that even with progress, there are still "some elements of religion" that place pressure on the LGBT people, however, he indicated that

## Cooper to be keynote speaker at gala

Award winners to be recognized

GREENSBORO — The Equality NC Foundation has announced that the state's Attorney General Roy Cooper will serve as the keynote speaker at its 2013 gala, "A Celebration of Home," on Nov. 9 at the Empire Room, 203 S. Elm St.

*qnotes* reported on Oct. 15 that equality advocates in North Carolina have praised Cooper's supportive personal remarks with regard to same-sex marriage. "The Attorney General has long been an advocate for equal rights for all people and we applaud him for publicly aligning with a fast-growing majority of North Carolinians who now support the legal relationship recognitions between committed LGBT couples," Chris Sgro, executive director of Equality North Carolina, said in a release.

Cooper was a vocal opponent of anti-gay Amendment One. During the evening's program, the Equality NC Foundation Gala Awards will be presented to:



N.C. Sen. Josh Stein, Jamie Kirk Hahn Ally Award; Janet Joyner, Bob Page Equality Champion Award; N.C. Rep. Tricia Cotham, Legislative Leadership Award; and Freedom Center for Social Justice, Organization of the Year Award.

Stein, of Raleigh, voted against Amendment One and believes that sexual orientation and gender identity should be included in the state's workplace non-discrimination law and actively worked to include sexual orientation and gender identity the *School Violence Prevention Act*, the K-12 anti-bullying legislation that passed the General Assembly in 2009.

Joyner, of Winston-Salem, has been a decades-long proponent of safe schools and as such helped to formulate

the statewide anti-bullying policy proposal to the State Board of Education in 2004, but it failed. Subsequently, it did become a basis for the model of legislation for 2009's *School Violence Protection Act*.



Cotham, of Charlotte, was an opponent of Amendment One and has spoken out against discrimination as well. In 2013, Cotham upped the pro-equality ante, sponsoring historic legislation that would offer statewide workplace protections for all state employees and teachers. The bill hasn't yet passed, but Cotham remains committed to seeing it through.

Bishop Tonyia Rawls, founder of Charlotte's Freedom Center for Social Justice, will accept an award honoring her

organization. The work of the center focuses on enhancing the quality of life by increasing the number of healthy options and opportunities available to low income communities, communities of color, sexual minorities and youth.

Registration is \$160 until Oct. 27 and will increase to \$190 until the day of the event. Active-military duty rate is \$50.

The Proximity Hotel, 704 Green Valley Rd., serves as the hospitality host for the gala. Reservations can be made online. Be sure to ask for the special gala rate when booking accommodations. Cost is \$159/night for king loft and \$169 for double queen. Transportation to the gala is included in the room rate. info: [equalityncfoundation.org](http://equalityncfoundation.org), [proximityhotel.com](http://proximityhotel.com).



— L.M. & M.C.

religion could become an "integral part" of the LGBT community.

The day after his engagement, *The Technician* reported that there was some backlash from its anti-LGBT student body.

Gregory McClanahan reported that Robinson was being demeaned, even after he received the highly distinguished role model award.

Some students felt that Robinson was a hypocrite. They even questioned how he could believe in God.

These attacks, McClanahan shared, "In a world where Christians claim to want love and

peace, there is an awful lot of hatred around the Christian community." He even went so far as to say that every student should take "courses like USC 100, Transition into a Diverse Community" to develop more understanding about those "who are different from them."

McClanahan indicated that by if a "stable social environment that promotes the care and respect from every single member of this university" could not be maintained, "then how are we going to have a community that

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