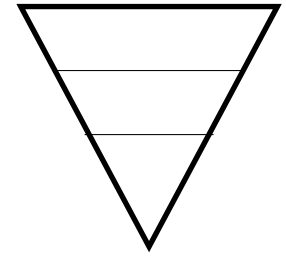


LGBT PHW NEWS



In official relations with the American Public Health Association

August 2006

Chair's Column

When I arrived at my first APHA Annual Meeting in Boston in 2000, I was quickly overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of the experience. Never before had I attended a conference with such diversity in content, attendees, and opportunities to participate. While the meeting was an amazing validation that professionally I had made the right choice by going into public health, I wanted to find others to share the experience with. I found the LGBT Caucus.

At first, I wasn't sure that the Caucus was the right place for me. Professionally, I was working in Cancer Control, not LGBT Health. I had always had an interest in LGBT public health issues, but had few opportunities to explore those interests in my work, or so I thought back then.

What membership in the LGBT Caucus did for me initially was provide a familial environment, a place I could "campout" with other LGBT people in the big forest of APHA, and explore how I could integrate lessons learned from LGBT scientific sessions into my cancer control work. Yet, I seem to be in the minority of our Caucus membership. Most Caucus members seem to be working in the field of LGBT health in some way. However, if there are about 50,000 APHA members (with LGBT folks making up between 5-10% of them), the LGBT Caucus could have as many as 5,000 members! So I ask this question: "Why are there LGBT APHA members who are not members of the LGBT Caucus?"

(continued Page 2, column 1)



The State Laboratory Institute of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Jamaica Plain, MA.

Program Chair's Report

The 2006 program of the LGBT Caucus of Public Health Workers at the APHA Annual Meeting in Boston promises to continue to bring forward LGBT priorities in public health. We had an increase in the number of abstracts submitting this year over 2005.

Seven oral sessions and two poster sessions will be held, representing a wide array of research, practice, and advocacy work within LGBT communities. The seven oral sessions are listed below:

- Community Organizing & Coalition Building (5175.0)
- LGBT Youth Research (5121.0)
- Lesbian & Bisexual Women's Health (4322.0)
- Mental Health in LGBT Communities (4045.0)
- PC: Policy & Competency, Prevention & Community, Populations & Class (3327.0)
- Transgender Health (3223.0)
- Gay & Bisexual Men's Health (3411.0)

In addition to the oral sessions, the two poster sessions are: HIV, ATOD, STD & DV (4176.1) and LGBT Health Disparities (4176.2)

(continued Page 2, column 2)

Chair's Column, continued from Page 1, column 1

My guess is that these APHA members either: A) don't understand the full scope of our Caucus' mission, or B) no one has asked them to join. Well, I believe that fixing a problem begins at home. Therefore, for those of you who are not familiar with the mission of the LGBT Caucus, here it is:

- To provide a forum for supportive educational interchange among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender APHA members.
- To provide the opportunity for APHA members and other health care workers to learn about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender public health related issues.
- To improve health care services for Lesbians, Gay men, Bisexuals and Transgendered people by combating homophobia and heterosexism within APHA as an organization and within public and private health care delivery systems.
- To ensure that Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender public health issues are addressed in APHA's policy statements.

Solving the second problem is more complicated. That is where we all need to do some work. Tell your colleagues in APHA *that* you are a member of the LGBT Caucus, *why* you are a member, and encourage them to join as well. Tell your friends in APHA that are LGBT that even if they don't work in LGBT Health, that's okay to join the LGBT Caucus! The first tenet of the Caucus' mission is to provide a forum for supportive educational interchange among LGBT members.

Remember that there is strength in numbers and with a larger, more diverse membership that includes Lesbians, Gay men, Bisexuals and Transgendered people, we can continue to serve our mission effectively and advance LGBT Health and the role of LGBT health workers. Let's all make a commitment to maintain our membership in the LGBT Caucus and to each recruit at least one new member to join us in our work.

—Andy Miller



Tony Silvestre receiving the 25th Anniversary award for the LGBT Caucus from Dr. Georges Benjamin

Program Chair's Column, continued from Page 1, Column 2

We also will need volunteers to staff the Caucus Booth in the Exposition Center. Come meet great people and have a fun time! Shifts will be scheduled in one or two hour intervals. There will be a Sign-up Sheet at the LGBT Caucus Business Meeting and Welcome Social, and you can also drop by the Booth to volunteer.

A special thanks to all who submitted abstracts and to the volunteers who helped in the review process. Without your support and contributions, the Caucus could not produce the quality program for which we have come to be recognized.

More detailed information regarding the dates, times, and location of all Caucus professional and social events during the annual meeting will be provided in the next newsletter just before you head off to the annual meeting.

—Rich Trevino



Anthony DiStefano, PhD, MPH (2005 recipient of the Walter J. Lear Outstanding Student Award) and Rich Trevino (LGBT Caucus Program Chair)



Editor's Column

As the LGBT Caucus prepares for the 2006 APHA Annual Meeting in November, I would like to reflect on the theme of this year's Meeting – "Public Health and Human Rights" – and the role of our Caucus in ensuring that our lives and rights are not ignored in APHA.

I live in Massachusetts which has been in the eye of the hysterical tornado about our rights related to marriage, and subsequently has forced the state legislature to stand up against bigotry. In Boston, the speaker at this year's pre-Pride "Interfaith Service" on June 10th was a well-liked Catholic priest from Newton who was removed from his parish for marrying two lesbians. Apparently, child sexual abuse is less threatening than same-sex marriage judging from the number of priests convicted of molestation who hung on to their jobs for decades!

Meanwhile, judges who rule in favor of marriage equality have been termed "activist" by George Bush and other right-wing ideologues – thereby turning "activist" into a negative word. However, activists have always been important in keeping the focus on human rights or the lack thereof in the world. By attempting to stifle activism itself, President Bush and his sympathizers are supporting obedience to whatever status quo exists which usually means the grinding down of human rights by those with the power to oppress. The status quo of non-activism, passive acceptance of mistreatment, looking the other way at injustice.

By targeting Massachusetts judges as a strategy to denying marriage rights to lesbian and gay people, Bush and his right-wing supporters are demonstrating their disdain for human rights not just for us but for every minority. That's the connection that I want to emphasize between our struggle for equality in marriage, the political backlash led by Bush and his right-wing base of support, and the theme of the upcoming APHA Annual Meeting.

It is extremely important that the LGBT Caucus continue to be visible in APHA. Now more than ever, the Caucus needs your involvement! I urge you to attend our Business Meeting and sessions at the APHA Annual Meeting. 'See you in Boston in November!

—Elizabeth Samit

Student Chair's Column

Last year, as President of my university's Public Health Student Association (PHSA), I oversaw various events. The PHSA subsidized student travel to the annual APHA meeting, raised money for various organizations and brought numerous individuals to the school for its Professional Lunchtime Series.

One program that I felt was vital to the success of the school dealt with LGBT issues. As a member of the LGBT community and a "newcomer" to public health, I was surprised at how little attention was given to this underserved and marginalized population at my school. My school dealt extensively with the community at large, and there were programs of every type of focus imaginable *except* LGBT. Since I was in a position to bring about such topics, I did!

The CEC seminar, "LGBT Human Subject Issues in Research" was developed with the Caucus to increase awareness of the LGBT human subject issues in public health research, especially those whom face increased issues of confidentiality and risk due to their innate sexual orientation. Two presenters from UIC — Thomas Lyons, PhD (Senior Research Associate of the Great Cities Institute) and David J. McKirnan, PhD (Associate Professor of Psychology) — spoke of the issues facing LGBT subjects in their research.

There was record attendance, with individuals from all areas of academia in the audience. I was pleased to see such a great response and elated when more than one person stated this was a topic long overdue for discussion at the school. Now, if we could get this at all schools, the community at large would be much better off.

—Gus E. Turner

Editor's Note: Gus Turner is an MPH Candidate in Community Health Sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago



25th Anniversary Award Ceremony at the 2005 APHA Annual Meeting (see Page 4 for related article)

How to reach us...

Chair

Andy Miller, MHSE, CHES
Austin, TX
Email: andy.miller@laf.org

Treasurer

John Grima, MHSA
San Francisco, CA
Email: jfjtg@aol.com

Secretary

Emelia Lombardi, PhD
Pittsburgh, PA
Email: elombardi@stophiv.pitt.edu

Membership Chair

Michael DeGuzman, MPH
Decatur, GA
Email: madeguzman@yahoo.com

Program Chair

Richard Trevino, BS
Boston, MA
Email: rptrevino@mindspring.com

Program Chair-Elect

Seth Wells, ScD, PhD
Boston, MA
Email: slwelles@bu.edu

Newsletter Editor

Elizabeth Samit, MPH
Arlington, MA
Email: samit@worldnet.att.net

Student Chair

Gus Turner
Atlanta, GA
Email: gturne4@iuc.edu

-
- The deadline for submissions for
- the next issue of the newsletter is
- October 1, 2006
-
- Please address all correspondence
- and submission of articles to the
- Editor at the email address listed
- above.
-



LGBT Caucus Honored for its 30th Anniversary at APHA's 133rd Annual Meeting

On Sunday, December 11th, the LBGT Caucus of Public Health Workers was recognized, along with other sections, SPIGs and caucuses, for achieving a milestone anniversary by APHA leadership.

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Caucus of Public Health Workers has provided a forum for educational interchange among LGBT members since 1975. For the past 30 years the LGBT Caucus has provided education to APHA members, improved health care services by combating homophobia and heterosexism, and ensured APHA policies appropriately address LGBT concerns. In addition, the LGBT Caucus has also collaborated on projects, research and health policy within other APHA sections, SPIGs and causes and with outside agencies such as the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Gay & Lesbian Medical Association, the National Coalition for LGBT Health and the Council on Education for Public Health.

Accepting the award on behalf of the LGBT Caucus was Anthony Silvestre, PhD, LSW, former Caucus Chairperson. In addition, numerous Caucus officers and member were on hand to celebrate this achievement, including caucus founder, Walter J. Lear, MD.

Printed with compliments by
The Haworth Press, Inc.
www.HaworthPress.com

Membership Lapsed?

Please renew!

The LGBT Caucus Membership

Application & Renewal Form can be

downloaded from the Caucus

web-site at:

<http://www.stophiv.com/lgbtc>