

2014 VA LGBT PRIDE OBSERVANCE REFLECTION MEETING

July 30, 2014

**Heliana Ramirez, LISW, LGBT Workgroup
Public Relations Committee Chair**

**Victoria Green, LGBT Workgroup
Public Relations Committee Member**

**Michael Youngblood, Office of Diversity and
Inclusion, Lead Equal Employment Specialist**

MEETING OVERVIEW

- Welcome and Thank You!
- 2014 VA LGBT Pride Observance Video
- Your RSVP Responses
- Discussion: Overcoming Barriers to Pride Observances
- Q&A
- Adjourn



WELCOME AND THANK YOU!

- Georgia Coffey, Deputy Assistant Director for Diversity, Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI)
- Michael Youngblood, Lead Equal Opportunity Specialist, ODI

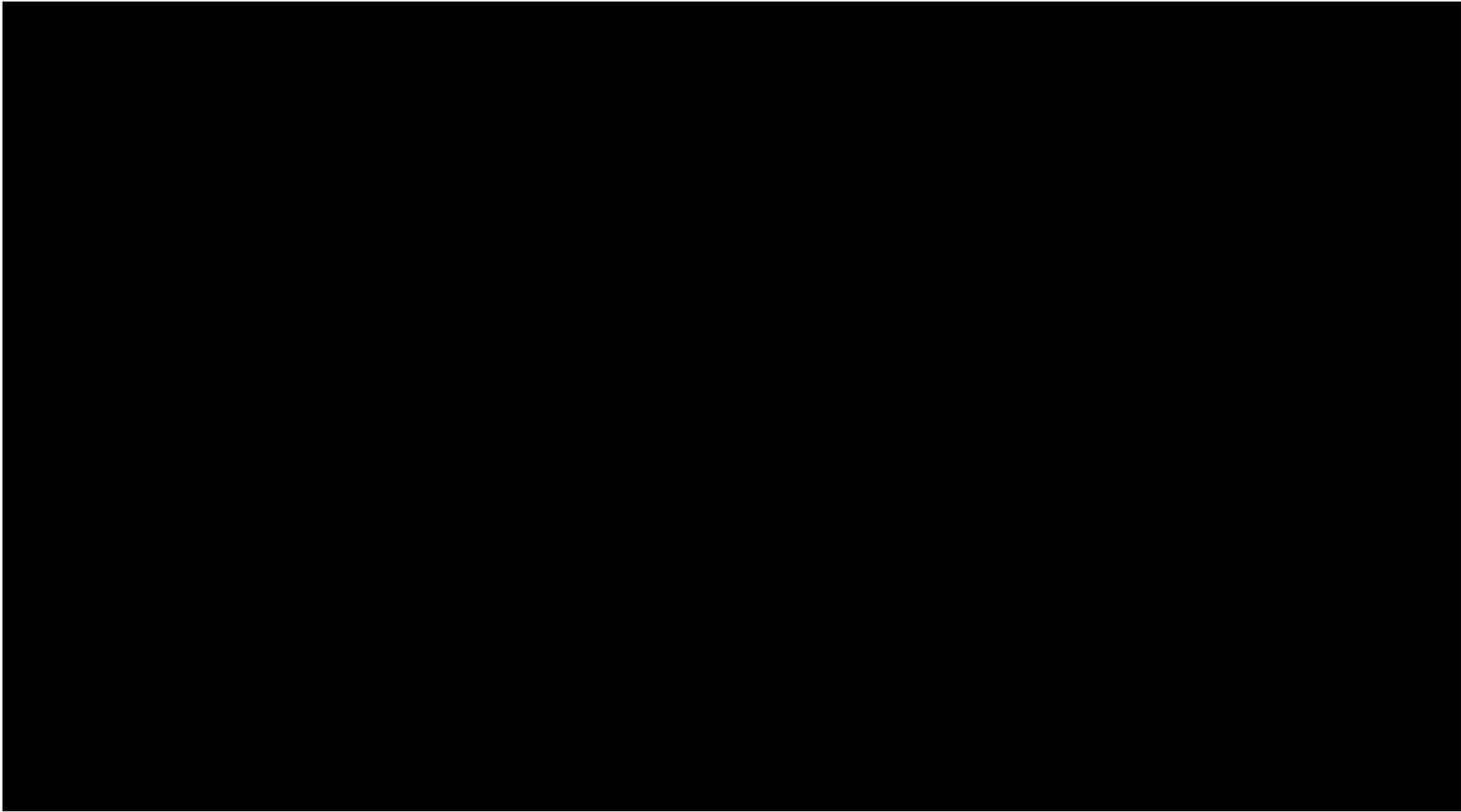


VA 2014 LGBT OBSERVANCE VIDEOS

- Snapshot of VA Pride Observances



SAN FRANCISCO PRIDE CLIP



YOUR RSVP RESPONSES

Was an LGBT Pride Observance Conducted at your facility?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes			<u>63</u>	87.5%
No			<u>7</u>	9.7%
No Responses			2	2.7%
		Totals	72	100%



TYPES OF PRIDE OBSERVANCES

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Marched in community-based Pride Parade			14	20.5%
Hosted a VA booth at a Pride event in the community			15	22.0%
Screened an LGBT related film at your VA			11	16.1%
Hosted an LGBT clinical training at your VA			12	17.6%
Hosted an LGBT Discussion Panel at your VA			4	5.8%
Distributed LGBT educational materials at your VA			18	26.4%
Hosted an LGBT booth at your VA			10	14.7%
Displayed Pride Flags or Posters at your VA			24	35.2%
Created a Pride Display Case at your VA			6	8.8%
Sent a Pride Observance email to all staff at your VA			22	32.3%
Article posted in local newspaper about LGBT Veteran Services at your VA			1	1.4%
Cosponsored an event with local Vet Center, University, LGBT Vet advocacy or other group			5	7.3%
Other (View all)			6	8.8%
		Totals	68	100%

ANY NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO PRIDE OBSERVANCES?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Not at all			<u>34</u>	47.2%
A little			<u>23</u>	31.9%
Somewhat			<u>6</u>	8.3%
Moderate amount			<u>3</u>	4.1%
A lot			<u>1</u>	1.3%
Extreme			0	0.0%
No Responses			3	4.1%
Totals			72	100%



AMOUNT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR PRIDE OBSERVANCES

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Not at all			7	10.1%
A little			8	11.5%
Somewhat			6	8.6%
Moderate amount			13	18.8%
A lot			21	30.4%
Extreme			13	18.8%
Other (View all)			1	1.4%
Totals			69	100%



TYPES OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Speaking at events and welcoming speakers
- Funding for materials, canteen, parade registration
- Approving use of VA vehicles and participating in parade contingent
- Encouraging staff to attend and including in announcements, addresses etc. Encouraging executive management to encourage front line staff
- Approving comp time and authorized absence for staff setting up, CEUs and/or Customer Care Credit for attendance
- Banner on Intranet
- Extending lunchtime for “Lunch and Learn”
- Posting LGBT-related posters in exec management suite
- Allowed joint work with nearby VA
- Approved medical media printing posters
- Purchased LGBT-related films for employee education



WHERE OBSERVANCE FUNDS CAME FROM

- EEO
- Public Affairs
- Office of the Director (e.g. canteen purchase)
- Voluntary Services
- Human Resources
- LGBT SEP Member donations
- Audience Contributions
- Employee Association



STRATEGIES TO INCREASE ATTENDANCE

- Early, diverse and broad outreach (facebook, Twitter, email, monthly staff meetings, other SEPs, Public Affairs, HCS calendars), get flyers printed by Medical Media and posted on electronic boards (LED screens)
- Targeted outreach: CEUs, upcoming CARF and Joint Commission, “LGBT allies,” professional ethics, Each One Bring One,
- Cosponsor with community-based agencies: LGBT orgs., Vet Centers, Veteran organizations, university LGBT student groups & advertise in local newspapers and LGBT Veteran channels
- Administration (from facility director to program managers) encourage attendance
- Include education relevant to VA work (e.g. LGBT-policies, issues specific to veterans, ICARE and Strategic Plan)- help staff do their jobs!
- When appropriate: make it an event for staff, veterans and community members (e.g. familial care takers, RCH owners, skilled nursing home staff)
- Make it fun/social (e.g. staff retreat, activities with door prizes, interactive exercises)

BEST PRACTICES/OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

- Weekly emails to Observance Team through Outlook mail group
 - Potluck strategy
 - Cosponsoring with other SEPs, VA Services (e.g. Psychology or Social Work Departments) community groups
 - Starting several months in advance with a timeline (e.g. flyers partially completed before CEUs, branding by PAO and add CEU language before sending for outreach)
 - Staff feeling unsafe being outed at an event so don't attend- broaden to allies
 - Vendor system- start early, check if previously rejected vendor, chose companies previously vendorized
 - Vtel program to remote campuses, video tape presentation and place online
 - Find out what LGBT staff (and allies) are interested and available to work on
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BEST PRACTICES CONTINUED

- Read and share weekly LGBT articles email (Matthew Bessel and John Hall)
- Getting a dynamic, famous and inexpensive speaker
- Chose a central location for event, advertise with the smell of popcorn
- Invite personal/professional contacts
- Building off momentum from previous years (reusing posters, positive cross discipline relations, support from other SEPMs)
- Intentional group building among SEP members
- Expect but don't feed into naysayers- have prepared responses
- Keep it positive, relevant and teach something people can walk away with
- Don't just offer education- but a way to get involved (e.g. Wall of Love)



POSSIBLE SPEAKERS

○ **LGBT Veteran Advocacy Organizations**

1. American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER) <http://aver.us/>
2. OUTServe/ Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN) <http://www.sldn.org/>
3. Knights Out (LGBT West Point Alumni) <http://knightsout.org/>
4. USNA OUT (UC Naval Academy Alumni) <http://usnaout.org/>
5. Blue Alliance (LGBT Alumni US Air Force) <http://blue-alliance.org/>
6. The American Military Partner Association <http://militarypartners.org/>
7. Service Women's Action Network <http://servicewomen.org/>
8. The Gay Military Signal <http://www.gaymilitarysignal.com/>

○ **LGBT VA Staff**

- **PFLAG** (Parents and Family of Lesbians and Gay Men)
- **COLAGE** (children with LGBT Parents)
- **LGBT Student Groups** at local colleges/universities
- **Local LGBT Community Center Staff**

* Many people may be willing to speak over Skype for free!



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & TRAINING RESOURCES

Within the VA

- LGB Education SharePoint
<http://vaww.infoshare.va.gov/sites/LGBEducation>
- Transgender Veteran Educational SharePoint
<http://vaww.infoshare.va.gov/sites/pcsclipro/trer/default.aspx>
- LGBT VA Inclusion Initiatives
<http://vaww.vha.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/OHE/Pages/LGBT.aspx>
- VHA Office of Health Equity SharePoint
<http://vaww.vha.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/OHE/Pages/Default.aspx>
- VHA Diversity and Inclusion SharePoint
<http://vaww.wmc.va.gov/Diversity/default.aspx>
- VA Diversity and Inclusion SharePoint
<http://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/lgbt.aspx>

Outside the VA

- Fenway Institute: Free online trainings www.lgbthealtheducation.org/
- National LGBT Health Education Center www.lgbthealtheducation.org
- LGBT Pride Month Database <http://lgbthistorymonth.com/icon-search>

THANK YOU!

For follow-up information about this meeting,
please email heliana.ramirez@va.gov

For more information about the LGBT Workgroup
please email LGBTWorkgroup@va.gov

or visit

<http://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/lgbt.aspx>

