



The PFLAG Link

MIDLAND—BAY CITY—SAGINAW CHAPTER
P.O. BOX 834, BAY CITY, MI 48707
• 989.941.1458 •

<http://www.pflag-mbs.org>

July 2008

Celebrating the Diversity of "The Human Element"

This month's speaker describes an inclusive work environment

Acceptance of GLBT people at a major corporation is the subject for this month's speaker. **Kevin Appold** is a native of Bay City and works for The Dow Chemical Company in Midland, Michigan. He has been with Dow for 14 years, with projects including Process Engineer designing new chemical processes, Six Sigma Black Belt leading break-through projects, and Improvement Engineer for Dow AgroSciences' Phenoxy and Dursban manufacturing facilities in Midland. Kevin has been a member of **GLAD** (Gays, Lesbians and Allies at Dow) since 2004, becoming "Site Implementation Leader" for Midland in 2007. In that role, he coordinates local activities, serves as a representative of the network to leadership and teams in Midland, communicates GLAD / GLBT information to participants, and serves as a contact on GLBT issues. GLAD has grown to include over 400 participants company-wide since its inception in 2000, with a mission

to foster a safe, inclusive, supportive and open working environment for all employees regardless of sexual orientation and gender identification. Dow's web page states, "...we are fostering an environment that embraces the diverse viewpoints, creative ideas and unique strengths that our 43,000 employees in 61 countries bring to the workplace daily. We encourage a culture that is inclusive of all people, all ideas, all thoughts, and most importantly, all differences." Dow's policies are at <http://www.dow.com/diversity/beliefs/inclusion.htm> and <http://www.dow.com/diversity/employee/networks.htm>. (GLAD should not be confused with GLAAD, the non-profit Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, which is not associated with Dow Chemical Company.)

Farewell, Founder and Friend

Rich Kormelink, PFLAG TriCities Co-Founder - and this newsletter's namesake - left us June 2

Richard (Rich) J.Kormelink, co-founder of PFLAG TriCities and retired Delta College biology professor, died on June 2, 2008 in Wyoming, Mi. He was survived by his loving wife, companion and friend, **Barbara Anne Johnson Kormelink**, and three children: **Jeffrey**,

(Diane) of Grand Rapids, **Karen Kormelink** and companion **Pam Shaff** of Baltimore Md, **Gregory (Juliette)** of Grand Rapids, as well as 5 grandchildren.

Rich retired as an associate professor of Biology from Delta Community College, where he was awarded the coveted Bergstein Award for Teaching Excellence in 1966. He was a collaborator on many editions of Biology Texts, Pre-Nursing Texts and an Environmental Science Text for College students. His wife, Barbara, said of him, "Rich Kormelink was an educator before all else. He spent his life teaching and enjoyed it very much. When his daughter came out to him, he was determined to teach as much of the world as he could reach that being gay or lesbian was a natural thing and so he did to the end of his life." A memorial service to celebrate his life will be held at 2 PM on Saturday, August 2, 2008 at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Midland. In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory are requested for Delta College or PFLAG TriCities.

From the President: Open Board Seats

Any PFLAG Tri-Cities member that is interested in serving on our board of directors is invited to put your name forward for nomination. Serving as a board member is not as big an undertaking as it sounds, and you meet lots of great people who value equality for lesbians, gays and transgender persons. The following seats are open: **Vice-President**, **Treasurer**, and **Member-at-large**. If you are interested in serving in one of these positions, please contact **Bob Malosh** at malosh@chartermi.net or call Bob at 989-835-6371 (home) or 989-948-1355 (cell).

This Month's Meeting:

Sunday, July 27, 2 p.m.
Unitarian/Universalist Fellowship,
6220 Jefferson at Wackerly, Midland

Calendar:

Next PFLAG Meeting: **Sunday, Aug. 24**

Michigan GLBT Association Summit

Saturday, Aug. 2 9:30 AM-4 PM
Bovee University Ctr. at CMU,
Mount Pleasant

Memorial Service: Richard Kormelink

Saturday, Aug. 2 at 2 PM
Unitarian/Universalist Church, Midland

Michigan PFLAG Statewide Meeting

Saturday, Sept. 20
Unitarian/Universalist Fellowship,
Midland

AIDS Walk Bay City/Saginaw/Midland

Sat., Sept. 27, Winona Park, Bay City
Register at 9:30, walk at 11:00 a.m.

PFLAG Link - July, 2008

September State-Wide Conference

This year it's our baby

PFLAG Tri-Cities will host the Michigan PFLAG State Conference on Saturday, September 20, 2008 at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6220 Jefferson in Midland. The conference is for any PFLAG friends as well PFLAG members - like Perceptions members and friends. Conference presenters include two local Perceptions friends: **Charissa Urbano** and **Michael Brancheau**, as well as state and national leaders. Workshop topics include "Transgender 101," "Straight for Equality," "Media Training," "Evolution of an Activist" and "Leadership and Membership Development." The cost per person, which includes breakfast and lunch, is \$25 (\$10 for students.) For more information, contact **Denise Malosh** at malos1dm@charter.net or (989) 941-1458. In addition, participants will be invited to join a pre-conference dinner with Perceptions' Friday Dinner, at 6 PM, Friday, Sept. 19th at the China Palace, 1908 S. Saginaw Rd. Midland. More information, speakers and registration forms can be found at http://perceptionssv.org/PFLAG_state_conf_2008.pdf.

U.S. Senate Approves Repeal of HIV Travel and Immigration Ban

Conference Committee Next Hurdle for Ending Discrimination Against HIV-Positive Persons

In a press release July 17, the Human Rights Campaign praised the U.S. Senate for approving the repeal of a law barring HIV-positive visitors and immigrants. Senators **John Kerry** (D-MA) and **Gordon Smith** (R-OR) secured a provision to repeal this ban in the Senate's legislation to reauthorize PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. "We applaud the Senate for rejecting this unjust and sweeping policy that deems HIV-positive individuals inadmissible to the United States," said Human Rights Campaign President **Joe Solmonese**. "We call on the leaders of the House and Senate to retain the Kerry-Smith provision in conference and ensure it is included in the final legislation sent to the President's desk." The ban originated in 1987 and was explicitly codified by Congress in 1993, despite efforts in the public health community to remove the ban when Congress reformed U.S. immigration law in the early 1990s. While immigration law currently excludes foreigners with any "communicable disease of public health significance" from entering the U.S., only HIV is explicitly named in the statute. The travel and immigration ban prohibits HIV-positive foreign nationals from entering the U.S.

unless they obtain a special waiver, which can only allow for short-term travel. Current policy also prevents the vast majority of foreign nationals with HIV from obtaining legal permanent residency in the United States. For all other illnesses, the **Secretary of Health and Human Services** retains the ability, with the medical expertise of his department, to determine which illnesses truly pose a risk to public health.

"Be Brave, Shoot Straight, but Stay In That Closet" - Shutting Down the "Shutting Up"

A note from Brooke Smith, PFLAG Field & Policy Coordinator

Next week the Military Personnel Subcommittee of the US House Armed Services Committee will hold a hearing on the repeal of "**Don't Ask, Don't Tell**," a law that prohibits honorable gay, lesbian and bisexual Americans from serving their country openly and honestly. This will be the first hearing to discuss repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" since Congress enacted it fifteen years ago. The hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, July 23, at 2 p.m., before the U.S. House Armed Services Committee's Military Personnel Subcommittee, chaired by **Rep. Susan Davis** (D-CA). Several witnesses, three calling for the repeal and two against, will testify. Current legislation before Congress, the Military Readiness Enhancement Act (MREA), HR 1246, would remedy this discriminatory and unworkable policy by replacing Don't Ask/Don't Tell with a policy of non-discrimination. If you would like to know more, visit the Committee's schedule website at http://www.house.gov/hasc/calendar_this_week.shtml.

New PFLAG/GLAAD Brochures Help Get the Conversation Started

PFLAG National has partnered with **GLAAD**, **HRC** and **Lake Research** on a new series of brochures which cover talking points and tips for speaking with diverse audiences about issues and topics important to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and ally communities. The Talking About series is now available online, and features the following: "Overall Approaches for Talking About Gay and Transgender Issues;" "Talking About Employment Protections for Gay and Transgender Americans;" "Talking About Marriage and Relationship Recognition for Gay Couples;" "Talking About Inclusive Hate Crimes Laws;" "Talking About Adoption and Gay Parents," and "Talking About "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." You can download each publication in pdf format, and learn more about the series online at <http://www.glaad.org/talkingaboutseries>.