



Sonoma County LGBTQI Giving Circle

Community Mapping Meeting

On Saturday, November 1, 2014, 50 of the 79 members attended the first membership meeting of the Sonoma County LGBTQI Giving Circle. The goal of this Community Mapping meeting was to explore the key issues facing the LGBTQI community in Sonoma County over the next three years.

The meeting was facilitated by Karin Demarest, Vice President of Programming at the Community Foundation Sonoma County. Karin led a needs assessment process in which the membership shared and discussed their perspectives on the different issues facing the community. At the end of the process, the Giving Circle members' ideas were summarized as follows (full list at the end of this document):

- ***Inter-Generational Connections*** – recognize the need to develop a connection between young people and elders in the Sonoma County LGBTQI community
- ***Support for Youth*** – recognize the importance of supporting young LGBTQI people in Sonoma County and developing resources for them
- ***Support for the Aging LGBTQI Community*** – recognize the importance of supporting aging LGBTQI people in Sonoma County and developing resources for them
- ***Support for the Transgender Community*** – recognize the importance of supporting members of the transgender community in Sonoma County

- ***Support for the under-represented members of the LGBTQI Community*** – recognize the importance of supporting traditionally underrepresented members of the LGBTQI community in Sonoma County
- ***Lack of community infrastructure*** – recognize the lack of community infrastructure
- ***Cultivating allies*** – recognize the need to cultivate allies in Sonoma County

Members also suggested different organizing and granting strategies that affect all of the different issue areas, including:

- ***Structural and financial issues***, and
- ***Raising the visibility of the LGBTQI community within Sonoma County.***

During the first half of next year, the Sonoma County LGBTQI Giving Circle steering committee will curate three educational forums for the entire Giving Circle membership to provide an opportunity for additional education about the priority areas identified at the Community Mapping meeting. This will include bringing in content area experts to each educational forum. **These meetings will be held at the Fountaingrove Lodge (4210 Thomas Lake Harris Drive, Santa Rosa) from 2:00 – 4:00 pm on Saturday, February 21, 2015, Saturday, March 14, 2015, and Saturday, April 11, 2015.**

Following the educational forums, the membership will hold a vote to recommend priorities to the steering committee for the final granting strategies.

As with any community process, there is a need to condense and compromise. We recognize that there are issues that did not make it to the final list. Giving Circle members are encouraged to broaden their personal giving to issues addressed on the list, as well as other issues that were discussed but may have not made the final list.

We also acknowledge that the Giving Circle does not represent all of the communities in Sonoma County. Over the next few months, and in subsequent years, we will bring in additional voices to the process to expand the dialogue and reach new communities not currently represented.

Finally, one important piece of feedback received from a number of members is that members do not necessarily know enough about what resources are currently available within the community to make informed recommendations about what the priorities of the Giving Circle should be over the next three years. Because this is, in fact, a real issue, one of the primary goals of the Giving Circle continues to be educating all of the members about the resources that are available, which will also allow us to determine where the gaps exist. We believe that the educational forums and the connections between members that are being created through the

Giving Circle will help all of us to gain a better understanding of needs and opportunities as we go forward.

The following is a complete list of the key issues facing the LGBTQI community in Sonoma County over the next three years. Actual membership recommendations are reported in bullet points under each issue area.

Inter-Generational Connections – recognize the need to develop a connection between young people and elders in the Sonoma County LGBTQI community.

- Programs for youth and elders
- Community-wide mentoring programs
- Youth/Elders programs

Support for Youth – recognize the importance of supporting young LGBTQI people in Sonoma County and developing resources for them

- Address youth suicide and coming out
- Support education for youth, their families, and the community at large
- Through education, increase safety for LGBTQI youth and adults
- Convene an LGBTQI Safety Task Force
- Develop resources for seniors and youth
- Explore a supportive living models for gay youth and seniors

Support for the Aging LGBTQI Community – recognize the importance of supporting aging LGBTQI people in Sonoma County and developing resources for them

- More affordable Senior living center, a more middle class version of Fountaingrove Lodge
- Infrastructure for aging LGBTQI people
- Connect with and assist elders with paperwork and socializing
- Services for LGBTQI seniors
- Resources for seniors
- Creation of senior families of choice

Support for the Transgender Community – recognize the importance of supporting members of the transgender community in Sonoma County

- Identify and address transgender support and issues
- Tackle employment barriers and discrimination, especially in the transgender community

Support for the under-represented member of the LGBTQI Community – recognize the importance of supporting traditionally underrepresented members of the LGBTQI community in Sonoma County

- Special outreach to Latino LGBTQI youth
- Developing outreach, resources and programs for LGBTQI migrant workers
- Minority youth
- Convene an advocacy group with representatives from every LGBTQI community and allies

Lack of community infrastructure – recognize the lack of community infrastructure in Sonoma County

- Virtual community center
- LGBTQI center with comprehensive services
- Community social center
- Explore feasibility of LGBTQI Community Center
- Leverage technology to serve and build community
- A vibrant post-ghetto gay community (Physical, online, social, commercial)
- Brick and mortar cultural, art and social center
- Building community through social media

Cultivating allies – recognize the need to cultivate allies in Sonoma County

- Anti-bullying programs, policies and procedures
- Education in schools around gender and diversity
- Education of students and teachers
- Becoming allies – for and from them

Members also suggested different organizing and granting strategies that affect all the different issue areas:

Structural and financial issues

- Minimal bureaucracy
- Collaborative partnerships among 10-15 non-profits that support the LGBTQI community
- Cultural sensitivity competency
- Model for systematic inclusions
- Explore grants on federal, state, and local levels
- Use an approach that is replicable

- Assess emergency services – hotline, police, fire, medical and legal
- Develop and implement measures to track services

Raise Visibility

- Leadership development
- Visible and influencing presence
- Loud voice for LGBTQI people through politics and advocacy
- Creating diverse and engaged leaders
- Raising awareness conference
- Community scholarship contest and event
- Community building events
- Documenting and sharing our stories and history