



7 Rivers Region 2009 Annual Report

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AmeriCorps Member
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AmeriCorps Member
Amanda Acklin

From the Board President

Marilyn Huckenpohler

During our last board meeting of 2009, a side discussion arose regarding the sixth anniversary of the center. Through the years a number of people have given so much time, money, and energy to the work of the center. While the center differs in some ways from the original vision of the founders, there was a general consensus in our meeting that the Center has covered a lot of ground in 2009 toward realizing the dreams of those founders.

This year marked the first full calendar year with a full-time executive director on staff to direct the efforts and resources of our membership. A recap of the center's calendar for the past year serves to underscore the key role of our executive director and AmeriCorps staff in realizing the vision set forth by members and community leaders.

Each month, Rosanne provides the board with a dizzying report of activities that she and the center have engaged in over the recent month. The center continues to participate in a smoking cessation program through the Diverse and Resilient grant. Rosanne and her staff support an array of different groups meeting regularly at the center. A number of secondary and post-secondary schools have requested Rosanne to speak in various venues. She continues to provide training and information to community partners and professionals. Under Rosanne's influence, the center is profiled with increasing frequency in letters to the editor and in the region's print and visual media. In March, center staff and supporters were delighted to welcome the GALAXY program to its new home within the center.

All of these valuable services and programs require funding for staff and overhead. Like many non-profits, the center weathered decreased donations and grants this year. Rosanne, the board, center staff, and volunteers pursued a number of small fundraisers to supplement projected income. During 2009, the center drew upon some of its savings in order to maintain programming and staffing levels. The year ahead is bright with a board committed to supporting Rosanne. Vice-president Kathryn Hietbrink has joined with several former board members to focus intensely upon increasing our grant-writing activities to build a more stable financial base for the upcoming year.

While our paid staff is pivotal in achieving past accomplishments hopes for the future; it is evident that our membership and supporters play a vital role in sustaining the center in all its endeavors. Please continue the work of the center this year through your donations, and most of all, your participation.

From the Executive Director

Rosanne St. Sauver

What an amazing year 2009 was for the Center! Throughout the year, we added programs, trained 16 volunteers to help staff the Center, and continue to expand our services to meet the needs of LGBT people, allies, professionals, and community members to help further our mission. As we continue to move forward with a committed staff, volunteers, board of directors, and the generous support of people like you we will continue to realize our potential as a community organization focused on meeting the needs of the LGBT community throughout the tri-state area.

With the addition of GALAXY in March, we have been able to partner with Diverse and Resilient to help fund this life-saving program for LGBTQ youth and their allies ages 13-20. Currently, GALAXY meets twice per week on Tuesdays and Saturdays, we have had over 46 different youth participate in our program. Five GALAXY youth attended the Young Womyn's Empowerment Conference and we sent six GALAXY youth and two leaders to Diverse & Resilient's HIV Institute. Part of the Institute's focus was to develop a plan as a group on what you wished to take back to your community and develop a course for implementation. The Center is blessed to get to work with youth that understand the importance of giving back to their community; our youth chose to volunteer once per month as a group for one year. With the support of other GALAXY youth, staff, and leaders we all contributed to develop a volunteer plan. Thus far we have staffed WAFER, assisted with Come For Supper at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, litter clean up downtown which resulted in our filling a 45 gallon trash can, and helped collect donations for Warm for the Holidays 2 to benefit families served by the ARCW.

We are in our second year of our **rm2breathe** grant which is a state-wide anti-tobacco program for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in Wisconsin. This initiative is funded by The University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health's Wisconsin Partnership Program and implemented by Diverse & Resilient in partnership with the Center, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine & Public Health, Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, OutReach, the LGBT Community Center of Madison, LGBT Community Center of the Chippewa Valley, SAGE in Milwaukee, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, University of Wisconsin Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention, American Lung Association of Wisconsin and Milwaukee City Health Department. The next step for this grant in 2010 is to provide a Quit Group. It has been beneficial for the Center to collaborate with other providers focused on improving the quality of life and health of LGBT people in Wisconsin. For more information and to get involved with this initiative visit www.rm2breathe.org

The Center will continue to work with Fair Wisconsin, other LGBT Community Centers, and our legislators to help influence policies, laws, and strengthen protections for the LGBT community. 2009 proved to be a year of small but necessary gains for the LGBT community in the Midwest, in Wisconsin the passage of the Domestic Partnership Registry, in Iowa legalized marriage for same sex couples, and in Minnesota the Saint Paul City Council passed a Domestic-Partner Registry Ordinance. In our quest for equality the steps will be many, the challenges at times enormous, but it is in our collective efforts that we shall persevere.

Our Mission:

The LGBT Resource Center for the Seven Rivers Region, Inc. **provides service to foster understanding** and **build connections** on issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity to the 7 Rivers Region through **education**, **events**, and **programming**.

Highlights of 2009:

provides service to foster understanding

- Presented to 190 faculty and students members of Brookwood High School, Ontario, WI, at their Wellness Day
- Keynote Speaker at Viroqua Diversity Day
- Presented at the Young Womyn's Empowerment Conference on Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships Dating and Sexual Violence
- Presented and facilitated a LGBT Panel to Family & Children's Center Staff-12 attendees

build connections

- Increased newsletter subscription to almost 400
- Rm2breathe training
- Hosted a Rainbow Potluck Feast in November
- Presented to the WTC Diversity Task Force and became a committee member

education

- Training: Intersex Rights Movement with Dr. April Herndon-18 attendees
- Workshop presented in conjunction with OutFront of Minnesota: "Deconstructing the Screen Door: Intimate Partner Violence Assessment"
- World AIDS Day we held an Open Office with AIDS themed movies playing all do, refreshments, and GALAXY hosted a Candle Light Vigil at 5:00 pm

events

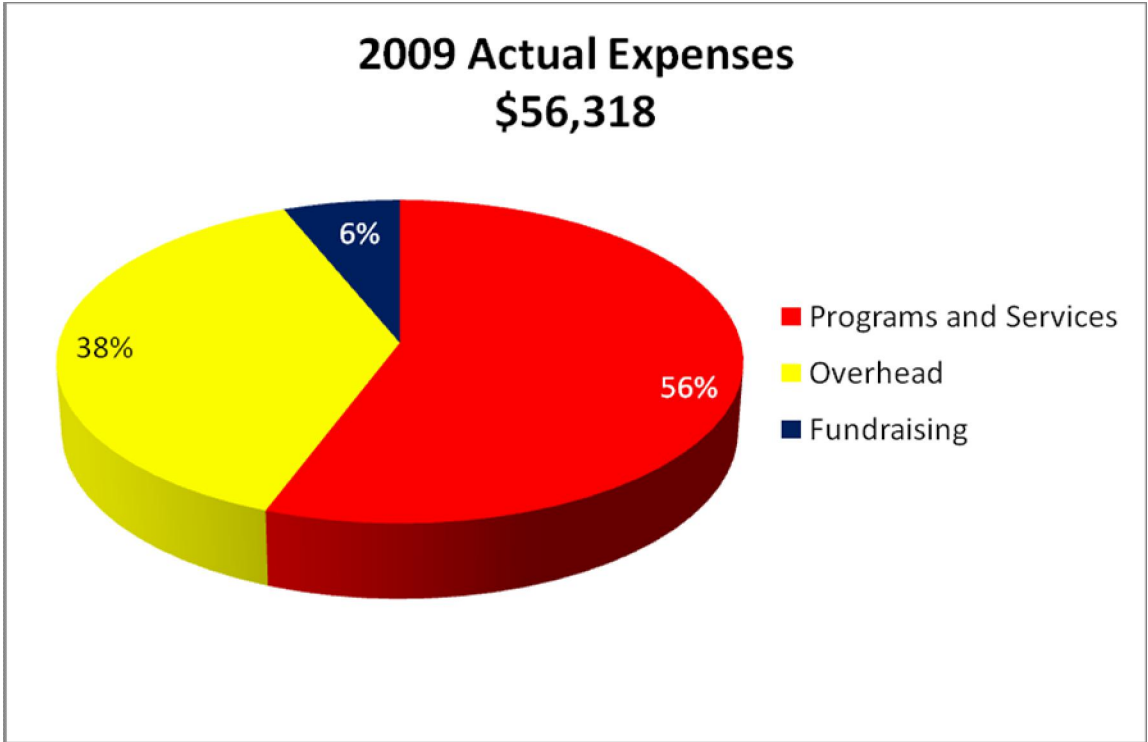
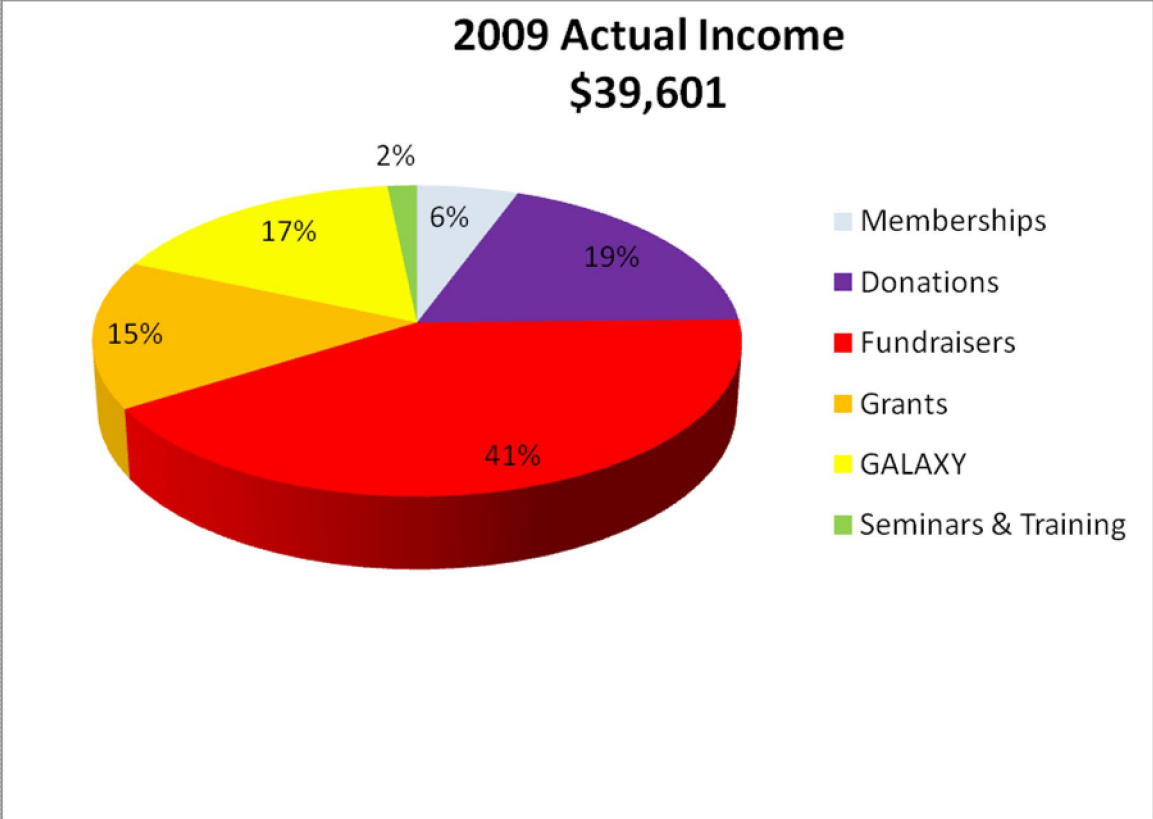
- Pride in August we staffed a GALAXY & Center table with support from Diverse and Resilient Staff
- National Coming Out Day Activities:
 - Silent Rally for Equality we had 90 people and 3 dogs for equality, Representative Jennifer Shilling joined us on the bridge and returned to the Center for conversation and treats
 - Coming Out For Equality we had another fabulous event with presentations from Tim Ewing, Fair Wisconsin and Philip Crary, Logan High School student
- Numerous Fundraising and Friend raising events throughout the year

programming

- Welcomed GALAXY to the Center March 5, 2009 - 46 different youth participated in GALAXY in 2009
- Transgender/ Gender Queer Gathering meets monthly
- Monthly Out & About
- Drop In Group have up to 25 attendees per week
- GLENDA started meeting again twice per month in 2009
- GNO started meeting in May

For more fabulous happenings in 2009, please visit our website www.7riverslgbt.org

2009 Budget



Throughout 2009, the Center was funded with grant monies, collaborative initiatives, donations, fundraisers, our newly founded “I ♥ My Center” Campaign, memberships, and more. We continue to be creative in our efforts to fund the vital work of the Center. Our Development Committee and Grant Writing Committee are both comprised of dedicated volunteers that help write grants, develop events that raise friends and funds, and work to develop a solid financial foundation for the Center. We look forward to working with you our supporters in 2010 to have another successful year of events.

In addition to the above, the Center sponsored several local fundraising events:

5th Annual Rummage Sale
Brat Barns
Holiday Home Tour
New Year’s Eve Drag Show
Macy’s Shop For A Cause

Progressive Dinner
Coming Out for Equality Gala Event
People Helping People Fish Fry’s
Kickapoo Country Fair
GALAXY Talent Show

2009 Corporate Sponsors

Special thanks to our corporate sponsors, who gave time, space, and monetary support. Please support our corporate sponsors.

- By James
- Caring Hands, Kathy Blencoe
- Christina Mae Olson, CFP
- Family Tree Floral & Greenhouse
- Johns, Flaherty and Collins Attorneys at Law
- Illusions
- Impulse
- La Crosse Community Theatre
- Macy’s
- Monet Flowers and Gifts
- Midwest Family Broadcasting, Inc
- My Place
- Players
- Radisson Hotel of La Crosse
- Stylist Lisa Anne, 2nd Street Hair Gallery
- Travel Leaders-Goli’s Avenues of Travels, Annette Peterson, ACC
- UW-L Theatre Department
- Vendi Advertising

Volunteer of the Year

2009 Erik Stephenson was this year’s recipient. He was selected for his continued support, work, and dedication to the Center and our library. Erik started with the Center as an AmeriCorps member and has chosen to remain a Center Volunteer. Every Saturday, except for over the holidays when he goes home to New Jersey, Erik opens the Center and facilitates the Saturday Movie Time. Erik exemplifies daily the qualities of a great volunteer.

2008 Johnnie Schmeckpepper