

[Click here to sign up for our newsletter](#)



Fall 2023

[View as Website](#)

Centering & Celebrating LGBTQ+ Voices in Rural Communities

Happy Fall to our CRDP community! Starting this September, we'll be reaching out to you on a quarterly basis with updates, news, and positive vibes from the LGBTQ TA Center. This means we can better highlight the voices of our community and provide you with more in-depth information on the amazing work of our grantees (this also means fewer emails cluttering your inbox, which is never a bad thing!).

In this Quarterly Newsletter, you'll hear from James Patnaude, a long-time staff member at the San Joaquin Pride Center, who will share his take on personal and collective joy as a form of resistance, and talk about some of the ways community-based organizations in rural communities, like SJPC, are working to address health disparities. He'll also share some ways that SJPC works to create opportunities for collective joy for LGBTQ+ folks with local events like their recent watermelon-themed party (come on, you know you're curious!) - read on to learn more!

[Visit the LGBTQ TA Center Website >](#)



Fall Grantee Spotlight San Joaquin Pride Center

The LGBTQ TA Center provides no-cost technical assistance and training to seven organizations to support their phenomenal work with LGBTQ+ communities. We want to take this opportunity to showcase one of our fantastic grantees! The San Joaquin Pride Center (SJPC) is a community-based organization dedicated to serving the diverse LGBTQ+ community in San Joaquin County and the surrounding areas.

Introducing, James Patnaude!

James Patnaude (he/him/his) provides transgender support services and data analysis at the center, along with a variety of other services that make SJPC an asset to the community. Last month, the LGBTQ TA Center team had the opportunity to interview James about his work with SJPC.



Hi James! How long have you been working with SJPC?

More or less, this has always been my job, unless you want to count my three month long stint as an English tutor in high school. Like, I joke a bit but it's an inherited family thing because my uncle also was very heavily involved in the LGBT movement and the HIV and AIDS crisis in the 1980s and nineties. He was actually the executive director of the Native Americans Against AIDS Foundation back in the nineties.

What is SJPC's approach to addressing mental health disparities within the LGBTQ+ community in San Joaquin County?

One of the key aspects of our approach to reducing mental health disparities is, specifically, our free LGBT affirming therapy services. So, we work with local colleges and even non-local colleges to get clinical interns who are finishing their practicum hours either for a BSW, MSW or MFT degrees. And while they get their practicum hours here, they work, primarily, directly with our trans clients or LGBT clients that are coming in for therapy services. So, we're not only giving them the opportunity to work directly with our community, we're also providing them with the opportunity to become culturally competent before they just go off into the world.

How do you think the role of SJPC differs from CBO's in more urban areas?

There are more resources in more urban areas because there are so many [organizations]. Let's say in San Francisco, because there's already enough to treat the general LGBT community, they're able to branch off and focus on their specific intersectionality. I know that there's a few CBOs out there that focus on black LGBT individuals. There's some that focus just on Latina transgender women. So, they're able to branch off and just focus on their specific demographic.

Out here, we don't necessarily have that luxury or that ability to because we're dealing with very few resources, very little information, and a lot of community pushback from local lawmakers. Because it's rural, it's difficult to find any health care provider, any mental health care provider. It's even harder when you're a trans person of color looking for a therapist who knows what a trans person is and is also going to include the intersectionality between your identity as a person of color with your identity as a trans person, with your identity as, let's say you're bisexual, because all of those are interlinked.

What is the most rewarding part of your work?

I think my favorite part has just been seeing my clients that come in [to SJPC], and have been coming in for years, and being able to see them just flourish and live their lives as their authentic selves. Like there's one individual, I call him my kid because I've known him since he was 13 and I've known his whole family since they started coming in and seeing him. He just turned 18. He's now an adult and he's able to live his life as a trans person with a full support and love, with his family and with himself. And even if it's not a personal connection, just knowing that I'm able to help someone access the resources that they didn't know how to get before, that really makes this job worth it for me.

What has challenged you the most?

I would have to say the community pushback. It's actually less so from the community and more on the part of our local lawmakers. This last Pride month was the worst pride month I've ever worked. The pushback that we got from local lawmakers in light of all of the legislation that's being passed right now to limit even talking about LGBT stuff in schools, limiting access to trans affirming health care; it's just, I've seen that change the climate here a lot. Even though we're in California, it's touching us here too. We had to fight to get a pride flag raised at city Hall, which has never been an issue until just this year.

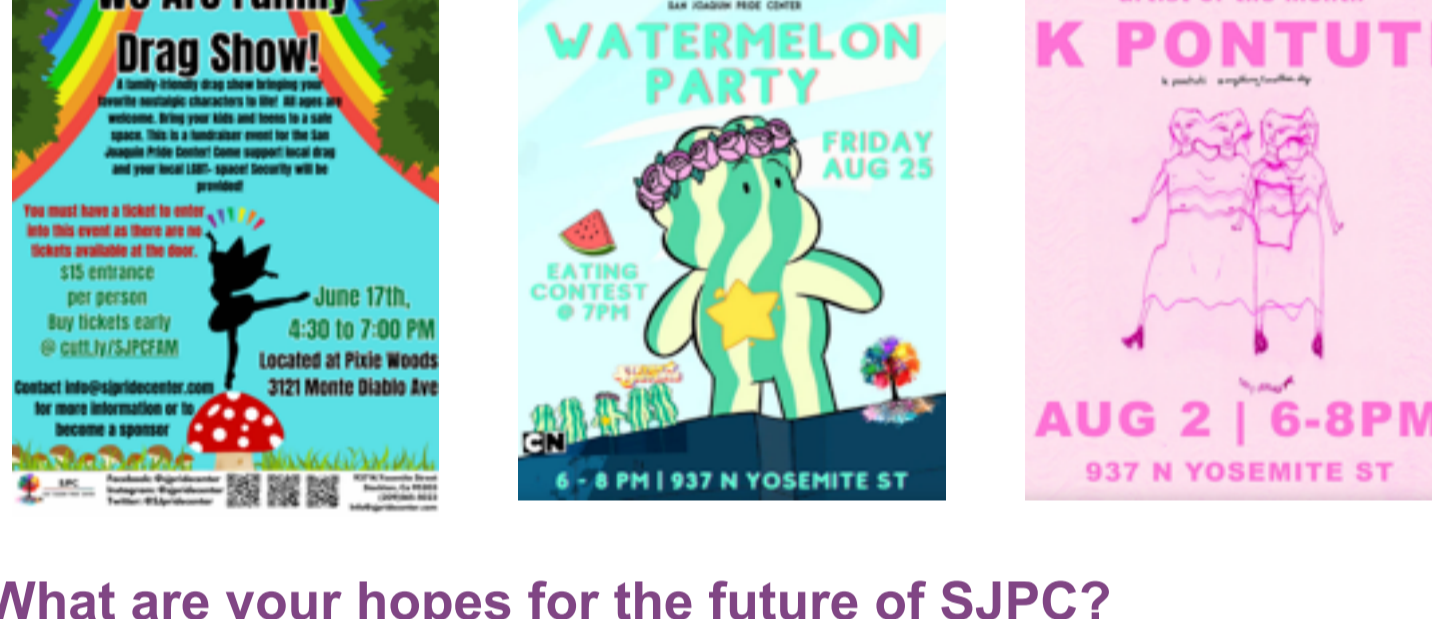
Can you talk a little bit about how you see collective joy as a form of resistance?

People just hate to see LGBT folks living happy because it goes against this overarching narrative that has followed us for years that being gay or being trans is inherent suffering. And that's why you shouldn't be it, because you're going to suffer, and that's simply not the case. So, being able to live authentically, live openly, is by itself an act of resistance, even though it shouldn't have to be. But it's also one of the more profound ways of resisting.

Can you talk about some of the ways SJPC creates opportunities for collective joy in the community?

Just last week, we had just a watermelon-themed party, and that got quite a few people, and they really seemed to enjoy it. It was my coworkers - I call it their brainchild because it's just kind of happened and people were so intrigued by just, the entire concept of a watermelon party that they showed up for it. We had people show up dressed watermelon-themed with watermelon makeup and stuff like that.

Now we have an Artist of the Month event, so we'll feature a local LGBT artist to showcase their work on our walls out in the main area. And then we'll bring them in for a day and just kind of have an art gallery type thing. People really enjoy that, and different community parties and events like that.



What are your hopes for the future of SJPC?

Right now, we are at five regular staff. One of my dreams here is to have an in-house physician be able to provide HRT here, rather than us having to outsource or send someone to them, and hoping that something sticks. But even beyond our trans services, just having a bigger space or having more staff or being able to put on more events, on a more regular basis, just being able to expand our already existing services and maybe bring on more.

Thank you, James, for sharing your story with us!



Community News

California Reconsiders Travel Ban to States With Anti-LGBTQ+ Legislation

California is considering repealing a ban against federally-funded travel to 26 states with laws discriminating against LGBTQ+ individuals. A measure by state Senator Toni Atkins, a San Diego Democrat and the first openly-gay leader of the state Senate, is expected to pass that would repeal the travel ban and replace it with an outreach campaign that would bring pro-LGBTQ+ messaging to red states. Instead of penalizing states with discriminatory laws, the outreach campaign is designed to educate the public and include media like this video, posted by Sen. Atkins, featuring interviews with trans children and their parents. According to Politico, Atkins "echoes a growing number of critics who feel that the travel ban is causing unintended economic consequences and preventing the exchange of ideas that could help combat anti-LGBTQ bigotry." You can learn more about Senate Bill 447 [here](#).

California is the First State to Declare a Transgender History Month!

We're thrilled to report that August will be recognized as Transgender History Month, starting in 2024! California's State Assembly voted in favor of House Resolution 57, making it the first state to honor trans history with such a designation. The resolution states, "Supporting the transgender community by designating August as Transgender History Month will create a culture led by research, education, and scholarly recognition of the contributions of transgender Californians to our great state's history, and will educate future generations on the importance of this history." As the resolution makes clear, even though California has been central to the trans liberation movement, "prominent portions of transgender history remain undiscovered, unrecognized, and outside mainstream consciousness." We look forward to having new opportunities to recognize and honor the contributions of trans folk, throughout the month of August.

Gender Health Center is Hiring an Executive Director!

The Gender Health Center (GHC) is a non-profit organization located in Sacramento, California, dedicated to providing services, resources, and support to the transgender and gender diverse community. The Executive Director's primary responsibility will be to oversee all aspects of the organization's operations, programs, and initiatives to ensure the delivery of high-quality services to the transgender and gender diverse community. They will play a pivotal role in leading and shaping the organization's mission, vision, and strategic direction. We encourage you to learn more about the role and apply or share the posting with your community!



[Learn More & Apply >](#)

The Center for Sexuality and Gender Diversity is also Hiring an Executive Director!

The Center for Sexuality & Gender Diversity (The Center) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual & transgender community in Kern County, California. In partnership with The Center's Board of Directors, the E.D. will provide strategic, administrative, and financial stewardship of the organization, and will lead organizational development, fundraising/resource development, staff management, external relations, and strategic communications efforts. They will work collaboratively with internal and external partners and stakeholders to advance The Center's vision and mission. Take a moment to learn more about the organization and apply or share with your community!



[Learn More & Apply >](#)

Openhouse Research Project on Aging Experience of LGBTQ+ Californians

Openhouse, along with CITRIS at UC Berkeley, University of California San Francisco (UCSF), and the California Department of Aging (CDA), are currently crafting a historic research project that aims to survey the aging experience of LGBTQ+ Californians. To ensure the success of the study, they are building a statewide coalition of organizations, service providers, aging agencies, and community stakeholders that serve LGBTQ+ seniors in California to support in reaching a minimum of 2,000 responses between November 1st, 2023 - March 31st, 2024. They hope that the findings of the study will lead to future pieces of legislation that will increase the quality of life of LGBTQ+ seniors and the LGBTQ+ community at-large.

Please use this Statewide Coalition Registration link to register your organization/entity to the statewide coalition to be a part of this historic project.

[Join the Coalition >](#)

New Resource Series on Suicide Prevention for 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth

Developed by Suicide Prevention Resource Center, in partnership with NORC at the University of Chicago, this series of guides centers the input of LGBTQIA2S+ individuals and those who have experienced suicidal thoughts and behaviors. The series includes a resource guide and four companion focus guides designed for specific populations. These guides can help professionals, families, and communities support the mental well-being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and Two-Spirit (LGBTQIA2S+) youth.

[View Resources >](#)

Participants Needed for Research Study on Cancer and Wellbeing

Call for participants from the University of Alabama, Birmingham: LGBTQIA+ individuals living with cancer, we care about YOU and your experiences. The Stress, Aging, and Resilience Lab is looking for individuals living with cancer and their care partners who might be interested in completing daily diaries for our study. Your answers will remain anonymous. You will be paid for your time. To learn more and see if you qualify or for more information contact us at starlab@uab.edu.

[Take the Survey >](#)

Contact Our Team: <http://lgbtq-ta-center.org/> contact-us 1-877-568-4227



The California Reducing Disparities Project's LGBTQ TA Center is funded and directed by the California Department of Public Health, Office of Health Equity, and administered by the Center for Applied Research Solutions.

