

# OutCenter

Celebrating  
**10**  
Years Proud



*Serving the LGBT Community in Southwest Michigan*

## OUT & abOUT

**Newsletter**

**July 2013**

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**Lake Effect Pride 2013 Celebrates  
10 Years Proud!**

**Individual  
donations now  
more important  
than ever**

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### Challenge met

The Frederick S. Upton Foundation challenge grant met! As announced in the June newsletter emailed on the 15th, the OutCenter received a challenge grant from the Foundation in support of the Youth Program.

This challenge was met **FOUR DAYS LATER!**

The OutCenter thanks these donors for their quick response and support: Paul Lane and James Boyd, Mike and Anne McCausland, Megan and Clay McCausland, Lisa Hubbs and Cassandra Lopez, Cathajane and Chris Galante, Barbara Levering, and Miriam Pickus and Jane Jarcho.

### Affirming Clergy News

Affirming Clergy and clergy interested in joining us, please come to a meeting **Tuesday, Aug. 6 from 10-11:30 a.m. at St. Augustine's Episcopal**



Join the OutCenter on **Friday, July 26 at 6 p.m. at Harbor Shores Golf Club** to celebrate 10 Years Proud at our signature Pride event! You'll find us under the tent!

Come one, come all to also celebrate the OutCenter's founders and an AMAZING year for LGBT equality! We still have a ways to go but



**Church, 1753 Union St., Benton Harbor.** We're reassembling this clergy group and need to hear from you what you need to help your congregations be fully welcoming of LGBT people and to be advocates for the cause in our communities. We'll use this meeting to get to know each other, form a steering committee, and schedule a one-day conference based on your needs later in the year. I hope you're interested and able to join us. Please email Dan Scheid at [dsjscheid@gmail.com](mailto:dsjscheid@gmail.com) to RSVP. If you can't make this meeting, please email Dan with your contact information so we can update our list and keep you in the loop. Thanks!



Dan Scheid

know the OutCenter is working hard to bring equality home to Southwest Michigan!

Tickets are **ONLY \$25** and you will enjoy live entertainment, DJ Todd Dockerty, and celebrating with friends and family in a beautiful environment!

Buy your tickets now and know you are supporting a great center and celebrating diversity and equality in Southwest Michigan!

## ALIVE Youth Group

By **MacKenzie Carlock** and **Claire Postelli**

At this month's ALIVE Youth Group meeting, the OutCenter will be showing footage from filmmaker Alden Peters' film-in-progress, "Coming Out," **from 2-4 p.m. on July 20 at the Phoenix.**



Shocked by the LGBTQ suicides in 2010, filmmaker Peters teamed up with Brenda Lopez, Patrick Murphy, Alex Familian, and Megan Mancini to create a documentary that captures the coming out process in today's social media driven society. Alden turned on the cameras and got his family's, friends', and acquaintances' reactions to him revealing his identity as an LGBTQ community member.



Alden was born and raised in Seattle and attended New York University's Tisch School of the Arts as a filmmaker. He struggled with his identity and, like many others, looked to the internet for help. The thought of coming out terrified him so he looked up stories on YouTube.

"They were interesting but they were essentially, 'This happened two years ago, then this happened, now it's like this,'" Peters said. "I just couldn't wrap my head around what it was actually like to come out. I wanted to see it. That went into the decision to film it."

His idea to make his experience into a documentary was fueled by his adolescence, in which he was never assured that homosexuality was socially accepted. He hopes that the documentary will assure today's youth that it is, essentially, okay to be gay.

"We want to encourage LGBTQ youth to be proud of who they are, and positive stories foster that courage and pride," Peters said.

As pride goes, Peters' story is one of hope for the entire community. Not only does it offer an inside look at what coming out can look like, it also deals with growing up feeling different and addressing those feelings of otherness.

"Everyone will have a different experience of course, but I know there is a need for some sort of example," Peters said. "A starting point. That's what this film is intended to be. I hope a young LGBTQ boy or girl can watch this film and feel supported and inspired to be who they are."

This screening is for 14-21 year old LGBT youth and their allies.

After the screening, people are invited to share and listen to others share their stories and experiences of coming out.

### Quick Links [Our Website](#) [Programs & Services](#) [Resources](#)

OutCenter on Facebook:



[info@outcenter.org](mailto:info@outcenter.org)  
**269.925.8330**

### Foundation Support



**West Shore AWARE**



The Frederick S. Upton Foundation

## Whirlpool Pride in Chicago

Whirlpool Pride Event in Chicago was a success and a lot of fun, too!

Chris Rice of Whirlpool, helped make it all happen with a great team, especially noting the amazing work done by Erin Brown. At the World of Whirlpool folks showed up to support the OutCenter, meet fellow supporters and allies, bid on and walk away with some amazing items, and just relax and enjoy the scene. See the limited edition (and first one to be available) Rainbow mixer. (For more pictures, check out the OutCenter's Facebook page.)



Brian Savage, OutCenter Board Chair, also spoke about the important work of the OutCenter and how very important it is to support this one-of-a-kind organization in Berrien County.

In a spur of the moment inspiration, Mary Jo Schnell asked Heather Sawyer, Senior Counsel for the U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary, to say a few words, too. Heather has led the committee's efforts to challenge the Defense of Marriage Act's (DOMA's) constitutionality, and served as lead counsel for important legislation such as the 2008 ADA Amendments Act and the 2009 Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

Heather emphasized to all in attendance how important it is for us all speak up and speak out, telling our stories and letting all know how important it is--how just it is--for LGBT people to be fully equal in the U.S.

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