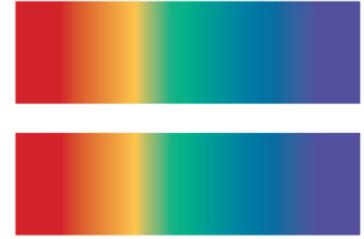


GREATER ERIE ALLIANCE FOR EQUALITY



GEAE's mission focuses on the commitment to be "Dedicated to supporting the region's LGBT community and its straight allies through educational programs, social events, and opportunities for service, which are designed to strengthen our voice and improve the quality of life in northwestern Pennsylvania." This report reflects our adherence to that mission.

Letter from the retiring president, Will Koehler, Ph.D.

It has been a great honor to serve the Greater Erie Alliance for Equality as the board president for the past three years. In 2015, I was able to cast a 5-year vision for our organization to raise Erie's Municipal Equality Index and increase safety and well-being for all in this wonderfully diverse community regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. That first year, we conducted a community needs assessment and have been building a network with businesses, organizations, agencies, and elected officials to address the needs the assessment revealed. In 2016, we were able to move into a small office space, providing our organization with the stability we needed to carry out the education, training, service, and outreach necessary to build our community's competency in working with LGBT people of diverse ages, races, socio-economic statuses, and abilities.

In 2017, we were able to contract with a service coordinator to further advance our mission.

All of these great advances towards this 5-year vision have been made possible through the many supporters and allies like yourself who believe in the mission of GEAE. I have enjoyed meeting and working with all of you over the past 3 years. I am confident that the new leadership we have elected will be able to continue this mission and see our community continue toward equality and respect for all. I encourage you to continue to work with and contribute to GEAE in the coming years to empower these passionate people toward the good work we have ahead of us.

Thank you for the privilege of working with you and GEAE as board president.

Sincerely,
William J. Koehler, Ph.D., LCSW



Dale Allgeier receiving Special Recognition Award presented by GEAE President Will Koehler at Afternoon for Equality 2017, presented to him by GEAE



Keynote Joe Kort, Ph.D. delivering his address about changes in life.

Educational Programming

Intersections of Equality Symposium

In October, GEAE hosted its Intersections of Equality Symposium, a professional development symposium that offered continuing education credits. The two-day event provided community education opportunities with the screening of the award-winning documentary, **MAJOR!**, followed by a panel discussion.

The panel discussed experiences of trans people in the criminal justice system, as well as related issues within the LGBT community.

The second full day facilitated several discussions regarding LGBT seniors. Keynote speaker, Dr. Joe Kort, provided a lively discussion regarding the lives of LGBT people as they age.

The next symposium will focus on LGBT youth.

Business & Organizational Competency Training

GEAE continues to develop LGBT competency trainings for the business sector and non-profit organizations in the greater Erie area. In 2017, GEAE provided LGBT Competency Training or Bystander Intervention Training on 5 different occasions. Training was provided by experienced professionals for a variety of human service agencies and academic institutions. GEAE trained approximately 100 people in the region, empowering them to intervene in a potentially aggressive situation. The training provided information about ways to be more trauma-informed about LGBT people in shelter services, in drug and alcohol counseling services, and within the criminal justice system.

Regional GSA Development

Continuing our mission to provide more services and outreach to those in specific marginalized populations, GEAE developed a regional GSA (Gay-Straight or Gender-Sexuality Alliance) for area high school and college students. Support from the Erie Community Foundation helped us to establish this program, and its continued development will help to effect a positive change in our community. GEAE is currently working with NWPA Alliance to expand GSA events and workshops, so that more students can be reached and supported in Erie County.



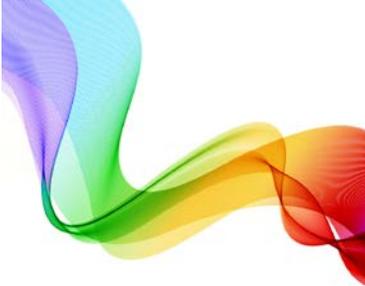
At the Afternoon for Equality 2017, several GEAE Scholarships were presented to graduating high school seniors who were furthering their education after graduation.

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Community Events

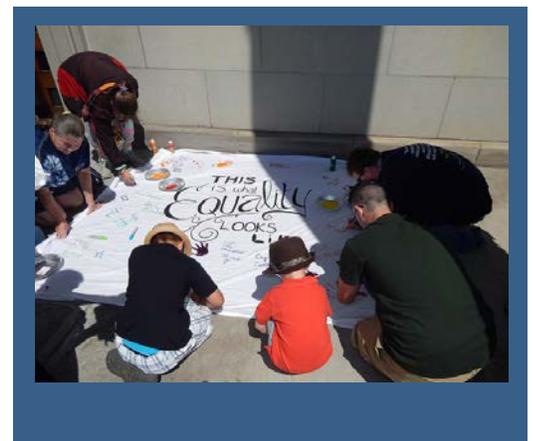
GEAE hosted and supported many community events in Erie, from social outings, to advocacy rallies, and networking with other organizations in order to provide essential education and outreach to our LGBTQ community.

- **Hockey Night:** In February we held our annual GEAE Hockey Night at Erie Insurance Arena. Participants enjoyed the buffet, game and lots of socializing. We are excited to provide this opportunity to join with friends during the cold Erie months.
- **Progress Toward Equality:** On Sunday, June 11, 2017, Greater Erie Alliance for Equality held a rally entitled Progress Toward Equality on the steps of the Erie County Courthouse. This educational event celebrated the gains we have made while highlighting the work that still needs to be done for the LGBT community. This was organized in conjunction with similar events in Washington DC and across the US, namely the InterPride organization. The event featured a presentation of a timeline on local, state, and national progress on LGBT Equality.
- **7th Annual Afternoon for Equality:** GEAE's most successful fundraising event is Afternoon for Equality. Held at 21 La Rue Dix on Sunday June 12th in downtown Erie, the event featured delicious food, local wine and great music, and a celebration of GEAE's accomplishments over the past year. President Will Koehler thanked our many sponsors and presented scholarships to five area high school graduates who will be furthering their education, most at local universities.
- **Pride Picnic:** GEAE provided games for kids and information for teens and adults at this August event held at Presque Isle Rotary Pavilion.
- **Pride Rally Support and After Pride Celebration:** GEAE was represented well at this year's very successful Pride Rally and offered face painting for children and adults alike. We also sponsored a reception at the Bourbon Barrel following the Pride Rally. It was a great way to provide more networking opportunities for our out-of-town guests. Approximately 100 visited the After Pride party this year.

Advocacy:

The opportunity to reach out into the community, help some other organizations with their mission, and provide insights through discussion and collaboration is vital to our mission. Here are some highlights:

- ✓ Healthy Living Expo
- ✓ Penn State Behrend youth conference
- ✓ LGBT Veterans informational session
- ✓ Roundtable discussion with Equality PA
- ✓ Published analysis from community needs assessment survey
- ✓ Worked with new partners in the community: Cancer Society, Alzheimer's Association, NWPA Alliance
- ✓ Established communication with elected officials and candidates regarding the Municipal Equality Index numbers for Erie and how those can be improved.



Thank you to our sponsors!

Our sponsors donated funds for multiple programs and projects, and we are grateful for their support. If you would like to sponsor any event or program or help with GEAE's administrative costs, please review the donor levels below for the benefits and how to contact us to make donations this holiday season and beyond!



NWPA
ALLIANCE



Lake Erie Counseling Services



Helping today... Shaping tomorrow.



ECGRA
ERIE COUNTY GAMING REVENUE AUTHORITY

Red Ribbon Sponsor: \$100-\$249:

1. Listing as a Red Ribbon Sponsor on our website and in our annual report
2. Listing at Afternoon for Equality

Blue Ribbon Sponsor: \$250-\$499:

1. Listing as a Blue Ribbon Sponsor on our website and in our annual report
2. Table sponsor at Afternoon for Equality

Bronze: \$500-\$999:

1. Business name listed on all print advertising
2. Listing as a Bronze Sponsor on our website
3. Two complimentary tickets to our Afternoon for Equality event in June 2018

Silver: \$1000.00-\$4,999: All of the above advertising list with the following upgrades:

1. Your business logo displayed on all print advertising
2. Your business logo displayed on the website as a Silver Sponsor
3. Four complimentary tickets to our Afternoon for Equality event in June 2018

Gold: \$5,000.00-\$7,999: All the above advertising, and the following:

1. An extensive Facebook update highlighting your commitment to GEAE and the LGBT community
2. Six complimentary tickets to our Afternoon for Equality event
3. A opportunity to speak at Afternoon for Equality about your company

Platinum: \$8,000.00 and above: All the above in addition to the following:

We will feature your business on our website in an article.

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