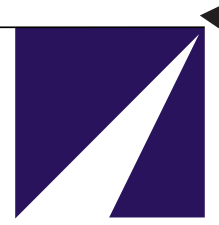


ReVision



P R O J E C T

YES

re (ri) *n.* 1. anew, again **vision** (vizh 'ən) *n.* 1. the manner in which one sees or conceives of something.

Making our world safe for ALL youth

The mission of Project YES is to prevent suicide and ensure the healthy development of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth by initiating dialogue, providing information and creating support systems.

Georgia On Our Mind

During the last week of April, Martha Fugate, Dr. Carolyn Garwood, the Rev. Frank Smith and Joseph Zolobczuk traveled to Dahlonega, Georgia - a small, rural college town located two hours north of Atlanta in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains.

Rev. Frank Colladay of the ministerial Association that invited us, sent these words after our visit:

"'Thank you' seems such a short phrase to try to express how very much I appreciated you coming and sharing with us last week. I believe many eyes and hearts were opened to the issues facing our community, especially our young people. There was much excitement as to what we might be able to do here, and your presentation contained much to chew on and digest. It is safe to say that our community will not be the same after Project YES came to town!"

Following the day of clergy dialogue, we spent two days with school faculty and staff. We were invited by Dr. Bob Michael, the Dean of Education, who kindly sent this report after our visit:

"For two days, the North Georgia College & State University's School of Education faculty and staff and the University Coaching Staff

A Visitor From The West

By Solomon Liston, Coordinator of SPIRIT



Thank you from the heart of the Rocky Mountains for the awesome communication workshop and your wonderful hospitality. As a coordinator of SPIRIT (Student Promoting Individuality, Respect and Tolerance, a program of the Aspen Gay and Lesbian Fund and the Stepstone Center in Colorado), I hear a lot of strong comments. Using the model of communication, which I learned in the Project YES speakers training, I have been able to address many of our local community's concerns with greater ease. I proposed to the Roaring Fork Health Council to bring the Project YES Safe Schools, Healthy Families workshop to the RE-I School District. The concern of why do "our" teachers need to know about gay and lesbian youth came up. I am proud to say the simplicity of your model stood strong when I addressed this question. Now the Roaring Fork Health Council understands the need for this training and is excited to welcome Project YES to the district. Thank you again for your dedication to the healthy development of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and ALL youth by initiating dialogue within different communities. I would also like to thank Jonathan Lewis and Robert Posada for initiating and supporting the meeting of Project YES and SPIRIT.



The North Georgia State College and University Administration Building



Teachers who participated in SSHF workshop day one.



Teachers who participated in SSHF workshop day two.

The first day, we conducted a communication course and clergy dialogue for 12 members of the local rural churches of Dahlonega. They had no idea what to expect as the day began, and their courage was only rewarded with some very difficult work.

The clergy showed enormous courage in their willingness to find a way through conflicts of beliefs and doctrine, to a path of support and caring for young people.

carved out several hours to engage in serious dialogue and reflection about the full meanings of diversity, tolerance, acceptance, and fairness. Each day a different group of faculty, staff and coaches participated in the Project YES Safe Schools / Healthy Families workshop on our campus. We spoke candidly about the mission of Project YES and how the concern for the healthy development of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth connects with and supports

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Sunset High School Suicide Presentation

Project YES was asked to participate in a presentation to the entire 4,700 student body of Sunset Senior High School. We were invited by Rosa Neil, a student and a member of Family Career & Community Leaders of America Club.

Eva Leivas-Andino, Tommie Watkins, and Joseph Zolobczuk discussed suicide prevention and education. The dialogue between the student panel and the speakers occurred in the media room, where the conversation was broadcast through closed circuit TV to all classrooms. Students could then email or phone-in questions or comments they had for the Project YES speakers. After the presentation, the students were handed yellow ribbons and yellow cards. The yellow card is used to show a friend or counselor when the student is thinking about suicide and needs to talk.

Since our mission primarily addresses inclusion of gay and lesbian youth, we were curious why Rosa invited us to speak at Sunset High.



Richard Sherman, Community Voices Speaker with two teachers, and Joseph Zolobczuk and Luisa Patino at a Miami-Dade County High School presentation.

“I searched many community organizations and Project YES was the only one I could find able to send speakers on the issue of suicide.”

- Rosa Neil

Braddock High School contacted us following the success at Sunset for their suicide prevention week.

Georgia On Our Mind

continued from page 1

our efforts to develop caring, humane, intelligent, and fair teachers for our 14 county service area in North Georgia.”

There is so much we learned in our workshop and we are so grateful for the opportunity to take huge risks - both personally and professionally - in a challenging yet safe context.

The faculty embraced the idea for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is their passionate commitment to just and equitable education for all students. What began as a single request for consideration became a mandate from the faculty for the workshop and a request that we expand the list of participants to include the coaching staff of the University. Through the insightfulness of Mary Ann Westerfield, Coordinator of our Athletic Teaching Education Program and the leadership of Randy Dunn, our Athletic Director, the coaching staff had a significant presence in the workshop.

There is so much we learned in our workshop and we are so grateful for the opportunity to take huge risks - both personally and professionally - in a challenging yet safe context. Project YES spoke to many teachers in all areas of our preparation program. We have committed to continuing our work through a newly-formed committee to examine the inclusion of the Project YES vision in our teacher preparation program. The Project YES mission will be used in our diversity programs, addressed in our accreditation standards, and incorporated in faculty development plans and activities.

We have taken a very small but important step toward expanding our ability to provide the best professional preparation and continued professional development for the teachers of North Georgia. This step has been made possible by a group of faculty, staff, and coaches who care so deeply for our students and our area schools, because of the warmth, caring, honesty, wisdom - and brilliance - of the Project YES folks who took the risk to work with us. We think we are off to a great start - and we look forward to the challenges and successes that lie ahead.

Turner Tech Presentation

Every year, Diana Maniscalco, an English Teacher at Turner Tech High School, has her class read "Invisible Life," an autobiography about growing up gay in high school. To supplement her classes' learning experience, she invites speakers from Project YES to encourage classroom discussion and dialogue about the book and issues about

gay and lesbian students. This year Denise Hueso and Joseph Zolobczuk addressed Diana's "energetic" class. They were truly a wonderful group of students - full of questions, ideas, and thoughts. We have a bright future knowing these kids will be leading the world!



Students at Turner Tech High School

Project YES Gets FAMEous

The Florida Association for Multicultural Education (FAME) held its annual conference in Broward County at the Sheraton Hotel on March 31. This was a wonderful opportunity to reach educators and teachers across the entire state. Martha Fugate and Dr. Carolyn Garwood presented the Safe Schools / Healthy Families Workshop to the 20 participants in our workshop class.

Many of the teachers were familiar with gay and lesbian youth in their schools, and wanted more

Multicultural education advocates who attended the Project YES workshop.



information about how to appropriately handle other students who may be harassing their

peers. They also wanted to learn how to be in partnership with concerned parents.

United Way Donors!



We would like to thank everyone who listed Project YES as your United Way Donor Choice organization. We know you had to go out of your way and write us in to have that happen. If you did not receive a note from us it is because the feedback from United Way listed your donation as anonymous. If you would like to receive a letter from us, please fill in your donor choice form completely and request that notice of your donation be sent to Project YES. Our supporters are the best in the world and we want you to know how much we appreciate you! We would like to thank Luis Herrera for his contribution through United Way.

Douglas Gardens Cares About Safety

By Lorraine Berger

At first, many questioned why we should bring Project YES to our weekly discussion group at Douglas Gardens Home for the Elderly. Many had no apparent interest in this topic, given their age and unfamiliarity with gay and lesbian issues. I began to share with them the suicide rates of these youth, and the harassment many teenagers experience in high school. They soon understood the implications - it was an uncomfortable issue, but a topic that may be affecting their own grandchildren.



Myrna Danzig, volunteer speaker for Project YES, and Lorraine Berger, Dade County Public School teacher

The message was well received and I'm sure enlightened the thinking of the 30 residents present. I was surprised to see each one of the residents take a brochure!

A Workshop For Homestead Police

By Marie Ortiz

On April 18, I spoke to police officers at the Homestead Police department about suicide and harassment of gay and lesbian youth.

During the dialogue, one of the officers opened up and told a story about one young girl who was under suicide watch in their department. When the officers went to the school to investigate, the students said there was a rumor that she was a lesbian. She was experiencing a lot of harassment, and was depressed and withdrawn. The officers decided to turn the case over to someone in their unit that was experienced with gay youth issues.

I would like to thank Officer Tony Aquino for inviting Project YES to this diversity presentation.

Kiaora Society



The last few weeks have been busy ones for Project YES in our efforts to enroll new friends in our work, and thank old friends for their support. On April 11, Northern Trust Bank and Chesterfield Smith co-hosted a lunch that was held in the beautiful private dining rooms of Northern Trust. Over 30 new friends came to hear about the innovative programs of Project YES. On May 3, Jose Valdes-Fauli and Shed Boren hosted our Spring Kiaora Evening for more than 70 people, enabling us to thank current supporters, as well as welcome new ones.



Janet McAiley and Ray Marchman, Senior Vice President of Northern Trust Bank

We would like to thank six friends of Project YES who have recently joined our Kiaora Society - Lang Baumgarten, Douglas DeBoer & Howard Kurzweil, John C. Roettger & Brian P. Molloy, and Steve Werner.

Lessons In Communicating

By JoAnne Salem

I have been teaching in Dade County for 44 years, presently teaching at Coral Gables Sr. I attended a Safe Schools Workshop and a communication course by Project YES. I had been agonizing over how to discuss safety for everyone in my classes. How do I bring up the topic? What happens if things get out of hand? Will I be able to control the atmosphere in the class? I was frightened! What if I do something wrong and make an intolerable situation worse? The poster was the catalyst. As soon as it went up one student asked me about it, another joined in and the discussion was on. These mini discussions take place each day even with students I don't teach. I learned that all have concerns that their friends may be in danger or hurting. Like ripples in a pool, it is a start. The communication course changed my life. What a powerful tool! People discovering the power of changing from a win-lose, right-wrong approach, to one guided by purpose and powerful listening.

Project YES is a dynamic driving force for our schools and our community to insure safe, healthy environments for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and ALL youth. Thank you, Thank you, THANK YOU.

Wish List:

- In need of an IT professional. Consulting tasks will include helping us assess our current and future IT needs and to plan accordingly.
- Laptop computer, PII or equivalent, 32 RAM or higher, modem.
- VCR

Call 305.663.7195

Kiaora Society Members

Kiaora Society members donate \$1,000 or more to Project YES annually.

Visionary

\$10,000 or more

Colin Higgins Foundation
Health Foundation of South Florida
Ittleson Foundation
Ed McAmis and Gerson Gonzalez
Jonathan Lewis and Roberto Posada
Ruth Anderson Foundation

Champion

\$5,000 or more

Dade Human Rights Foundation
Espirito Santo Plaza
North Dade Medical Foundation
Roblee Foundation
Carol and Ed Williamson

Leader

\$2,500 or more

Kate Adler and Pam Reynolds
Greg Baldwin and Jose Castro
Connie Barden and Martha Fugate
Nellie Barrios
BellSouth
Bob Cole
Colonial Bank
Cordis Corporation
Dade Community Foundation
Pink Palm
Karen Raben and Andrea Pernick
real.life.basic
Robert Oldakowski and Luis Mendoza
Jacques Soukup
William Vaughan

Mentor

\$1,000 or more

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Lang Baumgarten
BellSouth Pioneers - North Miami
Shed Boren
Jerry Chasen and Rob Welborn
City National Bank of Florida and the Abess Family
Coral Gables Congregational Church
Alice G. and Thomas C. Davis
Douglas DeBoer & Howard Kurzweil
Dupont Pharmaceuticals
Dwina Gibb
Randall Gluss and Fernando Mendez
James C. Hanrahan
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Larry Hyer
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Jim Kitchens and Edward Lee
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New World Symphony
Bernard Oxman
John C. Roettger & Brian P. Molloy
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Janice and Howard Scholl
Lee Brian Schragar
Scott Sittler
Chesterfield Smith
The Rev. Frank Smith and Isabelle Hill
Howard Snoweiss and Lin Childress
South Florida Tennis Club
Mark Steinberg and Dennis Edwards
Jose Valdes-Fauli
The Rev. Marta S. Weeks
Steve Werner
Robin Wheatley and Jeffrey Newton

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Upcoming events

Meeting for Gay & Lesbians Jewish Youth, at Temple Israel of Greater Miami: June 11, at 3:00 PM.

July Project YES Community Meeting: July 13, at 3:30 PM.

Newsletter Volunteer Night: August 8, beginning at 5:30 PM.

August Project YES Community Meeting: August 10, at 3:30 PM.

Special announcements

Let's Go Sol!

Project YES is proud to be participants with Miami Sol, the new Women's National Basketball Association hometown team in Miami. Look for the Project YES information table present at five home games during this season. Volunteers will be at these games sharing about Project YES. If you are interested in being a volunteer, call Joseph at 305-663-7195. Preference will be given to people who have completed the Community Voices Communication Course. Game entry is provided for volunteers.



A Note From Orlando

By Orlando Calderin



My name is Orlie (short for Orlando). I have known that I was gay ever since I was 6 years old. I grew up in a very religious home, with a very strict mother who was very set in her ways and views of life. My years in high school

went by smoothly, up until my sophomore year.

That was the year that I came to realize and accept the fact that I was gay.

I am now a senior at Miami Senior High School, dealing with coming out to my Mother. It all came down on me practically out of nowhere. I was working one day at Eckerd's, and when I got home, my mother was waiting for me in my room with my empty book bag in her hand. She gave me this face and started asking questions. My book bag was the only place that I had privacy. I had letters, pictures of friends and most importantly my Journal. She had read my Journal in full and pretty much found out that I was gay. It lead into the slow destruction of the relationship because of the gay issue that I think she has suspected all her life. My mother pushed me away with all her derogatory comments against gay people and me.

My trust counselor referred me to Project YES; there I met a beautiful soul named Martha Fugate. I then learned that there was an opening for an office assistant. I applied and was hired.

She, along with Marie, Joseph, and Eva helped me with my present situation. I now work at Project YES and am in the process of getting my own apartment. I took the communications course at Project YES that same weekend; I loved it, and I learned a lot. Within two weeks, I was making a speaking engagement at Miami Jackson Senior High School.

Thanks to organizations like Project YES, hopefully the youth of tomorrow won't have to go through the things that I went through during middle and high school.

IBM Charity Sponsorship

Thanks to Stanley Zolobczuk, Joseph's dad, IBM now recognizes Project YES as one of their Approved Charity Organizations and it will be a standard selection for the 2000 IBM Employee Charitable Contribution Campaign. IBM colleagues and retirees can contribute to Project YES on the IBM w3 Intranet.

If you are a colleague, retiree or know someone who is an IBM associate, please share this opportunity to contribute to Project YES and the work of making our world safe for all youth.