

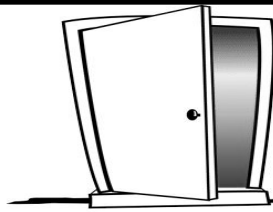
**RAINBOW
HEIGHTS CLUB**
25 FLATBUSH AVE.
4TH FLOOR
BROOKLYN, NY
11217

Rainbow Heights Club is a project of Heights-Hill Mental Health Service-South Beach Psychiatric Center Community Advisory Board, Inc. that provides psychosocial support and advocacy services, free of charge, to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender mental health consumers.

This newsletter is made possible by the continued support of City Council Member Bill de Blasio.

Inside this issue:

- “Dollar Dude” 1
- Director’s Corner/ Member Spotlight 2
- Monthly Calendar 3
- New Staff ! 4
- PNG Announcement/ Christian’s Conference Corner 5
- Roving Reporter/ Friends & Family Brunch 6

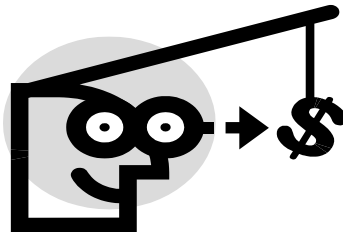


Rainbow Heights Club

AUGUST 2009

Xpress

DOLLAR DUDE UPDATE



RAINBOW HEIGHTS CLUB RECEIVES NEW FUNDING FROM THE N.Y.S. SENATE

Hi members!

I hope everyone is having a great summer at Rainbow Heights Club. I'm thrilled to announce that through our work with the NYS LGBT Health and Human Services Network we have secured a new grant from Senate President Senator Malcolm Smith and the Democratic Majority in the amount of \$40,000. These program/operation funds will allow RHC to maintain its high level of service despite funding cuts from our other government sources. The funds from the Senate are in addition to the grant we have received for the past several years from the Speaker of the NYS Assembly, The Honorable Sheldon Silver.

Members played a significant role in helping us to secure these funds when we boarded busses last spring and traveled to Albany to tell our stories to our elected officials. Hearing directly from consumers about the help they receive from the club is very important to elected officials as they try to decide where to allocate very limited funds.

Continued on page 5

RHC End of Summer BBQ

August 20th 12-5pm
Prospect Park



We need YOUR help to make this event bigger and better than last year! Help plan *Food *Fun *Festivities! Come to FUN Committee every Tuesday at 3pm in the Art Room to get involved.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER: Nicole Avallone, LMSW

As the summer heats up and winds down, Rainbow Heights Club continues to bring you exciting new activities and events to keep your days and nights full of things to do! Here is just a quick glimpse of events for the month ahead.

The **Wednesday, August 5th at 1:30pm** the walking group will head over to **Toys in Babeland** on Bergen Street for an **LGBT Safer Sex Workshop**. In addition to the workshop, we'll get a store tour and 10% off any purchases!

The Shopping Group continues to get great reviews as members head out together to learn more about healthier food options and the best way to make that dollar go farther! Did you know that you can use your food stamps to buy super fresh local produce at fabulous prices??

This month, join the group on **Thursday, August 6th at 1:30pm** for a special trip to the **Borough Hall Green Market** to learn more.

Did you know that you can get free legal advice on a wide array of civil legal matters? On **Wednesday, August 19th at 4:30pm**, the **LGBT Law Project** at NYLAG (NY Legal Assistance Group) will be joining us at Community Meeting to share information about their valuable services.

On **Thursday, August 20th from 12 to 5pm**, we'll be gathering in Prospect Park for our **2nd Annual End of Summer Barbeque**. This year we'll be adding in some great new games and activities, and we'll be firing up the grill with some super tasty fare. Interested in getting in on the planning? Come to the club on Tuesdays at 2pm for our weekly Work Committee meeting to help with planning.

As usual our monthly **Birthday's Celebration** will be the last Friday of the month, **August 28 at 4:30pm** so be sure to come in if this is your birthday month – you'll get a special treat just for being you! And our **monthly Friend's & Families Brunch** is sure to be a hit with exciting new activities planned for the day on **Sunday, August 30th from 12-4:30pm**.

And finally we'd like to recognize Eileen Cheong, our Food service intern for creating a connection between RHC and the Community Supported Agriculture program, Brooklyn Beet. Because of Eileen, we've gotten a bunch of fresh fruits and vegetables donated to us – so thank you Eileen! There will be more information about that in our next newsletter.

We hope to see you here for one of the exciting happening during the month of August!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Dorothy "Dottie" Taylor



Dorothy "Dottie" Taylor,
RHC Member

My name is Dorothy Taylor or "Dottie." I've been a Rainbow Heights member since July 2008. Through the Rainbow Heights Club I've grown tremendously - socially, mentally, and emotionally. RHC feels like the family I can relate to - unlike my biological family.

Groups and therapy at RHC have helped me to feel more positive about my identity as a lesbian of color. I used to have a lot of internalized homophobia, feeling that

I had to hide or pretend to be straight or even MUSLIM to protect my sanity and life.

RHC became a haven and an escape from the negativity I had to and still have to deal with.

I love to dance, write poetry and act. RHC has helped me recognize and enhance these God-given abilities. They say gay people are creative. (Smile). Alright, gotta go. Thanks for your love and support.

Love y'all! -

Dottie



AUGUST 2009



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Open Support Group, Brunch, Current Events Discussion	3 Open Soc., PsychEd Group, PNG Meeting (3-5) Art. Expr. Group, Spirituality	4 Open Soc., Zappa-lorti, Fun Committee, Bi/sexuality/Chess Club, Thghts & Flings, Read out Loud	5 Open Soc., Wilking Group outing to Baheland (1:30) , Outreach TF, Comm. Meeting, SAGE Games	6 Shpping group- Green Market Trip (1:30) Op. Soc., TG Explorers, W/M Group, Cooking Group, Movie night	7 Open Soc., Writing Group, '2 much? Group, Coming Out Group/Lesbian Group, Karaoke	8
9 Open Support Group, Brunch, Current Events Discussion	10 Open Soc., PsychEd Group, Art. Expr. Group, Spirituality	11 Open Soc., Zappa-lorti, Fun Committee, Bi/sexuality/Chess Club, Thghts & Flings, Read out Loud	12 Open Soc., Wilking Group, OutreachTF, comm.meeting, SAGE, Games	13 Shpping group, Op. Soc., TG Explorers, W/M Group, Cooking Group, Movie night	14 Open Soc., Writing Group, '2 much? Group, Coming Out Group/Lesbian Group, Karaoke	15
16 Open Support Group, Brunch, Current Events Discussion	17 Open Soc., PsychEd Group, Art. Expr. Group, Spirituality	18 Open Soc., Zappa-lorti, Fun Committee, Bi/sexuality/Chess Club, Thghts & Flings, Read out Loud	19 Open Soc., Wilking Group, Outreach TF, comm., Meeting ft. LGBT Law Project , SAGE, Games	20 End of summer BBQ (12-5)	21 Open Soc., Writing Group, '2 much? Group, Coming Out Group/Lesbian Group, Karaoke	22
23 Open Support Group, Brunch, Current Events Discussion	24 Open Soc., PsychEd Group, Art. Expr. Group, Spirituality	25 Open Soc., Zappa-lorti, Fun Committee, Bi/sexuality/Chess Club, Thghts & Flings, Read out Loud	26 Open Soc., Wilking Group, Outreach TF, comm.Meeting,SAGE Games	27 Shpping group, Op. Soc., TG Explorers, W/M Group, Cooking Group, Movie night	28 Open Soc., Writing Group, '2 much? Group, Cmng Ot Group/Lesbian Group, Karaoke	29
30 Friends & Family Brunch 12:30-4:30	31 Open Soc., PsychEd Group, Art. Expr. Group, Spirituality	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> <p>A Hot Nutritious Meal is served at 4pm Monday through Friday. Sunday Brunch is served at 2:00pm.</p> </div>				August B-Day Celebrations (4:30)

WELCOME RHC'S NEW PEER ART SPECIALIST! : BENJAMIN DAVIS

Benjamin Davis is a new member of the Rainbow Heights team, serving as a peer art specialist. Currently, he is working towards his masters degree in the field of art therapy, with hopes to continue working with LGBT communities after he receives his degree. A native New Yorker, Ben loves all the city has to offer and hopes to bring the excitement and vibrancy of city life into the art room here at RHC. When Ben is not at the club, he enjoys outdoor concerts, cooking, bike riding with friends, and reading.



Featured above: Benjamin Davis,
RHC's New Peer Art Specialist

WELCOME RHC'S NEW PEER SPECIALIST!: HELEN "SKIP" SKIPPER

Helen "Skip" Skipper is a new Peer Specialist at Rainbow Heights Club. Skip has worked as a Residential House Manager and Caseworker, and is planning on going back to school for a Certificate in Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counseling (CASAC). She sees her role here as a way to make a difference in some else's life like what has been done for her. Skip brings an incredibly joyful energy and spirit to the club and really knows how to have fun!



Featured above: Helen "Skip" Skipper
RHC's New Peer Specialist

WELCOME RHC'S NEW PEER SPECIALIST! : MICHELLE WOOLARD

Michelle Woolard has been the Hospitality Peer Intern at Rainbow Heights Club since April of this year, and her incredible work led to her being accepted into an ongoing Peer Specialist position. Before coming to Rainbow Heights Club, Michelle worked as a peace officer, had various volunteer roles, and raised 4 beautiful children. Michelle likes everything about working at Rainbow Heights Club – the time, the caring, the people, and the sense of community. She is thrilled to be working in such a family-oriented place!



Featured above: Michelle Woolard
RHC's New Peer Specialist

Continued from Page 1

Also included the New York State budget for 2009/10 are over \$26,000 in individual 'member items' that were sponsored by our local Assembly Members and Senators. This support is used to purchase a large portion of the groceries that our chefs turn into the delicious meals served and enjoyed by our members every day. We'd like to extend a special thank you to the following elected officials who support our club directly through these member items;

NYS Senator Tom Duane
NYS Senator Velmanette Montgomery
NYS Senator Kevin Parker
NYS Senator John Sampson
NYS Senator Daniel Squadron
NYS Assembly Member Jim Brennan
NYS Assembly Member Joan Millman

Additionally, Rainbow Heights Club support in the NY City Council remains as strong as ever with annual grants included in the City's 2009/10 budget from; **Council Speaker Christine Quinn**

Council Member Bill de Blasi
Council Member Leticia James

Lastly, those members who attended our annual Gay Pride open house last month or read the July Xpress learned about the generous \$125,000 capitol grant from our good friend and supporter Assembly Member Hakin Jeffries and Assembly Speaker Silver. These funds cannot be used for program operation expenses but will help us to make improvements to the building we all share with other agencies ensuring a safe, comfortable environment for our members and guests.

-Kevin Garrity

Director, Outreach and Development



Featured above: Julienne Brown
Outreach Coordinator

PNG (Peer Network Group) ANNOUNCEMENT

Hey folks!-

I just wanted to let you all know about this really amazing group that meets on the first Monday of each month. It's called the Peer Network Group (PNG) and it meets at the State office of Mental Health at 330 5th Avenue on the 9th floor. I've been to their first meeting and let me just tell you that it's a really pleasant group of people. The purposes of their meetings are to hear from guest speakers, learn about trainings and job opportunities, and attend events that deal with LGBT mental health consumers' lives. Their next meeting will be August 3rd from 3-5pm. Please check the by the club room for information about monthly meetings! You'll be glad you did!

-Julienne Brown
Outreach Coordinator, RHC

CHRISTIAN'S CONFERENCE CORNER



Pictured above: Christian Huygen
Executive Director, RHC

On June 22, 2009, Rainbow Heights Club Executive Director Christian Huygen took part in a multicultural panel at the New York City Association for Community Living's annual conference. He addressed 100 people who work in mental health residences about how to be effective and supportive with LGBT clients. Then, right after the excitement of marching in the LGBT Pride Parade on Sunday, June 28, 2009, Christian got on a plane to Norfolk, Virginia, where he presented on Best Practices with LGBT Mental Health Consumers at a national conference organized by the United States Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association. About 40 people attended his presentation. On July 15, Christian will travel to Washington, DC, to take part in a first-ever national LGBT Mental Health Roundtable, sponsored by the National Coalition for LGBT Health. Always remember: Rainbow Heights Club staff work hard to share what we've learned from you, at the citywide, statewide and national levels, so that LGBT consumers everywhere can benefit!

Christian Huygen,
Executive Director, RHC



RHC's Roving Reporter...

25 Flatbush Ave.
4th Floor
Brooklyn, New York

Phone: 718-852-2584
Fax: 718-852-5214

We're on the Web!
www.rainbowheights.org

SAVE THE DATE:

August 5th:
Walking group
outing to Babeland

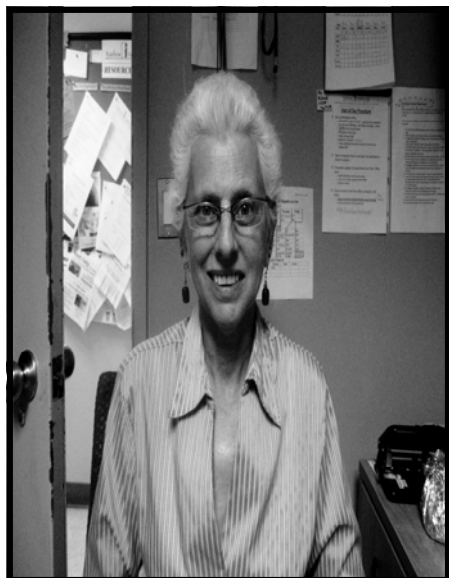
August 6th:
Shopping group
Green Market Trip

August 19th:
LGBT Law Project

August 20th:
End of Summer BBQ

August 28th:
August Bday
Celebrations

August 30th:
Friends and Family
Brunch



Featured Above: Natalie Lessinger, Peer
Specialist

“What changes have happened to you since you’ve come to Rainbow Heights?”

“I graduated from school on the 16th of July, that’s positive!”-
David C.

“I finished school with a 3.5 GPA and I can’t wait to go back in the fall”- Jim

“I get to interact with people”-
Melanie

*Brunch at
Rainbow Heights*
**Want to relax after a long week?
Join RHC every
Sunday
for food and fun!!!**

**Doors Open at 12pm and Brunch is
Served at 2pm.
Hope to see you and your appetite
there!**