

**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 Brad Lander

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Rainbow Heights Club

APRIL 2010



ADVOCATING IN ALBANY!



RHC members and staff in Albany for NYAPRS Legislative Day

Last month, Rainbow Heights Club members and staff journeyed to Albany to with NAMI and the Empire State Pride Agenda's LGBT Health and Human Services Network, to ask our elected officials to support LGBT mental health. Why? Because across New York State, there are 800,000 LGBT people, and often, they aren't able to access the care that they need.

The first-ever survey of LGBT New Yorkers' needs shows that 39% of LGBT people feel they do not have enough support groups. LGBT New Yorkers are twice as likely to experience depression. Some people believe that this is due to the greater stress and stigmatization that we experience. Among LGBT people, Black and

transgender or gender non-conforming people are more vulnerable to depression, as are youth and Latinos. Rainbow Heights Club was designed to fill this need for support. We now serve a majority of people of color (66%), and people from all across the transgender spectrum now make up 35% of our active members. But services like this need financial support, and that's why we traveled to Albany.

Members along with Skip started their journey to Albany @ 4am in the morning. At roughly 6am the greyhound bus pulled out to take them on their great adventure. After a fun (and sleep) filled journey they arrived in Albany where they had breakfast with consumers over a thousand strong from all over New York State. Afterwards they

attended an awards ceremony/briefing which gave all necessary information needed to appeal directly to lawmakers about the mental health budget cuts. Then the fun started with a rally right outside Governor Patterson's office at the Capitol Building. Skip swore she saw him peeking out the window! From the rally there was some downtime before the scheduled round of meetings with State Legislators so Skip & the members used that time to get to know each other better & rehearse their spiel over hot chocolate in the café. When the legislative meetings started everyone was so well prepared. Skip said "We were a well-





Director's Corner : Nicole Avallone, LMSW

Rainbow Heights Club members welcomed in spring with two incredible events in March—our second absolutely amazing Talent Show (see pictures on back page) and our annual Spring Fling Open House! What an invigorating start to this season of rebirth and renewal! In the coming months we have even more exciting events for you to join in on. Don't forget to check our website at www.rainbowheights.org for a continually updated listing of activities and events and our daily meal menu.

On **Thursday, April 15th** Peer Art Specialist Ben Davis will be leading a group for an afternoon at the **Brooklyn Museum**. Come check our fresh new art and gain inspiration for your own creative expression.

Over the next couple of months the club will also be continuing our **collaboration with StoryCorp**. On

Wednesday, April 21 representatives will be here to sign folks up for our first **on-site StoryCorps Recording Day** scheduled for **Thursday, May 6th**.

Storycorp is a nationally-renowned non-profit that gives folks the opportunity to make a professional quality recording of their personal life story—everyday people in their everyday lives. Come on by to sign up!

We'll continue with our regularly scheduled programming, including Member Birthday Celebrations the last Friday and Friends & Families Brunch the last Sunday of the month. Also remember to come by for Consumer Advisory Board Meeting on the third Friday of each month.

Please make note that the club will be **closed on Sunday, April 4th** in recognition of the Easter holiday **and Monday, May 31st** for Memorial Day.

Advocating in Albany

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“Our Rainbow Heights story was told so effectively by the members that even I wanted to reach for my checkbook and give-give-give – so I know we persuaded these legislators to look favorably upon us! “

All & all as a member stated “It was a memorable event and lots of fun! On February 23, 2010, Christian Huygen and Skip met with assembly members and state senators to request support for LGBT affirming health and human services.

We met with Assembly member Hakeem Jeffries, Assembly member William Boyland, and Senator Velmanette Montgomery. Skip and Christian told captivating stories about Rainbow Heights Club, along with people from the Audre Lorde Project and GRIOT Circle. We almost got caught in an Albany blizzard on the way back home! But it was worth it, to advocate for the support that we all need and deserve.

StoryCorps

StoryCorps is coming to RHC on Thursday, May 6th! Sign up today to take part & get a free audio recording of your story!!

“THE THINGS WE ARE PROUD OF...”

Members were asked in March, “What are things in your life you are happy or proud of OR what are things that you are looking forward to?”

Aaron “I enjoy playing pool and drawing pictures here at the club.”

AJ “I feel good when I help someone else.”

Alvin “I'm happy that I'm going to the NYC central library once I leave the club.”

Arnold “I love drawing in the art class.”

Bill “I'm happy that I will be in Florida until the middle of April.”

David C “I am happy that I am working and looking for a full-time job.”

Deirdre “I am proud to just be here today instead of being at home depressed.”

James Dis. “I'm hoping that I find romance.”

Kenny “I am happy to come to the club to meet with the staff and talk with the members.

Kenya “I am looking forward to the talent show.”

Kimberley “I'm going for my CASAC. I am looking forward to starting school in June.”

Martin “I am happy that I am in the talent show.”

Mikey D. “I won 2 games of BINGO.”

Robert “I filled out my first census form this year.”

Rachel P. “I just finished writing a one act play & I can't wait to start the process of sending it out.

Ronald “I am happy that spring is just around the corner.”

Serafina “I am happy that I'm finally making gender peace.”

Skye “I'm looking forward to hosting the talent show.”

Veronica “I am happy that I am here at Rainbow Heights.”

Now it's your turn! What are you proud of?

Email one line/sentence with your first name and or/last initial to Imani imanihenry@rainbowheights.org or

Call 718 852-5217 by Wednesday, May 13th 2010.





CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS



We've experienced a creative buzz of excitement this past month with two new member run groups, our very own Theater Group and Writing Workshop. Both groups have started with a bang! Attendance is regular and growing, and members are planning for upcoming events and workshops. Best of all, **NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!** Whether you are a long time practicing writer or actor, or excited novice, your voice is welcome here at the Club. Ultimately, the goal of each group is to encourage and support the joy of self expression. Talk to Rachael Therien if you have more questions about the Theater Group or Julie Cipolla with questions about the Writing Workshop.

For Michael Jackson,

My Virgo Brother

By Dottie Taylor

From Gary, Indiana

he rose to fame,
at 9 Years old we all
know his name.

Cute Black boy with a
'fro he sang, " I Want
You Back."

Young boy, an old
soul,

Danced like James
Brown with style and
grace.

When "thriller" came
out, he started

changing his face,
White gloves and
socks.

Moonwalk, Motown
25,

This powerful brother
was kickin'

He was LIVE!
There were MJ

lookalikes
There were many

imitators.
Then came along the
vipers,

and also the haters
He's gay, he's crazy,
don't wanna be

Black.

He cried many times,
"Hey, cut me some
slack"

He's donated money,
shared love from his
soul

In an effort to change
hearts that had been
frozen so cold.

Marriages didn't
work, but who am I to
say,

maybe because he
was just simply gay.
Children he loved for

their purity and truth,
They reminded him of
his own lost youth.

Did he touch them in
places that weren't
too nice?

For those accusations,
Mike paid a dear
price

If it's true or not, we'll
never know.

Maybe it's affection
Michael wanted to
show.

Surgeries, masks,
vegetarian—He's
weird!

He must be a fag cuz
he can't grow a
beard.

Into isolation he
went to escape from
the pain
All the bashing
almost drove him
insane.

He was planning a
comeback at his
point of midlife,

I guess Mike's poor
heart couldn't take
any more strife.

While rehearsing in
L.A. he suddenly fell
down—

It appears the King
had lost his crown.
The angel of death

said, "M.J., come
home,"
just like his song,

"You Are Not Alone,"
The heavens opened
to welcome The King

of Pop,
his music, his legacy,
will never stop.

Rest in peace,
Michael, you're home,
you're free.

You're now in the
place we all long to
be.

R.I.P., M.J.



Art Group meets Mondays from 3 to 4pm, and on Thursdays from 2 to 3pm. Interested in art?

Meet us at the club **Thursday April 15th at 1pm** for a trip to the Brooklyn Museum of Art!

Theater Group meets Mondays from 3 to 4pm

Writing Workshop meets Friday from 3 to 4pm

Poetry Group meets Tuesday nights from 6:30-7:30pm.



Congratulations to all the members who submitted pieces to the consumer art show to be held at the OMH Central Office in Albany. We are proud to have had our work be accepted and displayed in this exhibit!



25 Flatbush Ave.
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Brooklyn, New York

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

SAVE THE DATE:

April 4:
**EASTER SUNDAY CLUB
CLOSED**

April 14 & May 12:
**LGBT Federation meeting @
The LGBT Center**

April 15:
Brooklyn Museum Field Trip

April 16 & May 21:
**Consumer Advisory Board
Meeting**

April 21:
Story Corps Sign up

April 30 & May 28:
**April and May Bday
Celebrations**

April 25 & May 30:
Friends and Family Brunch

May 6:
Storycorps Recording Day

May 31: **MEMORIAL DAY
MONDAY- CLUB CLOSED**



**WOW!! Congrats RHC
TALENT SHOW
Participants!**



GROUPS SCHEDULE Spring 2010

Schedule Effective April 2010

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sunday	
1:00PM	Open Socialization	Open Socialization	Open Socialization	Computer Skills Group (In Computer Room)	Open Socialization	Member-led Workshop	
2:00PM	Psycho-education Group	Zappalorti Society	Walking Group	Healing Arts Group	Writing Workshop	BRUNCH	
3:00PM	Artistic Expressions Theater Group	FUN Committee	Outreach Task Force	Trans/Gender Explorers	Too Much?? Group (Addictions Support)	Spanish Workshop	
4:00PM	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER & Community Meeting	DINNER	DINNER	4:30 Close	
4:45PM	Open Socialization	Dreams & Goals Group		Women's Group Men's Group	Coming Out Group Lesbian Group	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> Hours: Monday 12:30-5:30 Tuesday - Friday 12:30-8 Sunday 12-4:30 </div>	
5:30	5:30 Close	Bi/Sexuality Group	SAGE Seniors Group 6:00-7:00 (David-SAGE)	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> Movie Night! </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> Food Group (in the kitchen) </div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> Rainbow Moonlight Karaoke Lounge (starts at 6:00) </div>
6:30		Reading Out Loud (Poetry Group)	Games Night (Bingo 1 st Wednesday!!)				
7:30		8:00 Close	8:00 Close	8:00 Close	8:00 Close		

