

SAN FRANCISCO PRIDE®

SAN FRANCISCO LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER
PRIDE PARADE AND CELEBRATION COMMITTEE, INC.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 10, 2018

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SAN FRANCISCO PRIDE ANNOUNCES 2018 COMMUNITY GRAND MARSHALS AND HONOREES

Six Community Grand Marshals and Eight Awardees to be honored at the 48th Annual Event

San Francisco, CA – The 48th Annual San Francisco LGBT Pride Celebration and Parade will be held on June 23 and 24, 2018. The Parade/March is Sunday, June 24th in the heart of downtown San Francisco beginning at 10:30 AM. A two-day Celebration and Rally is scheduled from Noon to 6:00PM on Saturday, June 23rd, and from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Sunday, June 24th at San Francisco's Civic Center Plaza and surrounding neighborhood.

"Every year, Pride brings almost a million people to San Francisco in celebration. Pride is also an opportunity for our LGBTQ+ communities to reflect on our past and look to the future," according to San Francisco Pride Executive Director, George Ridgely, Jr. "The 2018 theme for Pride, *Generations of Strength*, encourages us to express our gratitude to those before us who organized against and stood up to injustice, recognize those among us who advocate tirelessly for our progress, and lend our support to those who will lead us into the future. In this spirit of solidarity and strength, San Francisco Pride is pleased to be honoring this exemplary collection of individuals and organizations. Our communities are, have been, and will be better for their contributions."

"Our communities have a rich history of resilience, and it is from that deep well of strength we will gather our momentum forward," said Michelle Meow, President of the San Francisco Pride Board of Directors. "We are living in a monumental time of tumult, especially in our country, and we have the crucial choice of how to respond. We will raise our voices in solidarity with all of the communities under fire. We will march to demonstrate our determination. We will offer compassion in the face of animosity. Through unity, acceptance, and might, we will prevent the further erosion of our hard-won civil rights, and work to liberate our people."

San Francisco Pride honors and applauds this year's Community Grand Marshals and Honorees, in recognition of their contributions to the LGBTQ community and movement. "We are inspired by the accomplishments and aspirations of these individuals and organizations, and we are glad Pride can be a part of their recognition," said Ridgely.

Congratulations to the 2018 San Francisco Pride Community Grand Marshals and Awardees:

Brian "Chickpea" Busta
Billy Curtis
FAIR Education Act Implementation Coalition
Kin Folkz
Jewelle Gomez
Shaun Haines
Kate Kendell

Ali Marrero-Calderon
Jen Orthwein
Pamela Peniston
Aria Sa'id
San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band
Soni Wolf
Carolyn Wysinger

Designations and short bios follow below.

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COMMUNITY GRAND MARSHALS

Kin Folkz - Community Grand Marshal, Selected by Public Vote

Kin Folkz is an award-winning educator, human rights activist, author, community catalyst, founder of the Oakland Pride Creative Arts & Film Fest, the founder of the Oakland Queer +Trans Open Mic, a BiNet USA National Board Member, Oakland LGBTQ Center's Healing Arts Director, a member of Black Lives Matter Bay Area and Queer Black Lives Matter. Kin's work has been lauded by the Huffington Post and presented within and outside of the US including Japan, South Africa, and Jamaica. Kin is the CEO and co-founder of Spectrum Queer Media, an internationally recognized LGBTQIA rights, media and creative arts advocacy organization.

San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band -Community Grand Marshal, Organization, Selected by Public Vote

The San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band is the first openly gay musical organization in the world, inspiring the formation of all other LGBTQ bands, choruses, and other groups around the globe. Locally, SFLGFB is the Official Band of San Francisco, having been given that honor by two different mayors. Founded in 1978 by Jon Sims at the height of Anita Bryant's anti-gay crusade, the Band first appeared when it marched up Market Street behind Harvey Milk's car in that year's San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade. The Band meets their mission of community service through 40+ performances every year, from LGBT Pride events to civic events around the Bay Area and beyond.

Brian "Chickpea" Busta - Community Grand Marshal, Selected by the San Francisco Pride Membership

Brian "Chickpea" Busta has been bringing light, laughter, art, and music to San Francisco's LGBTQ* community since 1989. Brian has helped to raise tens of thousands of dollars for the community, and brought beauty, joy, and levity during some of its darkest hours, and nurtured and inspired generations of young queer artists. He founded Gay Glow Street Theater, the Temple Whores drumming troupe, was Grand Duke of the Ducal Court, inspires audiences as the comic figure 'Amber Alert,' and is the current Creative Director of Comfort & Joy.

Billy Curtis – Community Grand Marshal, Selected by the SF Pride Board of Directors

Billy Curtis is a committed community activist and advocate. In 1999, Billy was hired as UC Berkeley's first full time Director for LGBT Resources and is currently the Director of the university's Gender Equity Resource Center. During his tenure Billy has evolved campus resources for LGBTQ students, faculty and staff and mentored a host of LGBTQ leaders. He has volunteered his time on a number of boards of directors, including Vitality, a network of LGBT business professionals, and the SF LGBT Center. He also served on the LGBT Advisory Committee of the SF Human Rights Commission, volunteered with Project Open Hand and is a past AIDS Lifecycle Rider.

Soni Wolf – Community Grand Marshal, Selected by the SF Pride Board of Directors

Soni Wolf is a founding member of Dykes on Bikes® (DOB). She began riding with them in the late 1970s, shortly after the movement for women's empowerment and visibility brought the DOB to the front of the San Francisco Pride Parade. During her forty years of service, Soni helped DOB evolve into a 501(c)3 non-profit, spearheading the group's mission to create a national and international community of women motorcyclists supporting philanthropic endeavors in LGBTQ communities. Her commitment to the LGBTQ community has never wavered and the legacy of Dykes on Bikes would not be what it is today without Soni.

Jewelle Gomez – Lifetime Achievement Grand Marshal, Selected by the SF Pride Board of Directors

Jewelle Gomez is the author of seven books including the double Lambda Literary Award-Winning vampire novel, The Gilda Stories. She has taught creative writing and popular culture at institutions of higher learning from San Francisco State University to Hunter College (NYC). She's written for numerous publications and is playwright in residence at New Conservatory Theatre Center. She was the recipient of a National Endowment on the Arts Fellowship in Literature and two California Arts Council Artist in Residence grants. In 2017, Jewelle received the Barbary Coast Trailblazer Award from LitQuake. She was on the founding boards of GLAAD, The Astraea Lesbian Foundation, and the Open Meadows Foundation.

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HERITAGE OF PRIDE AWARDS

Aria Sa'id – Heritage of Pride – 10 Years of Service Award

For those organizations, individuals, or other entities that have contributed at least ten years of consecutive service to the LGBTQ community.

Aria Sa'id is a writer, cultural icon, policy strategist and the Founder/Director of the Kween Culture Initiative. As an award winning public policy advocate, she co-founded the world's first transgender cultural district, the Compton's Cultural District. She is a 2016-2017 Policy Fellow Alum of the Women's Foundation of California's Women's Policy Institute; and Sojourner Truth Fellow Alum of Auburn Theological Seminary in New York. She is featured in numerous media platforms for her advocacy including *SF Weekly*, *Buzzfeed*, *Huffington Post*, *Vice*, *San Francisco Examiner*, and *The Advocate*. She currently serves as the LGBT Policy Advisor for the San Francisco Human Rights Commission.

Jen Orthwein - Heritage of Pride – Pride Freedom Award

For outstanding contributions to advancing civil rights and freedom for LGBTQ people.

Jen Orthwein is a fierce advocate for racial and gender justice. She began her career in SF in the late 1990s advocating for people living with HIV transitioning out of homelessness. She then pursued a law degree and a Ph.D. in clinical psychology to expand her advocacy. Jennifer helped launch the Detention Project at Transgender Law Center, leading the way to access to gender affirming surgery and gender expression for transgender prisoners in California. Jennifer co-founded Medina Orthwein LLP, a queer-owned, civil rights law firm that focuses on employment discrimination and transgender prisoner rights.

Shaun Haines – Heritage of Pride – Pride Community Award

For outstanding service to LGBTQ communities.

Shaun Haines is a native of San Francisco and the founder of San Francisco Impact Partners. Shaun works to produce events to support and provide resources for our community. He serves on the LGBT Cultural Heritage Strategy and Economic Development Committee, the Police Chief's LGBT Forum, Castro Community on Patrol, and the Stop the Violence Campaign. He is supporting our Trans, Leather, and Castro cultural districts to preserve our communities and commemorate the heritage of our people. Shaun believes that working together to fight injustices, our efforts will preserve our city's vibrant LGBT heritage, culture, diversity, and spaces.

Carolyn Wysinger – Heritage of Pride – Pride Creativity Award

For outstanding artistic contribution to the LGBTQ community.

Carolyn Wysinger is an author, blogger, speaker, high school educator, and the host of the podcast "The C-Dubb Show". Her work has appeared in *Everyday Feminism*, *Elixher*, *Black Girl Dangerous Autostraddle*, and *Sinister Wisdom*. Her first book, *Knockturnal Emissions: Thoughts on #race #sexuality #gender #community* was released in 2013. She is a former Human Rights Commissioner for the City of Richmond. She has served on the steering committee for Black Lesbians United and the board for the NIA Gathering for Same Gender Loving Women of African Descent. She currently serves on the boards for BUTCHVoices and Lambda Democrats of Contra Costa County.

COMMEMORATION AWARDS

Ali Marrero-Calderon – Gilbert Baker Pride Founder's Award

For those who have made a significant and historical impact on the LGBTQ community and the movement for LGBTQ rights.

Ali Marrero-Calderon began working for gay rights in the 1970s, fighting against the Briggs Initiative. In 1974, Ali joined GENTE, the first Lesbian of Color Organization in California. Ali belonged to Gay Latino Alliance (GALA) and Mujerio (a Latina lesbian organization,) and worked with Shanti Project in the early days of the AIDS epidemic. Ali has belonged to Dykes on Bikes since 1976 and was their first Emeritus member. Today, as part of the National Steering Committee of OLOC (Old Lesbians Organizing for Change), Ali fights for the rights of Old Lesbians, especially Old Lesbians of Color.

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FAIR Education Implementation Act - José Julio Sarria History Maker Award

Awarded to Bay Area people who make extraordinary changes in the way society views the LGBTQ community.

Convened in 2014 by Our Family Coalition, over half a dozen organizations comprise the FAIR Education Act Implementation Coalition, and work to see this historic education reform thoroughly implemented across California. The FAIR Education Act, SB 48 (Leno), was signed into law on July 14, 2011, and went into effect on January 1, 2012. It amends California Education Code to include the Fair, Accurate, Inclusive and Respectful reference to contributions by people with disabilities and members of the LGBT community in history and social studies curriculum. California is the only state in the nation to have such LGBT-inclusive legislation in place.

Kate Kendell – Teddy Witherington Award

Recognizing those individuals who have contributed a longstanding, large body of work to the LGBTQ community.

Kate Kendell leads the National Center for Lesbian Rights, a national legal organization committed to advancing the civil and human rights of LGBTQ people and their families through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education. Under Kate's leadership of twenty-four years, NCLR won the California marriage equality case in 2008 and was later part of the team of attorneys to secure national marriage equality in 2015. And together with GLAD, Kate led NCLR to file a federal lawsuit challenging Trump's transgender military ban in August 2017, which secured a nationwide preliminary injunction stopping the ban from moving forward.

Pamela Peniston – The Audrey Joseph LGBTQ Entertainment Award

For those who have made a significant and historical impact or left an indelible impression on the LGBTQ community and the movement for LGBTQ rights, through their artistic expression, or through their contribution within the entertainment industry.

Pamela Peniston is a founding member and Artistic Director of the Queer Cultural Center (Qcc). Since 1998, Pamela has provided visionary leadership for Queer Cultural Center's iconic program, the National Queer Arts Festival—now celebrating its 21st year—commissioned generations of LGBTQI artists & artists of color and provided opportunities for them to discover their voices and connect with their communities. Pamela and Qcc have mentored and inspired queer artists who have become leaders and changed the cultural landscape of queer arts across the nation.

More comprehensive biographies, photos and information about San Francisco Pride's Community Grand Marshals and Honorees can be found at sfpride.org/grand-marshals.

CALENDAR INFORMATION

Celebration and Rally

Civic Center Plaza Park

Saturday, June 23 | Noon to 6:00 PM

Sunday, June 24 | 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM

48th Annual SF Pride Parade and March

Sunday, June 24 | Starting at 10:30 AM

Along Market Street, from Beale to 8th Street

Information regarding registration, event tickets, and the complimentary SF Pride Community Calendar; as well as sponsor, exhibitor, advertising, membership and donor opportunities may be found at www.sfpride.org or by calling (415) 864-0831.

ABOUT SF PRIDE

The San Francisco Pride Celebration Committee is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded to produce the SF Pride Celebration and Parade. The mission of the organization is to educate the world on LGBTQ issues, as well as commemorate the heritage, celebrate the culture, and liberate the people of all LGBTQ communities. A world leader in the Pride movement, SF Pride is also a grant-giving organization through its Community Partners Program. Since 1997, SF Pride has granted nearly \$3 million dollars in proceeds to local nonprofit LGBTQIA organizations and organizations working on issues related to HIV/AIDS, cancer, homelessness, housing rights, and animal welfare.

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