

# SAN FRANCISCO PRIDE®

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

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **SAN FRANCISCO PRIDE ANNOUNCES DEPARTURE OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GEORGE F. RIDGELY, JR.**

*Ridgely has led the community organization since January 2014,  
overseeing significant growth and change.*

San Francisco, CA – San Francisco Pride is announcing the departure of Executive Director George F. Ridgely, Jr. After five-and-a-half years in the role, Ridgely has announced that he will be stepping down after the 2019 event; the sixth Celebration and Parade under his leadership. The Board of Directors, grateful to Ridgely for his guidance and hard work, is evaluating the next step for San Francisco Pride's leadership and will embark upon a search to fill the role. Ridgely has accepted a position with San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department beginning in mid-July, managing Permits and Reservations.

The San Francisco LGBT Pride Parade and Celebration comprise the largest outdoor event in San Francisco, attracting nearly one million people annually. In 2018, a total of 275 parade contingents, with an estimated 50,000 participants, marched along Market Street. Around 100,000 spectators cheered from the sidewalks. At the Celebration in Civic Center, an estimated 800,000 attendees visited the site on Saturday and Sunday of Pride weekend. Numbers in 2019 are expected to be similar.

Ridgely steered the organization through a number of momentous occasions during his tenure. In 2015, San Francisco Pride was at the epicenter of celebration as the nation welcomed in legal marriage for all. In 2016, the country sought comfort at Pride commemorations after the horrific gun violence that befell Pulse Nightclub in Orlando Florida. The San Francisco Pride Parade observed a moment of silence to recognize and honor the lives of those lost, and the Celebration and Rally swiftly implemented new security protocols that have remained in effect since 2016. In 2019, SF Pride joins a global community in recognizing fifty years since the Stonewall riots in New York City, a seminal moment many consider one of the first actions in the modern LGBT rights movement. And in 2020, San Francisco will celebrate fifty years of Pride celebrations since the first commemoration in 1970.

A veteran of event production, Ridgely's career includes an 11-year stint with Bay to Breakers, where he was Director of Marketing before serving for four years as the Director of Operations, including the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the race in 2011. As the cofounder of Pink Collar Events, Ridgely managed production of the LGBT Center's Soiree for many years, as well as annual galas for the GLBT Historical Society and API Wellness Center. Ridgely currently volunteers on the board of directors for the Castro Street Fair, where he previously served as Executive Director from 2004 - 2013.

"George has been a jewel to SF Pride. His leadership has driven a steady stream of substantial improvements for the organization," remarked Jacqueline Bishop, president of the SF Pride Board of Directors. "George is incredibly thoughtful, and his successes illustrate that. On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, we want to acknowledge our enormous gratitude for George and his leadership. With sadness we wave goodbye to him in this role. However, we're optimistic and excited to usher in a new chapter built upon his achievements."

"It has been the singular privilege of my life to lead this iconic organization along the path to its 50th year," said Ridgely. "I am grateful for the broad support I have received, and I am humbled by the lessons I have learned. San Francisco is an emblem of strength, an incubator of resistance, and a beacon of hope for LGBTQ+ people around the world. This Pride organization, parade, and celebration is a true collection of thousands of voices; and we strive to be inclusive and inspirational. I thank all of those who had faith in me to serve as the Executive Director; and in my new role with Rec and Park I look forward to continuing to serve this great city that I love to call home."

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"We are saddened to see George go, but we wish him the best as he leaves us. We want to thank him for his hard work and dedication to SF Pride and its mission," commented Suzanne Ford, Board Treasurer. "George brought a measured and strategic process that has allowed SF Pride to achieve financial stability and continue to grow and serve our community. We understand that we are responsible for taking what has been entrusted to us and to guard it lovingly. The Board is committed to working with future leadership to ensure that Pride continues to thrive well past its fiftieth anniversary next year."

Under Ridgely's leadership the annual budget for the organization has doubled and is expected to exceed \$3.2 million in 2019. During the same time period the agency has been able to fund a modest reserve account in excess of \$500,000.00, creating a pathway to fund a more robust safety net for future years. Another milestone under Ridgely's leadership centers around SF Pride's support of local non-profit community partners; last year the organization crossed the threshold of \$3 million dollars donated back to these organizations, with an average annual donation of \$165,000.00.

The 49th Annual San Francisco LGBT Pride Celebration and Parade will be held on June 29 and 30, 2019. The Parade/March is Sunday, June 30 in the heart of downtown San Francisco beginning at 10:30 AM. A two-day Celebration and Rally is scheduled from Noon to 6:00 PM on Saturday, June 29, and from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Sunday, June 30 at San Francisco's Civic Center Plaza and surrounding neighborhood.

A membership-based organization, San Francisco Pride's membership meets bi-monthly. The Annual General Meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2019. More information about the duties and privileges of membership can be found at [www.sfpride.org/membership](http://www.sfpride.org/membership).

## CALENDAR INFORMATION

### Celebration and Rally

Civic Center Plaza  
Saturday, June 29 | Noon to 6:00 PM  
Sunday, June 30 | 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM

### 49th Annual SF Pride Parade and March

Sunday, June 30 | Starting at 10:30 AM  
Along Market Street, from Embarcadero to Civic Center

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](http://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 over \$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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