



Center in the Park
Report to the Friends Foundation For Aging
Funds Received 10/18/2020

1. What problem were you addressing?

Center in the Park requested funding to support “*Rainbow Connections: Advancing LGBT Inclusion at Center in the Park.*” LGBT older adults encounter a complex array of social, emotional and physical health needs exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Senior centers can be engaged to provide access to programs promoting physical, social, emotional wellness for LGBT older adults who experience health disparities and isolation at disproportionate rates compared to heterosexual and cisgender peers.

2. What change did you expect to create? How? What were the desired objectives, outcomes and outputs of the program and progress made toward each during the reporting period?

Center in the Park envisioned change occurring in two phases. In the first phase (year 1) CIP expected to enhance organizational capacity to work with LGBT older adults through staff training, the development of a sustainable volunteer LGBT Advisory Committee infrastructure, and an LGBT Outreach & Program Plan. The second phase will occur in year 2 and involve programming directly for LGBT older adults and programs designed to cultivate allyship among CIP participants. Objectives in Year 1 included improving staff cultural competencies to work with LGBT older adults, cultivating a volunteer LGBT Advisory Committee, and developing an LGBT outreach and program plan. CIP projected mid-range and long-term outcomes (see attached logic model) that we anticipate achieving as we move forward.

CIP achieved the following immediate outcomes:

- Increased knowledge of working with LGBT communities across all levels of CIP staff.
- Implemented LGBT data collection process across CIP programs.
- LGBT Advisory Committee meets regularly via Zoom with staff to plan LGBT programming.
- Enhance CIP visibility in LGBT community.

CIP engaged in the following activities to accomplish the objectives and outcomes above:

- 1) Improving Staff LGBT Cultural Competency:** In January 2021, 21 of 22 CIP staff participated in SAGECares Training. The one person who did not complete the training was on medical leave at the time it was offered. SAGECares training include a 1.5 hour web-based training interactive modules. As part of the training, a SAGE trainer consultant also met with CIP’s leadership team staff to review standards for LGBT inclusion against CIP’s policies and practices. The primary area in which CIP needed to improve was in the area of LGBT data collection. We have since reviewed all intake forms and updated these to make sure we are collecting data that is inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity and done in a culturally sensitive manner. Moving forward, we hope to be able to more accurately report on the number of CIP participants who identify as LGBTQ+. Through the above SAGECares training process, CIP achieved Platinum level SAGECares certification— the highest level of certification.
- 2) Engage 4-5 volunteers to establish LGBT Advisory Committee:** In collaboration with the LGBT Elder Initiative, CIP conducted outreach to LGBT identified participants who had previously

participated in CIP programs and activities, including the LGBT Aging Mastery Program held at CIP in summer 2019. CIP recruited 4 committed participants who established CIP’s inaugural LGBT Advisory Committee. The committee met bi-weekly from April 2021 through June 2021. The original intent of the committee was to establish a committee structure, and to ultimately work toward developing an LGBT outreach plan for CIP to implement in 2022. The committee was very energetic and enthusiastic and collectively named themselves “Pride in the Park.” The newly coined “Pride in the Park” committee decided to plan a week of virtual events to celebrate LGBT Pride month in June 2021.

3) Development of an LGBT Outreach Plan to inform programming in year 2: The “Pride in the Park” committee reconvened in August and September 2021 to reflect on lessons learned and to outline an outreach plan for 2022. The overarching goals of that plan include:

- Continued recruitment to expand the “Pride in the Park” committee to include 5-8 new members to ensure its sustainability year to year.
- Outreach to establish relationships with 5-8 LGBT serving organizations through which to recruit participants for CIP programs and future Pride in the Park programs.
- Plan and execute a meaningful Pride in the Park week in June 2022 inclusive of educational and social sessions, relatable guest speakers, and giveaways.

3. How did you measure success--both quantitative and qualitative? A chart of objectives, actions, and results is helpful. Include numbers and demographics of people touched by the work. Explain your organization’s efforts toward diversity, equity and inclusion.

CIP entered the project with a logic model for year 1 and the upcoming year 2 of this project. CIP accomplished Year 1 activities, objectives, and immediate outcomes. Organizational outputs were measured by completing project milestones including the completion of training, implementation of data collection procedures and implementation of the LGBT Advisory Committee in accordance with the project timeline. The following objectives, actions, and results were accomplished:

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	RESULTS
1) Achieve SAGE certification (at least 80% of staff & BOD completed training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2021: Over 80% of CIP staff completed the SAGE Cares certification training which included completing several web-based modules. The training was limited to staff (and did not include Board members) due to the number of participants who could be accommodated by the trainer within the budget with which CIP was working. • CIP’s leadership staff engaged in a live session with a SAGE Cares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIP achieved SAGECares Certification at the Platinum level- the highest level of certification available. • Increased knowledge of working with LGBT communities across all levels of CIP staff.

	<p>trainer to assess organizational LGBTQ cultural competence against several key standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIP reviewed and adapted registration and intake processes to make sure these include demographics related to sexual orientation and gender identity in an inclusive manner.
<p>2) Establish an LGBT advisory committee structure and role to inform outreach and program delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 2021 – March 2021: CIP worked in collaboration with the LGBT Elder Initiative to establish an LGBT advisory committee which included 4 older adults who identify as LGBT and who had previously participated in programs at CIP. • April 2021-June 2021: The committee met bi-weekly in collaboration with CIP staff and the LGBT Elder Initiative. While the initial goal was the creation of an LGBT outreach plan to guide CIP programming moving forward, the committee decided that it wanted to focus on developing programming to celebrate LGBTQ+ pride month in June. The committee, which named itself “Pride in the Park” planned a weeklong series of virtual events held in June 2021. • August-September 2021: Committee met to develop LGBT outreach plan for 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in the Park advisory committee established. • Committee purpose and direction established. • Outline for outreach and programming in 2022.
<p>3) Increase outreach to LGBT older adults</p>	<p>1) June 2020: CIP hosted a week-long series of virtual events to celebrate Pride month. Activities were planned by the Pride in the Park committee and open to all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of LGBT older adults among CIP’s community.
	<p>2) August 2021-September 2021: CIP staff, Pride in the Park, and the LGBT Elder Initiative regrouped to discuss lessons learned from the June</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride month programming will be the focus of outreach

	<p>events and to developed and outreach and program plan for 2022.</p>	<p>and program goals in 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing recruitment of Pride in the Park volunteers is critical to sustainability
--	--	---

4. Please note any collaborations that supported your work and/or ways that you leveraged resources. How did this project engage and empower staff from all levels of your organization?

CIP’s collaboration with the LGBT Elder Initiative at William Way Community Center was critical to the success of the project. CIP and the LGBTEI have worked together collaboratively in the past and have also shared representation one another’s respective board of directors. This history of mutual organizational trust coupled with the LGBTEI’s expertise with outreach to LGBT older adults was critical to the project’s success. The project also was directly leveraged by CIP’s partnership with Gateway Health who sponsored CIP’s health fair which in June 2021 included a health equity focus that allowed the event to become part of the Pride in the Park activities. Finally, CIP is currently engaged in a Strategic Planning process and a parallel self-directed volunteer team approach to volunteer engagement. Both of these projects are informed by and will inform the future direction of CIP’s LGBT inclusion work.

5. Please share any unanticipated outcomes or barriers encountered. Indicate any changes in the program’s goals, strategies, personnel or timelines and the reasons behind the changes.

This first phase of the project was successful in increasing awareness of LGBT older adults, in particular among CIP staff, and in engaging LGBT older adults to participate in an advisory role to inform CIP programs. We did not intend to implement LGBT programming for participants in Year 1 of this project. Our newly formed LGBT Advisory Committee, however, was excited to take the initiative do so and we felt it important to allow the committee to be self-directed. We therefore hosted a weeklong virtual series of events (see attached flyer) targeting LGBT older adults and the broader community to celebrate Pride month. The weeklong series included the following:

- “What does Pride mean to you” Facebook post.
- A facilitated discussion for LGBT older adults to share experiences with the pandemic with 4 participants (not including CIP and LGBTEI staff).
- A poetry reading and discussion by and LGBT identified poet attended by 15 participants, the majority of whom were CIP staff.
- An online screening of “The Pursuit”, a documentary filmed focused on the history of LGBT activism in Philadelphia and beyond and the role today’s older adults played in it. The screening was followed by a discussion with a local LGBT activist who was feature in the film.
- CIP integrated LGBT inclusive content into our first virtual health fair (see attached flyer) the theme of which was “communities of strength,” and which was attended by 23 participants. The event was not LGBT specific, but rather featured various wellness demonstrations including exercise and meditation, speakers, and a panel discussion which focused on health equity which included representation from the LGBT community.

While we did not have as much lead time and outreach as we would normally have liked for the “Pride in the Park” events we believe the events were a tremendous first step toward giving LGBT older adults a voice in naming and framing CIP programs, increasing CIP’s visibility in the LGBT community, and increasing LGBT awareness in CIP’s immediate community. Of particular note were the CIP staff who participated in the poetry reading and film screening event. Staff were invited, but not required, to participate and doing so demonstrated that the training staff participated in earlier this year may have influenced their decision to take the time out of their day to learn more about LGBT communities.

6. How do you plan to share and replicate your results?

CIP has submitted a proposal to present best practices and lessons learned related to collaborating to create inclusive environments for LGBT older adults to the American Society on Aging’s annual conference to be held in spring 2022. Results are also shared with stakeholders and funders through inclusion in CIP’s annual report.

7. Include a project financial statement (budget and actual) for the reporting period. Please explain significant variances from the original budget and reasons for the variances (with corrective measures if overages), as well as plans for future sustainability.

As the current grant award began on 10/18/2020, CIP anticipates having spent all funds by October. The attached report includes funds spent to date with funds in process noted as such. Payment to the LGBT Elder Initiative is in process, as are payments of volunteer stipends to Pride in the Park volunteers. CIP also is planning to spend funds dedicated for outreach over the next month to purchase “Pride in the Park” t-shirts as an outreach tool, and LGBT inclusive signage as we work to reach more LGBT older adults in the coming year (and have recently resumed some on-site programs). The cost of SAGE training was \$100 less than anticipated- we therefore reallocated those funds to outreach materials. Additionally, CIP budgeted for volunteer stipends for 5 LGBT advisory committee members, but only had 4 committee members. CIP proposes to apply the \$250 balance to support a volunteer stipend in Year 2.

CIP has learned two key lessons related to sustainability from Phase 1 of this project. First, CIP will be devoting the Fall of 2021 to ongoing recruitment of Pride in the Park committee volunteers as we have 2 participants who are unable to continue at this time due to health and personal challenges. Thus, moving forward we plan to over recruit 5-8 participants for the committee, with a goal of retaining 4-5 annually, to help ensure year-to year sustainability. We also realize that staff who completed SAGECare training will need to complete one hour annually of continuing education through SAGE in order for CIP to maintain its certification. Additionally, CIP has some new staff who did not participate in the January training and will need to be trained. Therefore, LGBT inclusion training will be an ongoing component of sustainability moving forward.

Plans for sustainability include the current proposal to the Friends Foundation for Aging to implement Phase 2 of the project in the coming year. Funding from the Friends Foundation is leveraged by CIP’s existing contracts with the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging, as well as current grants related to strategic planning and staff training and implementation of a “self-directed volunteer team” approach to volunteer retention and management as CIP defines a vision for its future.

8. Feedback on your interaction with FFA would be helpful. How have we helped? Made it harder? What else can we do to facilitate your work?

Funding from the Friends Foundation for Aging has been instrumental in allowing CIP to continue to pursue a project focused on LGBT inclusion despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have appreciated the transparency regarding the grant process, as well as suggestions to delay a grant decision and to consider breaking up the project over a two year period given the challenges of the pandemic. We also appreciated and found the mid-year check-in meeting to be a valuable process. Thank you for your support of CIP's mission and our commitment to effectively reaching LGBT older adults.

9. Additional comments:

See attached Pride in the Park Outreach Plan and flyer from the June 2021 events.

6.15.19