



# news

Summer 2022

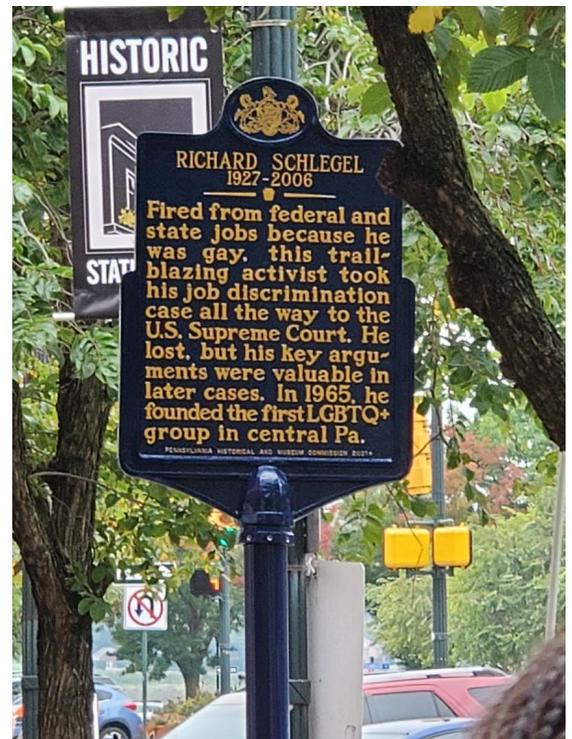
## PHMC removes Richard Schlegel marker

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) received a request from Sen. John DiSanto (R-15<sup>th</sup> District) on December 20, 2021 to remove the Richard Schlegel state historical marker that was installed and dedicated in October. The marker was sponsored by the History Project. PHMC notified the History Project on March 23, 2022 of the request and gave us 30 days to respond. After a review of the request and some additional research, Amanda Arbour, executive director of the LGBT Center of Central PA, and Barry Loveland, History Project chair, each prepared a letter in defense of the marker and the two letters were sent to PHMC in April.

PHMC's historical marker committee met in May and after a long discussion voted 4-1 to retire the marker. The PHMC met on June 1 and approved the recommendation of the marker committee unanimously.

In his objection to the marker, Sen. DiSanto cited an incident when Richard Schlegel was a minor, age 16, that occurred in 1943 with another younger boy of undetermined age (estimated by Schlegel to be 11 or 12) that Schlegel recounted in his oral history interview. No sex took place, but nudity and vague references to playing were made and the participation was apparently voluntary on the part of both minors.

Amanda Arbour wrote in her letter of response, "Although not much detail is provided as to what actually occurred, the behavior described in the oral history interview is best understood as problematic sexual behavior amongst youth.... The age gap (if his estimation of the other boy's age was correct) makes it inappropriate and we do not condone this behavior."



*Richard Schlegel state historical marker at 205 State Street, Harrisburg before its removal in June*

The response goes on to point out that the incident occurred in 1943, “when there was much less access to accurate information about sex, sexuality and consent – especially for LGBTQ+ people.” It is not accurate for DiSanto to describe the incident as criminal, even by standards of today.

While Schlegel is a complicated individual, all people honored on state historical markers are imperfect. His contributions in federal case law are nationally significant to the movement for LGBTQ+ equal rights and his contribution in organizing the first known LGBTQ+ group in the state outside of Philadelphia are significant to local and state history.

Despite this setback, the History Project will continue to honor Richard Schlegel’s important legacy as a pioneer of the LGBTQ+ movement through exhibits, publications and lectures.

## History Project sponsors first PA LGBTQ+ History Prize awarded at NHD in PA

The Army Heritage Center Foundation, the LGBT Center of Central PA History Project, and the PA LGBT History Network are pleased to announce the winners of the first annual Pennsylvania LGBTQ+ History Prize presented at National History Day in Pennsylvania (NHD in PA) at a ceremony held on May 8<sup>th</sup> at the University of Scranton.

The purpose of this award is to inspire students to explore topics of LGBTQ+ history in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and to recognize students who excel in this endeavor through the NHD in PA program. This award recognizes an outstanding entry in any category (paper, documentary, performance, exhibit, or website), in either division (junior or senior high school), that involves an aspect of LGBTQ+ history that is entered in the NHD in PA State Contest.



*Teacher James Bender (left) receives the PA LGBTQ+ History Prize on behalf of his two students, from Barry Loveland (center) and Jeff Hawks (right) at NHD in PA awards ceremony at the University of Scranton, photo courtesy of the Army Heritage Center Foundation.*

The winning entry was an exhibit, *The Riots that Started a Revolution*, by Izzy DaSilva and Bridget Veitz, students at Villa Joseph Marie High School. Their teacher is James Bender. Honorable Mention went to a documentary, *Drag and Ballroom: Impact on Ball Culture*, by Cache-Simone Campbell, a student at Central High School, Philadelphia. The teacher is Nick Palazzolo. Another Honorable Mention went to a performance, *HIV VS The World*, by Sophie Dubois, Shivahn Becht, and Maddie Healy, students at Indian Valley Middle School. Their teacher is Amy Craig.

Barry Loveland presented the awards on behalf of the sponsors, the LGBT Center of Central PA History Project, and the PA LGBT History Network, along with Jeff Hawks, state coordinator of NHD in PA.

National History Day is a year-long academic program focused on historical research, interpretation, and creative expression for students in grades 6-12. By participating in National History Day, students become writers, filmmakers, web designers, playwrights, and artists as they create unique contemporary expressions of history. For more information, visit the website, <http://pa.nhd.org>. NHD in PA is sponsored and managed by the Army Heritage Center Foundation.

## Out on Campus traveling exhibit to debut

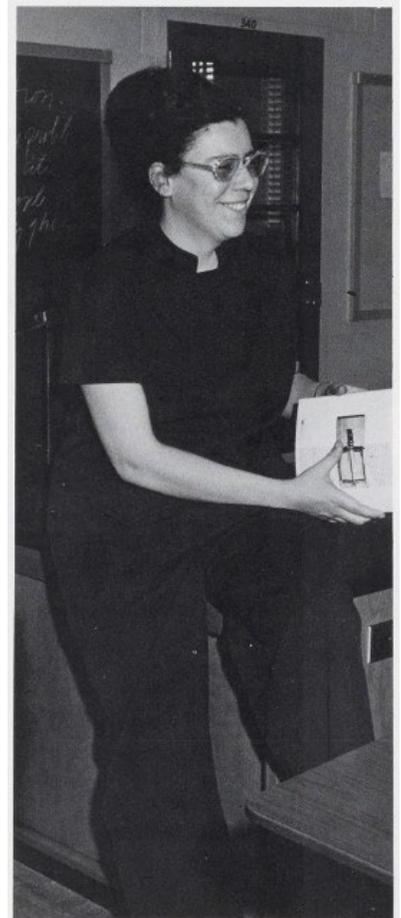
*Out on Campus: A History of LGBTQ+ Activism at Pennsylvania Colleges and Universities* is our third traveling exhibit developed with several of our partners in the PA LGBT History Network. Currently in design and fabrication this summer, the exhibit will debut in Harrisburg on Friday August 19, 6-9 PM for 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Burg at the Historic Harrisburg Resource Center, 1230 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, and be on exhibit there through September 7, and again on Sunday, September 11, when it will be open for Gallery Walk from 12-5 PM. It will then be out on the road to venues all across Pennsylvania. A digital version will be on our website.

This exhibit tells the stories of the formation of some of the earliest LGBTQ+ student organizations at colleges and universities in Pennsylvania, as well as more recent history, and experiences and personal stories of being openly LGBTQ+ on campus.

With an introduction by Dr. Marc Stein, noted historian, author and professor at San Francisco State University, the exhibit chronicles stories of LGBTQ+ history at eleven of Pennsylvania's colleges and universities, representing a wide spectrum including historically Black universities, historically single-gender colleges, state universities, private colleges, historically religious-based colleges and community colleges. Stein also curated one of the exhibit stories and provided consulting services to the team of exhibit curators, who volunteered their time to conduct research, write exhibit scripts and select historical images from archival collections to include in the exhibit.

"There are remarkable and little-known stories included in this exhibit," according to Barry Loveland, exhibit project manager. "I think these stories will surprise and amaze many visitors."

For more information, contact [history@centralpalgbtcenter.org](mailto:history@centralpalgbtcenter.org).



Janet Cooper, Library Science

*Janet Cooper of Shippensburg State College's Library Science Department, Cumberland yearbook, 1974. Courtesy of Shippensburg University Archives and Special Collections, Ezra Lehman Memorial Library*  
*Pioneering openly lesbian faculty member, Janet Cooper, served as an unofficial advisor to the first LGBTQ+ student group on campus.*

# 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary party to be held November 6

Come celebrate with us on November 6 from 4 to 8 PM at the Brownstone Lounge, 412 Forster Street in Harrisburg, as we close out our tenth anniversary year of the LGBT Center of Central PA History Project. DJ Kuhmeleon will be spinning dance hits through the last several decades of LGBTQ+ history, along with food and a cash bar. Come party like it's 1999, or 1969, or whatever your favorite decade is! Donations will go to support the History Project.

## Summer intern works on mapping, research

Jeremy Boorum, from Penn State Harrisburg, is doing an internship this summer with the History Project. Jeremy has been working on the continuation of a geographic mapping project of locations associated with people, businesses, organizations and events in LGBTQ+ history in central Pennsylvania.



*Jeremy Boorum at work in the Dickinson College Archives*

Hundreds of locations have already been identified through research into our collections by previous interns, but they were only able to go through a portion of the collection and the

collection has also expanded since those interns worked on the project. Jeremy will also be developing two new publications, self-guided tour booklets to LGBTQ+ history sites in Lancaster and York, similar to one we currently offer for Harrisburg.

Jeremy is also working on researching and writing a series of articles about organizations, activists and events that will be in a format similar to Wikipedia entries and will be uploaded to our website.

Jeremy is a Ph.D. candidate in American Studies and a University Graduate Fellow at Penn State Harrisburg. His research interests include queer theory, LGBTQ+ history, and 20th century and contemporary U.S. literature, arts, and culture. He previously completed an M.A. in American Studies at Penn State Harrisburg in 2020, and a B.S. in Business Administration and American Studies with a History minor at Elmira College in 2019.

On campus, Jeremy serves as President of the American Studies Student Association and as President of Pride at Penn State Harrisburg, an LGBTQ+ student organization. He helped revitalize Pride this past January as it was inactive for three years. Since its relaunch, Pride has quickly become one of the most active student organizations on campus. In the fall semester, Jeremy will teach a new course for Penn State Harrisburg students entitled LGBTQ+ Identity, Culture, and the Arts. Outside of his work on campus, Jeremy also contributed to the History Project's upcoming traveling exhibit *Out on Campus* and led a workshop for local college students as a guest facilitator for the LGBT Center of Central PA's 2022 Queer and Trans Activist Leadership Summit.

In his spare time, Jeremy enjoys creative writing, attending concerts and performances, visiting art museums, and exploring new places.

## Traveling exhibits back on the road

Our traveling exhibit *With Open Heart and Open Arms: LGBTQ+ Cuban Refugees and the LGBTQ+ Community's Response to the Mariel Boatlift of 1980*, is currently on display at The State Library of PA now through August 31 at their temporary location in the Commonwealth Keystone Building, 400 North Street.

Our other traveling exhibit, *The Long Road to LGBTQ+ Equality in Pennsylvania*, is on display at the Maris Grove Retirement Community in Glen Mills in June.

If your organization or institution would like to host one of these exhibits, please email your request to [history@centralpalgbtcenter.org](mailto:history@centralpalgbtcenter.org).

## Evan Smith joins steering committee

T. Evan Smith, PhD (he/him/his) is the newest addition to the History Project steering committee. Evan is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Elizabethtown College, and he teaches courses related to human development (e.g., Child and Adolescent Development, Adult Development and Aging) and courses examining social issues from a psychological perspective (e.g., Psychology of Women and Gender, Psychology of Prejudice). His primary research interests are identity development and the identities and experiences of LGBTQ+ people.



Dr. T. Evan Smith

Evan has been involved with the LGBT Center of Central PA in a variety of capacities since 2007. He was a chaperone for the Common Roads youth program for many years, given presentations at several GSA Summits, served on the Board of Directors for 6 years, and contributed to the Center's strategic planning process. He also facilitated the last strategic planning process for the History Project.

Originally from South Carolina, Evan received his bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and his doctoral degree in Psychology from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Evan lives in Camp Hill with his partner Megan and their son Aaron.

# Apply to join the steering committee

The History Project is looking for one or more candidates for appointment to its Steering Committee. This is a volunteer position as a member of the governing committee for this project, which is a partnership between the LGBT Center of Central PA and the Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections.

Members of the Steering Committee attend meetings (currently virtual via Zoom) six times a year (the first Monday of every even-numbered month at 7:30 PM). Meetings typically last about 90 minutes. There is no specific length of term; members serve for as long as they are able and willing. Members also are encouraged to volunteer with some aspect of the History Project programs, activities and tasks to the extent possible.

A background or interest in history, American Studies, historic preservation, women and gender studies, LGBTQ+ studies, English or allied fields is desirable, but not required. We strongly encourage applicants who are Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), transgender or non-binary, and youth to join the Steering Committee.

The mission of the History Project is to engage people to discover, document, collect, preserve and present the history of the LGBTQ+ community of central Pennsylvania through oral histories and material culture. Founded in 2012, we are celebrating our 10th anniversary this year. The History Project has a very active program of exhibits, events, publishing, recording oral history and collecting archival documents and artifacts.

If you are interested in this applying for this volunteer position, please send an e-mail with a brief statement of your interest and include any of your relevant educational background and/or experience to: [history@centralpalgbtcenter.org](mailto:history@centralpalgbtcenter.org).

## Annual appeal falls short of \$10,000 goal

The History Project is now in its tenth year which will culminate in its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in August 2022. We also launched our first-ever annual appeal in March to raise funds to extend our digitization of the collection, fund a third traveling exhibit, *Out on Campus: A History of LGBTQ+ Activism at Pennsylvania Colleges and Universities*, and other projects. A \$10,000 challenge grant will be used to match funds raised through individual donations. Unfortunately we have fallen far short of our goal to raise \$10,000. There is still an opportunity for you to make a donation now to help continue this award-winning project into the future.

We have accomplished much in our first ten years:

- Conducted oral history interviews with **more than 150 people**
- Collected **more than 120 linear feet** of archival documents and artifacts
- Won the Society of American Archivists' **J. Franklin Jameson Award**

- Published *Out in Central Pennsylvania: The History of an LGBTQ Community*, and won the **Book of the Year award** in 2020 from the Mid Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, and **donated more than 150 copies of the book to libraries** across Pennsylvania
- Created **two traveling exhibits**, displayed at **more than 60 locations**
- Created **six digital exhibits** online, [www.centralpalgbthistory.org](http://www.centralpalgbthistory.org).
- Sponsored the **first two state historical markers in LGBTQ+ history** in central PA
- Sponsored the **first-ever LGBTQ+ History Prize** for National History Day in PA, an annual competition of junior and senior high school students
- Conducted the **first workshop in the state to help teachers develop curricula** in LGBTQ+ history
- Digitized and uploaded to the web **several thousand pages** of documents, oral history transcriptions and oral history videos
- Created a Google spreadsheet and map with about **700 locations of LGBTQ+ history**
- Published a **guidebook and map to 29 LGBTQ+ history sites** in Harrisburg
- Worked with about **25 college and university interns** and several classes
- **Partnered with more than a dozen organizations**, including The State Museum, The State Library, The Historical Society of Dauphin County, Historic Harrisburg Association, York County History Center, the Susquehanna Art Museum, the Art Association of Harrisburg, the Demuth Museum/Lancaster Museum of Art, the Pennsylvania LGBT History Network and several colleges and universities.

We hope you agree that we have accomplished much in our first 10 years. There is much more we want to do, but we need your help. Please consider a donation now to help us celebrate our tenth anniversary year and continue our work.

The LGBT Center of Central PA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization so all donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

You can fulfill your donation by sending a check made out to: LGBT Center of Central PA, and mail it to P.O. Box 5629, Harrisburg, PA 17110. Or you can donate by phone with a credit card at 717-409-5781. Or you can donate through our website at [LGBT Center of Central PA \(neoncrm.com\)](http://LGBT Center of Central PA (neoncrm.com)). **Please note on your check or website form, or tell the staff member on the phone, that your donation is for the History Project.** Thank you for your support!

## Cleaning out your closets?

Unsure of what to do with all of the LGBTQ+ related stuff you found while cleaning out your closets, drawers, cabinets, basements and attics while stuck at home during the pandemic? We are always looking for historical materials pertaining to **local** LGBTQ+ history. Please take some time to check for any items like organization newsletters, flyers, photographs, videos, newspaper clippings, t-shirts, buttons and other documents and artifacts that you may have that relate to LGBTQ+ organizations, events, bars, businesses, publications or other aspects of the life of the LGBTQ+ community here in central Pennsylvania. We are also always looking for people who would like to be interviewed for our oral history collection. Contact us to donate these materials or sign up for an oral history interview at [history@centralpalgbtcenter.org](mailto:history@centralpalgbtcenter.org). Thank you!

# LGBT Center of Central PA History Project

*Founded in 2012, celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in August!*

*Winner of the 2014 J. Franklin Jameson Award from the Society of American Archivists*

*Winner of the 2020 Arline Custer Memorial Book Award from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference*

*Winner of the 2022 Pogue Award from Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region*

[history@centralpalgbtcenter.org](mailto:history@centralpalgbtcenter.org); 717-409-5781

<https://centralpalgbtcenter.org/lgbt-history-project>

<https://www.centralpalgbthistory.org> (our digital exhibit website)

facebook.com/LGBTcentralpa

Working in partnership with the Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections

<http://archives.dickinson.edu/lgbt>

