



We Could Not Have Done It Without YOU!

As we mark the 5th Anniversary of **THE CURVE** we have many in our community to thank for our successes. We thank all of you who, from our inception, have donated your time, money, snacks, personal stories, professional expertise, positive thoughts and encouragement.

But our thanks are not enough. Read this sampling of comments that members of **THE CURVE** have shared regarding their experience and be proud of your contributions:

- I have learned to better my life.
- I feel more connected to the gay community.
- I have found a place where I am completely comfortable with who I am.
- I think I've met people I could become friends with.
- I've got more confidence.
- I had fun with people without worrying about my sexuality.
- I found a local group of people to connect with.
- I will learn to love who I am.

2011 – **THE CURVE** is five years strong and we invite you to celebrate with us! We have accomplished much and impacted many.

Our journey to **THE CURVE** was not a straight path. Inspired by a York College student who had attended a teen Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Questioning and their Allies (LGBTQA) program in Bucks County, we conducted a community needs assessment and learned that there was little support for LGBTQA youth in our community.

With support from the Planned Parenthood of Central PA Board of Directors and CEO we forged ahead. A planning committee of three college students brainstormed topic ideas for the meetings and gave it a name: "THE CURVE – we are definitely not straight!"

In September '06 we held our first official meeting. Serving youth ages 14-21, the mission of **THE CURVE** is to provide a safe, supportive and welcoming environment by providing educational, advocacy and recreational activities.

THE CURVE Our History

Program topics vary from managing stress and coming out to cooking, exercise and college life. Professionals in the community share their personal and professional experiences as LGBT in a straight world.

In five years over 125 youth have attended and benefited from **THE CURVE**. In addition to our biweekly meetings, we have attended Pride Fests in neighboring communities, helped create a mosaic mural on the back wall of our York Center, traveled to the True Colors Sexual Minority Youth Conference in Connecticut, marched in the York City Human Relations Commission's Unity Parade and partnered with a number of regional LGBT organizations on projects to provide leadership training and to bring professional entertainment to the greater community.

We are proud of the strides we have made and look forward to continuing our mission.

Let's Celebrate! And support **THE CURVE**!

On Sunday, September 18, 2011, we're celebrating the 5th Anniversary of **THE CURVE** with a private reception at 1:30 and 3:00 p.m. screening of **La Mission** at the Capitol Theatre in York.

Set in San Francisco's Mission District and starring Benjamin Bratt, **La Mission** celebrates culture and neighborhood vibrancy. This is the story of a single father, a powerful man respected throughout the Mission barrio for his masculinity and strength, as well as for his hobby building beautiful low-rider cars. A reformed inmate and recovering alcoholic, the main character has worked hard to redeem his life and do right by his pride and joy: his only son, whom he has raised on his own after the death of his wife. When he discovers that his son is gay, he reacts violently and is forced to examine his actions and the life he lives. **La Mission** confronts the delicate issue of responding to the presence of same sex relationships, the image of family and the image of one's self. **La Mission** was the Official Selection of the 2009 Sundance Film Festival.

We will host a **PRIVATE RECEPTION** from 1:30 - 2:30 at the Capitol prior to the film screening. This is your opportunity to learn more about **THE CURVE** from group members, past and present, and from staff and volunteers.

You can support **THE CURVE** by sponsoring this screening of **La Mission**.

\$1000 SPONSORSHIP - 8 tickets to the film & private reception - 8 drink tickets - Recognition at event and in program

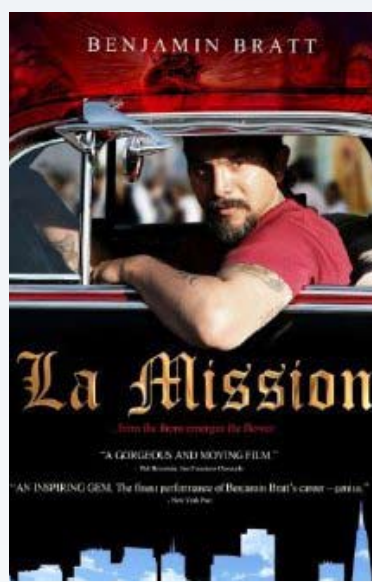
\$500 SPONSORSHIP - 4 tickets to the film & private reception - 4 drink tickets - Recognition at event and in program

\$250 SPONSORSHIP - 2 tickets to the film & private reception - 2 drink tickets - Recognition at event and in program

\$40 V.I.P. TICKET - FRIENDS OF THE CURVE - Admission to film & private reception - 1 drink ticket - Recognition in program

GENERAL ADMISSION - Film only, \$7.00

Contact Betsy at 845.9683 ext. 213 or betsy.buckingham@ppfa.org.



The Greater Community Benefits from **THE CURVE**

Members of **THE CURVE**, their friends and family are not the only beneficiaries of the amazing things that happen in this group. Our journey to establish and grow **THE CURVE** has provided opportunity to learn about and understand unique issues facing LGBTQA youth. As our expertise has grown so has the demand for us to share what we know with others. The Education Department of Planned Parenthood of Central PA provides much needed professional training and diversity training on topics of sexual orientation and gender identity for teachers, foster parents, medical students, medical interns, nurses and youth service workers. Sharing this knowledge is a natural fit with our organizational values and the belief that all people, regardless of sex, gender identity or sexual orientation, have rights to be respected and responsibilities to be exercised. Please contact the Education Department at 845.9683, Debbie Gable, ext. 205 or e-mail, deborah.gable@ppfa.org and Erica Rich, ext. 235 or e-mail erica.rich@ppfa.org.



In the following article, Erica Rich, Youth Program Coordinator, gives us a realistic perspective of a youth attending **THE CURVE** from a compilation of comments she has kept over the past four years.

We pull up to Planned Parenthood and I don't want to get out of the car. Mom tells me I'll have fun, but I doubt it. She thinks coming to this group, **THE CURVE**, will help me. But I already feel like a freak. Why do I want to go to a special group for outcasts? What if someone sees me going into Planned Parenthood? They will know I am going to this group for gay kids or else think I have an STD.

A man with a security badge approaches the car and says he's 'the greeter'. He asks if we are here for **THE CURVE** and I know he knows that I'm nervous. He says, "go in and have fun - you'll want to come back." My mom pleads with me to try and I tell her I will if she agrees to wait so I can leave early if I don't like it.

On my way in the greeter tells me that tonight we'll watch a movie and have some discussion, but that the topic is different every time. He says that no one is upstairs yet but others will be here soon and the program coordinator is ready for us. I hate the idea of being the first one here.

The elevator opens into a large room lit with colorful lamps. Books line the wall and posters about diversity decorate the space. I'm welcomed by Erica, who is the program coordinator, and another woman who is a volunteer. They tell me what to expect from my first meeting of **THE CURVE** and a little bit about how it all got started. I'm still nervous to see who will show up.

Soon, a boy comes up on the elevator. He must have been here before because he's greeted with a hug and is introduced to me. He asks me where I go to school and what kinds of movies I like and I think he's pretty cool. More kids come up the elevator and soon we're doing an icebreaker activity. Some of the others are new, too. We're asked to go around

and say our names and what our highs and lows have been for the last few weeks. I'm really surprised at what people say - most of them aren't talking about anything having to do with being gay or lesbian. Some discuss new relationships or breakups with same-sex partners, but no one even bats an eye. When it's my turn and I share my low of being treated like crap by the kids at school, they all sympathize with me and encourage me to stand up for myself. They don't tell me how to stand out less. This is different.

I realize I'm relaxed. We're sharing stories and laughing a lot. We watch a really interesting short film about a guy who's not sure about whether to come out at school, and then we relate his struggles to our own. I love how open everyone's being and I'm relieved that I'm not the only one dealing with this stuff. After the activities, I ask Erica if she has information on LGBTQ stuff. I can't believe how many different things she finds for me - even places where my family can go for support. My dad will really like this. As we leave some of us exchange phone numbers and we promise to friend each other on facebook so we can stay in touch between meetings. One new friend invited me to go to the mall this weekend.

In two weeks it's time for **THE CURVE** again! Some kids I met last time texted me to see if I'm coming and Erica e-mailed me to remind me about the meeting and tell me the topic. It's nice to have a group of people who actually want me around. I tell my mom to hurry up because I don't want to be late. When we pull into the parking lot, I jump out of the car, wave to the greeter and start heading for the door. Mom calls after me, "Do you want me to wait here again?" "No", I tell her, "I'm fine. Just be back at 9:00."

