

<<life @ line>>

Newsletter of the **LESBIAN GAY BI TRANS YOUTHLINE**

Fall/Winter 2007

"I feel proud and accomplished, the last two years was a great learning experience and I hope to learn more in my continuation at the Youth Line." -Brian De Matos



photo: Dominic Chan/n8n photo

Volunteer Coordinator, *Karl Nielsen* (left), presents *Ankur Malhotra* (centre) and *Brian De Matos* (right) with their Long Time Volunteer Recognition awards.

Long-Time Volunteers

by Karl Nielsen

At this year's Community Youth Awards the Service Coordinators, Karl Nielsen and charysse robinson, had the pleasure to recognize two of the Youth Line's long term volunteers. This year, Brian De Matos and Ankur Malhotra were publicly thanked for their two and a half years of volunteer commitment. Some people might think that two and half years doesn't seem like long a time, but consider that all Youth Line volunteers are youth who are often balancing high school, university course loads, part time work and/or full time work, and an active social life.

I recently had the chance to talk to Brian about his involvement with the Youth Line. When asked about what initially got him interested in the Youth Line, Brian said, "[T]he ability and privilege to help and talk to Queer/Trans youth who are going through issues that I have had to face or am still facing, and to other youth that are fac-

ing a variety of issues.". Keeping yourself interested in an organization can be challenging for some, so I inquired as to what the best part of volunteering is, "[H]aving a chance to help youth in need. Talking to them, helping them figure things out, also telling them it's ok to be who you are. As well, volunteering for the Youth Line gives you a great sense of community. Being involved you get to work with people who are friendly and non-judgmental, the environment is very positive."

As usual, our best tool for recruiting new volunteers is the word of mouth our current volunteers offer. When asked what he would say to people who were considering volunteering at the Youth Line, Brian replied, "If you could, you should! It's a great learning experience, in many ways, from talking to youth and learning about issues that face the Queer/Trans community or just obtaining basic office skills."

Once again we would like to thank Ankur and Brian for their dedication to the Youth Line and the youth that we serve!

what's inside

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and much more!!!!

“It takes a lot of courage to release the familiar and seemingly secure, and to embrace the new..” Alan Cohen

At the Youth Line this past year there has been a lot of changes. We have said fond farewell to some staff and board members and we welcome new faces that bring new energy and opportunities. Our board, staff and volunteers have all gone far beyond the call of duty to ensure smooth transitions that come with some of these changes.

This year we have moved our offices to a larger space that will be integral to our continued growth in service and staff. On June 9th we had our 9th Annual Youth Line Community Awards hosted by Deb Pearce. The awards were a huge success and thank you to all those who came out.

In April, we welcomed vashti persad to the role of Development and Communications Coordinator. vashti brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience in organizational development and capacity building within the not-for-profit sector.

In August, we bid a fond farewell to Philip Wong and Karl Nielsen. Philip has been our Executive Director for the past five years and moves on to be the Executive Director at the Lesbian Gay Community Appeal. Karl Nielsen was with the Youth Line for almost five years as our Service and Volunteer Coordinator. He moves on to a position with the United Way.

With all of these transitions in the past couple months we have had to make some shifts in the organization to accommodate them and to ensure that there would be no disruption to services. The Board of Directors decided to ask charysse robinson, who has worked with YL as our Service and Outreach Coordinator for a few years, to step in as our Interim Executive Director at the organization until we have completed our search for a new Executive Director. Cristina Murano has also recently joined our team as the new Volunteer Coordinator and brings years of experience of working on the line and familiarity with our volunteer services. Brian De Matos has been a phone line volunteer for a few years and he has recently moved into the position of Relief Shift Supervisor.

On October 30th we will have our Annual General Meeting at the Sherbourne Health Centre where we will welcome new board members and our new Executive Director. We welcome Michael Erickson and Sherri Manko as our new Co-Chairs. We are looking forward to the year ahead and the continued growth of the Youth line.

- Board of Directors, Youth Line



Brian De Matos is a gay identified male, who is currently attending The Triangle Program. He has been involved with the Youth Line for three years as a volunteer and now serving as Shift Relief Supervisor. His future ambition is to become an education facilitator (teacher) so he can inspire and help youth. He has enjoyed being involved with the Youth Line: meeting great new people, learning a combination of things, obtaining great experiences; in addition to the great sense of community that comes with being involved with the Youth Line. He looks forward in this new opportunity to contribute to the Youth Line.



Cristina Murano is a recent graduate of the School of Women's Studies and Sexuality Studies programs at York University. Recent post-graduate fun has included NOT talking politics for long periods time, spending lots of money on frivolous activities, building houses in New Orleans, and getting lost in New York City. However best of all in her post-graduate world is working full-time at the Youth Line with amazing staff, volunteers and board members. Ultimately when she is not working her life consists of laughing, dancing, reading, hanging out with friends, and contemplating how not to become a crazy lesbian cat lady in the future.



vashti persad has been working in the community and with not-for profit organizations for many years now and is excited to be working with the Youth Line. Her involvement with queer activism in Toronto drives her desire to ensure that LGBT youth that are coming up and out now have access to a lot more resources than she did.

Confessions of a Former Youth Line Caller

by charysse robinson

Nothing makes us more pleased and proud of the Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line service than testimonials coming directly from former service users. Due to the anonymous and confidential nature of our service it is somewhat difficult for us to obtain direct feedback from those who use our service, but sometimes we are lucky enough to have individuals “out themselves”, as it were, as former Youth line service users and tell us about their experiences.

Toronto Pride is the time of year when such testimonials tend to come more frequently. Blame it on all of the smiles and good cheer exuded by all, or the city shrouded in rainbows, or perhaps the considerable number of beer gardens lining Church Street for a weekend... something in the air seems to bring out the need for people to tell us how our service has affected their lives. This year we even had the pleasure of hearing Pride Parade Spectators screaming out “I’ve called your service!” and “We love you Youth Line” from the sides of Yonge Street. It’s subtle moments like these that cause me to beam with satisfaction, and absolutely renew my love in the work that I do. These ‘little confessions’ are so much more than that, they are a connection with the world at large... true reminders of why we do what we do.

I received a particularly moving affirmation this year, from an individual who holds that the Youth Line truly changed their life and for this they are eternally grateful. When this person called the line they were in the midst of making a life-changing decision and needed some help and clarity in doing so. They hold me that the Youth Line allowed them to get all of the facts and necessary information to make the best decision possible, and believes that their life is all the better today because of that support and information.

Each and every time that I am confronted with proof of the importance of our service and personal testimonials, I am overwhelmed. I know that I will never tire of hearing how the Youth Line has affected the life of yet another queer youth.



photo: charysse robinson

Freinds of the Youth Line at Pride in Toronto, 2007.

Our Mission & Values

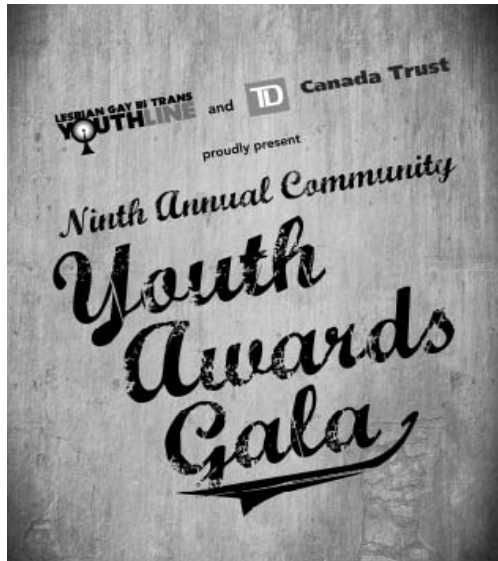
The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line is a service provided for youth, by youth that affirms the experiences and aspirations of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, 2-spirited, queer and questioning youth in Ontario. We are queer-positive and non-judgmental, and provide confidential peer support through telephone listening, information and referral services, and through complementary outreach. By reflecting our diverse cultures, abilities and experiences and celebrating our potentials, we seek to create an empowering community of queer youth across Ontario.

In all aspects of our work and throughout the organization, as we pursue our mission, we live by the values listed below. Together, they provide a picture of who we are and how we want to be:

- Caller-centred and Non-judgmental
 - Respectful and Inclusive
- Committed to Confidentiality
 - Embracing Diversity
 - Sex-positive
- Building a Learning Community
- Collaborating, Networking and Partnering



LESBIAN GAY B TRANS
YOUTHLINE
1 800 268 YOUTH
416 962 YOUTH



9th Annual Youth Line Community Youth Awards by Jesse Trautmann

The 9th Annual Youth Line Community Youth Awards got under way on June 6 at the Bright Pearl restaurant in Toronto's China Town district. The night was hosted by Proud FM's hilarious Deb Pearce and began with the soulful and edgy music of Charlena Russell, who entertained the crowd through the first courses of a delicious ten course meal.

2007 YOUTH AWARD RECIPIENTS

T.J. Naven received the **Outstanding Contribution to Queer Student Life** for his work with the newly founded Rainbow Centre on the Wilfrid Laurier University campus. He focused heavily on trans awareness and works with the University administration to ensure the campus is an inclusive environment for all.

The award for **Outstanding Contribution to Queer Youth Activism by a Community Group** went to **Westmount Positive Space** at Hamilton's Westmount Secondary School. They have organised numerous events in the past year where guests have been invited to come and speak to students; including an assembly on "Safe Schools" for over 200 students that helped develop the awareness of issues that LGBT students face.

Leonardo Zuniga has been an integral part of the queer youth community in Toronto providing anti-homophobia workshops at TEACH, treasurer at HOLA, the Toronto Gay Latino Group, and an active member of the Toronto Youth Cabinet (TYC). Leonardo has worked extremely hard to support LGBTQ youth newcomers, such as himself and was the deserving recipient of the **Outstanding Contribution to Queer Youth Activism Award**.

Donovon Caesar is a 25 year old artist and activist. He has performed in numerous queer youth venues including Buddies in Bad Times Theatre's Queercab and Artwherk! He has been involved with Black History Month as well as a documentary about the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina which devastated his hometown in Louisiana. Donovon is actively engaged politically, socially and artistically within and outside of the queer community and well deserving of the **Outstanding Contribution to Social Justice Award**.

A new award, The **Writer's Scholarship** sponsored by **GayGuideToronto.com**, was given to **Jesse Trautmann** for his contributions to numerous publications keeping the queer youth voice out there for the sake of other young queers and encourage the future telling of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered stories and perspectives.

Steph Cook received the **Outstanding Contribution to Queer Youth Visibility** award for being so instrumental in the growth of the Scarborough based LGBTQ youth group YAAHA! (Youth Advocating for Anti-Homophobia Awareness). She has been involved in anti-homophobia awareness workshops in Scarborough through the group and is a member of the 2007 Pride Scarborough Committee.

For **Jerry Lee's** immense involvement with the 519 Church Street Community Centre in Toronto, he was given the **Outstanding Contribution to the Queer Community** award. Jerry's short film "Mother, May I?" screened at the Inside Out Film and Video Festival in 2006, which looked at the coming out process to his family.

After some good food, laughs and good company the 9th Annual Youth Line Community Youth Awards was a fabulous evening to honour and support the queer youth that are continuing to empower and enrich our place not only within our communities but also our country. Congratulations to all the winners.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS!

Title Sponsor

- TD Canada Trust

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- Xtra! Magazine

Supporting Sponsors

- GGT (Gay Guide Toronto)
- LGCA (Lesbian and Gay Community Appeal)
- SHC (Sherbourne Health Centre)

Table Sponsors

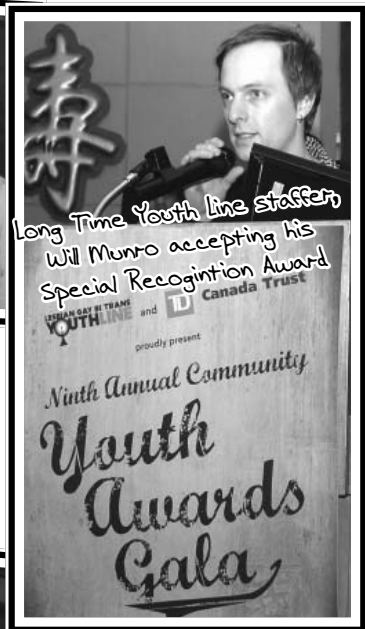
- ACAS (Asian Community AIDS Service)
- Assaulted Women's Helpline
- BlackCAP (Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention)
- CAW (Canadian Auto Workers)
- Cineplex Media
- El-Farouk Khaki
- George Smitherman, MPP
- Inside Out
- Kristyn Wong-Tam
- Pride Toronto
- SOY (Supporting Our Youth)
- TEACH
- the 519 Church Street Community Centre
- Youthography

Award Sponsors

- Egale Canada
- GayGuideToronto.com
- Ross Slater
- Salah Bachir
- SOY (Supporting Our Youth)
- TD Canada Trust
- Xtra!



Ron Puccini of TD Canada Trust (far left) with Westmount Positive Space



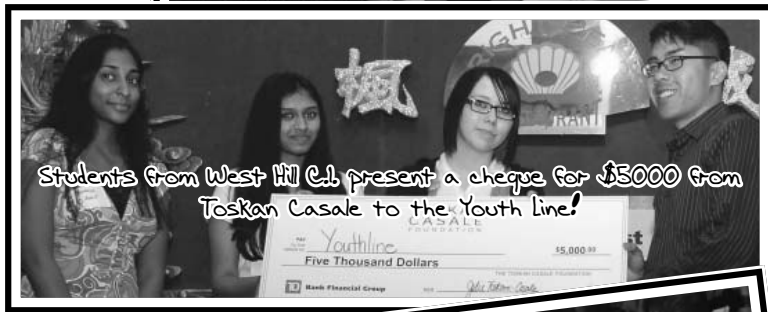
Long Time Youth Line staffer Will Munro accepting his Special Recognition Award



Renri Gorman from Youthlink (left) with Award winner Steph Cook



Our brilliant and hilarious host, Deb Pearce, taking it to the audience



Students from West Hill C.I. present a cheque for \$5000 from Toskan Casale to the Youth Line!



T.J. Naven, Award winner (left) with some of his friends



Community Activist Kristyn Wong-Tam presenting Donovan Caesar with his Award



Clare Nobbs from SOY giving Leonardo Zuniga a Kiss and his Award



Andrew Vail from GayGuideToronto.com (left) with Award recipient Jesse Trautmann



Adrienne De Francesco from Xtra presenting Jerry Lee with his Award

Attention Queer Youth!

The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line is looking for volunteers to answer our peer support phone line. If you are 26 or younger, identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual, 2-spirited, intersexed, or queer, can commit to 50 hours of training in a downtown Toronto location, and want to get involved, apply at www.youthline.ca.

Transgendered and transsexual people, Aboriginal people, people of colour, people with disabilities, intersexed people, and people who are HIV-positive are especially encouraged to apply. The Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line strives to create a volunteer group that is representative of the community it serves, as well as a safe space that is free from oppression. We believe it is important for our callers to connect with the person on the other line on a variety of levels.

Training will be taking place in a downtown location from October 17th to November 14th on Wednesday evenings and weekends.

If you have any questions or want more information, contact Cristina or charysse by phone at 416-962-2232 ext. 228 or ext. 229 respectively, or by email at volunteer@youthline.ca.

**NEXT VOLUNTEER
TRAINING**

**October 17th to
November 14th
Wednesday evenings
and weekends.**

call 416.962.2232
Cristina ext.228 or
charysse ext.229

volunteer@youthline.ca

You Can Only Turn 13 Once

To thank and celebrate past, current and future donors, volunteers and friends, the Youth Line is having a birthday party...

July 17, 2007

Voglie, 582 Church Street; 5:30pm – 8:30 pm



Featuring live performances, prizes, birthday cake and more! Hosted by Miss Kitty Galore



Annual General Meeting Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line

Tuesday October 30, 2007
6:00pm – 8:00pm

Sherbourne Health Centre
333 Sherbourne Street
416.962.2232 for more information

Guest Speaker:

Naomi Olsen from Youthography

*Youthography is North America's most significant full-service
research and marketing communications agency dedicated
exclusively to youth.*

Come out to our AGM on October 30, 2007 to find out what we've
been doing this past year, what we will be doing in the upcoming
year and meet the staff, board and volunteers
that make it all happen.

Line Art Auction a fundraiser for the Youth Line

saturday, november 24, 2007

SPIN gallery

1100 queen street west

doors at 5pm

auction at 7pm

416.962.2232

www.youthline.ca

Youth Line Directory

Website Peer-Support Phone
Line www.youthline.ca

Service Hours

1-800-268-9688 or 416-268-9688
Sunday to Friday - 4:00-9:30pm

Youth Email Support
askus@youthline.ca

Business Office Phone

1-888-687-9688 or 416-962-2232

Volunteering & Youth Services

volunteer@youthline.ca

Outreach Materials Requests

outreach@youthline.ca

General Inquiries

info@youthline.ca

Donations

donate@youthline.ca

Accounts Payable &

Tax Receipts

finance@youthline.ca

Mailing Address

Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth
Line PO Box 62 – Station F
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2L4

Registered Charity Number

#89756 4951 RR0001

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Youth Awards & Art Auction



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Film Festival ♥ Lesbian and Gay Community Appeal ♥ MAD for Dancing ♥
Maple Leaf Classic ♥ Muddy York Rugby Football Club ♥
Northern Secondary School GSA ♥ Ontario Federation of Labour ♥
Planned Parenthood of Toronto ♥ Positive Youth Outreach ♥
Pride Toronto ♥ Sherbourne Health Centre ♥ TEACH ♥
The 519 Church Street Community Centre ♥
The Toskan Casale Foundation ♥ Voices of Positive Women ♥ Youthography

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A. Karmali ♥ Doug Kerr ♥ El-Farouk Khaki ♥ Helen Knight ♥
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Ross Slater ♥ Mark Saelman ♥ George Smitherman, MPP ♥
Peter Sue ♥ Brian Terry ♥ Ihor Tomkiw ♥
Harry T. Wiebe ♥ Kristyn Wong-Tam ♥ Harold Wu
and many more generous individuals

our people

The Youth Line owes its existence to hundreds of dedicated volunteers that have answered the phones, organized events, licked envelopes and so much more. You know who you are and we hope you realize what a wonderful impact you have made.

Adam ♥ Adanyi ♥ Alvi ♥ Amanda

Andrea ♥ Ankur ♥ Anna ♥ Brian

Christelle ♥ Crystal ♥ Curtis

Dana ♥ Dani ♥ Danny ♥ Dave

David ♥ Emily ♥ Jamie

Jason ♥ Jennifer ♥ Jonathan

Julia ♥ Kate ♥ Kim ♥ Leah

Matthew ♥ Raul ♥ Shane ♥ Stephen

...and many many more!!

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