



# Life Line

Winter 2006/2007

Newsletter of the Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line

## Art with a big fuzzy heart

On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, the 2006 edition of the Line Art Auction raised over \$26,000 thanks to the help of 50 talented and generous community artists, title sponsor TD Canada Trust, caring art lovers and volunteer auctioneers Salah Bachir and Nadia Bello. Hosted at the Gladstone Hotel in Toronto, the event featured works by a diverse range of established and emerging artists.

At the November 30<sup>th</sup> opening reception, guest speaker Darren Cooney, a young man that had called the Youth Line ten years ago, recalled how growing up in a small town outside Belleville he would rollerblade off to one of the only public pay phones after discovering a phone book listing for the Youth Line.

“The first time I called, I just waited to hear what the person on the other end sounded like – but then I hung up,” says Darren, who currently works for the provincial government and is the former President of Ryerson University’s student administrative council.

“A few days later, I got up the courage to call back and I remember speaking to the person, but not being able to say the words lesbian or gay. It was too much. I couldn’t even say the words to ask if that’s what they were... But I had made contact and I realized that I wasn’t alone.”

“This year’s auction was the best one yet and the organizing committee already has ideas on how to



Daryl Vocat's *Gazing into liberation's furry chest* (2006) kicked off the live auction

make 2007 even better,” says event organizer and artist Peter Kingstone. “There are a lot of people that care about our youth who have helped make this event a great success!”

Special thanks to all our artists, guests, organizers Jonathan Kitchen, Julia Garro, Will Munro, Corinne Alstrom, Peter Kingstone, Nik Redman and the bevy of event staff and volunteers – especially our nimble art wrappers and sexy pastie-clad runners.

Thank you also to Daryl Vocat for lending us the event image, Peter Taylor, Rupert Hon and Al Ramsay & TD Canada Trust, Adrienne De Francesco & Xtra!, Chris Mitchell & the Gladstone Hotel, Akimbo, David Mordecai of blooming city, the Art Gallery of Ontario and our fabulous auctioneers, Salah Bachir and Nadia Bello.

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE: Youth Award Winners – New People – New Funding**

# Provincial Funding Announced

The Ontario government is investing more than \$2.5 million to increase access to health care services for diverse populations including a commitment of more than \$80,000 annually to the Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced at a press conference on November 9<sup>th</sup>.

“It truly is a new day for the Youth Line,” says Youth Line board co-chair, Marlene Ham. “For years, volunteers and staff have always worked hard to run this provincial youth service with very few resources, but with a commitment of stable ongoing funding we can be more effective and plan for the future with a lot more confidence.”

The Youth Line’s new funding will provide stability and address the non-profit sector’s lack of core funding for charities. Project-based funding has been general guideline for many funders. Though project-based funding allows for new and innovative projects to be developed, it also is dangerous in that an organization’s core infrastructure is

an important ingredient in its successful delivery of its services and deserves support.

The announcement also included general operational funding for the new Sherbourne Health Centre located in downtown Toronto and specific funding for Supporting Our Youth which runs programs for LGBT youth in Toronto and the LGBT Parenting Network for LGBT-led families.



Minister of Health & Long-Term Care, Hon. George Smitherman joins (l-r) Youth Line executive director, Philip Wong and board co-chairs Marlene Ham and Nik Redman at the press conference announcing funding support to several LGBTQ programs.

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## *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
- Committed to Confidentiality
- Sex-positive
- Collaborating, Networking and Partnering
- Respectful and Inclusive
- Embracing Diversity
- Building a Learning Community

# New talent joins the Youth Line team

Everyone at the Youth Line is excited to welcome four new board members to our team – at the same time we are saddened to say good-bye to departing directors Adrienne Barker, Jamie Berrigan, Jonathan Kitchen and Scott Wightman. Combined, these directors have contributed over 10 years of service to ensure the stability and growth of the Youth Line. Their leadership, energy and humour will be dearly missed.

## The newest members of our board of directors are:

**Luke Costello** is currently a student in the School of Nursing at Ryerson University and works part-time as a volunteer support worker with the Teen Sex Information Program through Planned Parenthood, and has a keen interest in the health and social issues facing youth and queer youth in the community.

**Michael Erickson** is a Toronto Secondary School Teacher with bachelor degrees in Education and Arts from York University. Experienced with community projects on a range of issues from developing countries, homophobia, and youth governance and leadership, Michael has been a board member of several agencies and was a phone line support worker at the Teen Talk Line in the early 1990's.

**Sherri Manko** is currently completing a Masters of Social Work, Collaborative Program Gender & Women's Studies Institute at the University of Toronto and also has a diploma as an Assaulted Women and Children Counsellor/Advocate and a Bachelor of Arts in Women's Studies in Alberta. A former Youth Line phone line and event volunteer, Sherri has also been a program assistant at Serve Canada, a youth community service organization.



**All a board: Members of the Youth Line team at October's Annual General Meeting** (back row l-r) Jamie Berrigan, Michael Erickson, Karl Nielsen (middle) Art Lam, program evaluation consultant Lavinia Lamenza, Marlene Ham, Adrienne Barker, Luke Costello, Chris McGrath, Scott Wightman, Jonathan Kitchen (front) Charysse Robinson, Edwin Lim, Sherri Manko, Corinne Alstrom and auditor Lionel Collier.

**Brandon Sawh** is currently an Event Manager with Pride Toronto. He completed the Community Worker Program at George Brown College, and has used this experience throughout his work in the Toronto queer community for the past five years. He is interested in getting involved with Youth Line so that he can do as much as he can to improve the queer community in Toronto.

**Also joining the Youth Line team this fall is our new part-time financial administrator, Akhaji Zakiya.** Akhaji also works for CHUM Television and comes to us with a considerable background in finance. Akhaji has shown her continued commitment to the queer community and is currently a volunteer with BQY, a program for black queer youth run through SOY.



**New staff Akhaji Zakiya**

She is pleased to be working for an organization that provides such an essential service to queer youth. "Given the importance of strong, healthy communities in the struggle for full equality, it is an honour to contribute to the economic and strategic growth of such a dynamic service".

Psst! Help spread the word.

**Some questions  
are hard to ask.**

**You are not alone.**



**LESBIAN GAY BI TRANS  
YOUTHLINE  
1.800.268.YOUTH  
416.962.YOUTH**

The Youth Line is a free service for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans youth, and those who have questions.

Anonymous & Confidential • Toll-Free from any phone in Ontario  
Open Sunday – Friday from 4:00pm – 9:30pm for young people 26 years of age and under  
Talk to other youth for support and information

TTY for hearing impaired available - Registered charity #897564951 RR0001

**[www.youthline.ca](http://www.youthline.ca)**

**Need our posters and postcards in your school, office or community centre?  
Help the Youth Line reach as many youth as possible.**

Contact charysse robinson at [outreach@youthline.ca](mailto:outreach@youthline.ca)  
or call our office at 1-888-687-9688 or 416-962-2232 in the GTA.

# Program Evaluation

The Youth Line is currently undergoing an evaluation of its services, working in partnership with Evidence, a program funded by the Counselling Foundation of Canada that we've enlisted to act as consultants and facilitators in the process.

The evaluation examines the strengths and weaknesses in our service, volunteer, and outreach programs. A great deal of work has already been done examining our service program, and we are midway through the volunteer program review. We have already begun to seek feedback from service users, service providers, staff, and volunteers – the groups of people who will be able to offer us the most valuable feedback.

The Youth Line and Evidence agreed that the best way to conduct the review was to work from a participatory model. By including the staff and volunteers in a hands-on way, Evidence is furthering the Youth Line's ability to carry out a thorough evaluation on its own when the next strategic evaluation is due to take place.

We would like to thank Evidence consultant Lavinia Lamenza for all the amazing work she has done. Once the program reviews are complete, several recommendations will be made to the Youth Line to help us better improve our programs. We are very excited to find out how our programs will be shaped and restructured in the near future.

*-Karl Nielsen*

## Youth Line Directory

<b>Website</b>	<b>www.youthline.ca</b>
<b>Peer-Support Phone Line Service Hours</b>	<b>1-800-268-9688 or 416-268-9688 Sunday to Friday - 4:00-9:30pm</b>
<b>Youth Email Support</b>	<b>askus@youthline.ca</b>
<b>Business Office Phone</b>	<b>1-888-687-9688 or 416-962-2232</b>
<b>Volunteering &amp; Youth Services Outreach Materials Requests</b>	<b>volunteer@youthline.ca outreach@youthline.ca</b>
<b>General Inquiries &amp; Donations Accounts Payable &amp; Tax Receipts</b>	<b>info@youthline.ca finance@youthline.ca</b>
<b>Mailing Address</b>	<b>Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line PO Box 62 – Station F Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2L4</b>
<b>Registered Charity Number</b>	<b>#89756 4951 RR0001</b>

## Volunteer Boot Camp

*Did you know...*

Each phone line volunteer goes through an in-depth **6 week training program?** The program is designed so that each volunteer is given an understanding of topics and issues that may come up on the phone line. There is always room for additional learning, even for volunteers who may think they know it all.

The Youth Line Service Coordinators facilitate the training program and bring in guest speakers from various partnering community organizations to paint an even more solid and detailed picture of the current issues facing the youth in Ontario. Each training program is tailored to the needs of the group and to changing social trends. Topics include:

- Introduction
- Agency Overview & History
- Basic Listening Skills
- Anti-Oppression
- Trans 101
- Coming Out Stories
- 2-Spirited People
- Queer/Trans Identities
- Ability & Sexuality
- Peer Support Skills
- Sex, Safety & Consent
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- HIV/AIDS
- Hard to Handle Calls

*-Karl Nielsen*

# Emerging Leaders

Achievements of Youth Celebrated at 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Awards

The Youth Line paid tribute to the outstanding achievements and contributions of eleven queer youth from across Ontario at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Line Community Youth Awards presented in June. It was a spectacular evening characterized by poignant speeches, live performances, and a sprinkling of Youth Line glamour (the hall was decked out with glorious bunches of pink, black and white balloons) – not to mention, the overwhelming show of support by all in attendance.

The event has been growing each year and this year more than 200 community members, sponsors, donors, friends and family attended the ceremony, which took place at the Metro Central YMCA. Ryan Hinds, a Toronto-based performer/activist/Diva and winner of last year's Youth Line Award for Arts & Culture, did a bang-up job as the smashing and amiable host for the special evening.

In addition to the presenting sponsor TD Canada Trust, major sponsors included the Lesbian & Gay Community Appeal Foundation, the Sherbourne

Health Centre, Gay Guide Toronto, and Xtra! Award sponsors Kyle Rae, Adam Giambrone, George Smitherman, Olivia Chow, and Painter's Place also lent their support.

The Youth Awards recognize individuals who have demonstrated leadership and shown a significant commitment to the LGBTQ community. One of the recipients this year was Ilanit Goren who has been instrumental in the activities of RyePride, the campus queer organization at Ryerson University, and has also co-facilitated Fluid, a bisexual youth group.

"I nominated Ilanit because I saw her tremendous dedication and passion for queer activism and social change," said Jessica Miller, another RyePride volunteer. The award recipients are nominated by members of their community and then selected by an awards committee.

*-Emily Collins*

*Read more about the award recipients on the following page*

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# www.youthline.ca

## Your Online Resource for:

Service Information  
Online Youth Forum  
News Updates

Online Donations  
Volunteering  
Community Resources



# And the winners are...

## **ALEX CHUNACO, 25**

*Contribution to Community*

Alex is from Cambridge who revived Mohawk Pride, a campus LGBTQ group. Alex has networked with other organizations, which led him to start an LGBTQ youth group in Cambridge. Alex is the longest-serving director for the Tri-Pride Community Organization, and currently volunteers with Gays and Lesbians of Waterloo University.

## **ALIX MUKONAMBI, 23**

*Queer Youth Education and Awareness*

Alix facilitates anti-homophobia workshops with Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia (TEACH), and offers peer counseling on the HEYY Line. Alix is also involved with Gays and Lesbians of African Descent where she has participated in a number of education initiatives. She recently completed Inside Out's Queer Youth Digital Project and is currently involved in the Queer Youth Video Project at Delisle Youth Services.

## **BRIAN MCCURDY, 23**

*Creative Activism*

Brian is an active member of many communities and projects, including the AGO Youth Council, CultureShock youth arts project, a group at The Griffin Centre for LGBTQ youth with disabilities, Laidlaw Foundation's Youth Engagement Program, the Bring Back the Don project in Regent Park, and is an artist who has participated in a number of art and theatre projects and shows.

## **CHRISTOPHER HAYDEN, 22**

*Contribution to Queer Youth Visibility*

Christopher is a gay youth from Toronto currently majoring in politics and governance at Ryerson. He has been actively involved in queer youth communities for over 8 years. He founded a gay-straight alliance at his high school and has hosted and performed at Fruit Loopz. Last summer, he was a counsellor at Camp Ten Oaks, a camp for LGBTQ youth and children from LGBTQ families. Christopher co-founded Artwherk!, a queer youth arts show, has participated in Canada World Youth, and is an active member of several queer sports clubs.

## **FENELON FALLS GSA**

*Queer Youth Activism by a Community Group*

The Fenelon Falls Gay Straight Alliance began when two students attended a queer youth support group in a nearby town and decided to take action locally. The GSA has sold buttons, held workshops and created awareness at both school and local community events. The GSA students have made a significant change in the school and community, and are an example of how a small group of dedicated individuals can create change.

## **ILANIT GOREN, 26**

*Contribution in an Academic Environment*

Ilanit is a queer woman from Toronto. She has spent several years working with RyePride, the campus queer organization at Ryerson University. She

also co-facilitated Fluid, a bisexual youth group. Ilanit's efforts at RyePride have raised thousands of dollars for the organization, and have provided students with the opportunity to attend a variety of events to deepen their awareness of queer issues.

## **JADE HINES**

*Personal Achievement*

Jade is a young trans woman whose open, publicized transition during her last year of high school in North Toronto made a significant impact in both her own life and the lives of other queer and trans youth. By transitioning openly at her school, and allowing her story to be documented in a city-wide newspaper, Jade has set a positive example for other youth. Jade is currently attending university in BC.

## **JESSICA, 21**

*Contribution to Social Change*

Jessica is a queer woman from Toronto. She has volunteered as a peer facilitator with Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia (TEACH) for almost 2 years, has worked with the Toronto City Summit Alliance Youth Steering Committee, writes & edits the Outlet zine for Lesbians Gays Bisexuals and Transgendered of U of T, and has participated in several youth programs at the AGO.

## **JEREMY DIAS, 22**

*Queer Youth Visibility*

Growing up in Sault Ste Marie, Jeremy's volunteer involvement has included work with a number of organizations including Stop Racism, the Algoma AIDS

Network, and Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving. Jeremy founded the Sault Ste Marie region's first LGBTQ youth group while still in high school. Jeremy founded Jer's Vision, an Ottawa-based organization which currently provides scholarships for youth.

## **MYKEL O'HARA, 20**

*Queer Youth Activism*

Mykel is a queer youth doing amazing things in Scarborough. He is involved with the HIV/AIDS Prevention Project and Violence Intervention Project at East Metro Youth Services, an active member of the queer youth group YAHAA!, and a volunteer for Teens Educating and Confronting Homophobia (TEACH), and brings a youth voice to the Pride Scarborough Committee.

## **TRANS YOUTH OTTAWA**

*Contribution to the Trans Youth Community*

Trans Youth Ottawa has been supporting trans youth in the Ottawa Region for several years. Providing much-needed support for youth, TYO works with Centretown Health Centre to provide classroom education in Ottawa-area schools. TYO has run workshops for teachers and community workers and is a well-known and valuable resource in the Ottawa area.

# Community Support

## PREMIER DONORS



Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care

## MAJOR DONOR



## CHAMPION MEDIA SPONSOR



## YOUTH AWARDS & ART AUCTION TITLE SPONSOR



## SUPPORTING DONOR

CAW Social Justice Fund ♥ Laidlaw Foundation

## ASSOCIATE DONOR

Acapella Foundation ♥ Caring Foundation ♥ Geoffrey Wood Foundation ♥  
Georgina Foundation ♥ Lesbian & Gay Community Appeal ♥ Procter &  
Gamble ♥ Royal Bank of Canada ♥ Sears Canada ♥  
Harold Wu & Lawrence Bennett ♥ Zucker Family Foundation  
♥ Alfred Lee - In Memoriam

## FRIENDS OF THE YOUTH LINE

Joan Anderson ♥ Barry Adam ♥ Kim Adlard ♥ Katherine Arnup  
Neville Austin ♥ Paul Austin ♥ Boiz Will Be Boiz ♥ Scott Bell  
Joanne Bersohn ♥ Murray Bush ♥ Fiona Buttars ♥ Christina Ciceri  
Andrew Chong ♥ Lyle Clark ♥ Hugh Clarkson ♥ Dan Cooperstock  
Brad Crafton ♥ Robert Cramb ♥ James Cressman ♥ Andrew Cruikshank  
Dupont Canada ♥ Audrey Dyer ♥ Ian Esquivel ♥ Dan Fraleigh ♥ Dan Fraser ♥  
The Friendly Greek ♥ Fountain of Hope ♥ Michael Galway ♥ Cathy Gulkin ♥  
Denise Hammond ♥ Tammy Hinsche ♥ Mark Hutchinson ♥ Greg Johns ♥ Mary  
Jones ♥ Jill Kelman ♥ Renee Lang ♥ Maria Lau ♥ Rob Lavery ♥ Greg Lichti ♥  
The Living Well ♥ Carl MacMillan ♥ David Marlowe ♥ Tom McGillis ♥ Chris  
McGrath ♥ Suzanne Nuttall ♥ Brian Rodgers ♥ Joel Rotstein ♥ Shannon Ryan  
♥ Jan Scheel ♥ Peter Sue ♥ Telus ♥ Brian Terry ♥ Norman Vanstone ♥ Village  
Pool League ♥ Robert Wallace ♥ Harry Wiebe ♥ Kevin Willcock ♥  
and many more generous folks

## IN-KIND SUPPORT

A Space Gallery ♥ AGO ♥ AKIMBO ♥ Salah Bachir ♥ Nadia Bello ♥ Buddies  
in Bad Times Theatre ♥ Olivia Chow ♥ Dangerous Dan's ♥ digital propaganda  
♥ Dufflet Pastries ♥ fab ♥ Gay Guide Toronto ♥ Sky Gilbert ♥ The Gladstone  
Hotel ♥ LSBN Toronto ♥ mancandy.com  
♥ Sherbourne Health Centre ♥

# 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 I hope you realize what a wonderful impact you have made.

Adam ♥ Adanyi ♥ Adrienne ♥ Amanda ♥  
Andrea ♥ Ankur ♥ Anna ♥ Brian D ♥  
Brian F ♥ Brian K ♥ Charles ♥ Chi Ching  
♥ Cristina ♥ Crystal ♥ Dani ♥ Daniel ♥  
Danny ♥ Dave ♥ David ♥ Devon ♥ Diane  
♥ Emily ♥ Heather ♥ jamie b ♥ Jamie M  
♥ Jason ♥ Jeff ♥ Jennifer ♥ Jimmy ♥  
Joel ♥ Jon ♥ Jonathan ♥ Julia ♥ Karen ♥  
Kate ♥ Katherine ♥ Lauren ♥ Liane ♥  
Leah ♥ Liz ♥ Matt ♥ Matthew ♥ Melanie  
♥ Mike V ♥ Nando ♥ Neil ♥ Penny ♥  
Raul ♥ Sabryna ♥ Sandra ♥ Shane ♥  
Shannon ♥ Shawna ♥ Silvia ♥ Walter  
and many more...

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Co-Chair – Marlene Ham  
Co-Chair – Nik Redman  
Treasurer – Arthur Lam  
Secretary – Chris McGrath  
Corinne Alstrom  
Luke Costello  
Michael Erickson  
Jamy Li  
Sherri Manko  
Brandon Sawh  
Ryan Weston

## STAFF

Service Coordinators  
Karl Nielsen  
charysse robinson

Shift Supervisor  
Will Munro

Financial Administrator  
Akhaji Zakiya

Executive Director  
Philip Wong

♥  
Charity #89756 4951 RR0001

