

2008 COMMUNITY CENTER SURVEY REPORT

*Assessing the Capacity and Programs of Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, and Transgender Community Centers*




CENTERLINK
THE COMMUNITY OF LGBT CENTERS

MAP
movement advancement project ▶

August 2008

CenterLink

CenterLink (formerly The National Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Centers) was founded in 1994 as a member-based coalition to support the development of strong, sustainable LGBT community centers. A fundamental goal of the organization's mission is to help build the capacity of these centers to address the social, cultural, health, and political advocacy needs of LGBT community members across the country. For over a decade, CenterLink has played an important role in addressing the challenges centers face by helping them to improve their organizational and service delivery capacity, access public resources, and engage their regional communities in the grassroots social justice movement.

Movement Advancement Project

Launched in 2006, the LGBT Movement Advancement Project (MAP) is an independent, intellectual resource for LGBT organization executives and donors, funded by a small number of committed, long-term donors to the movement. MAP's mission is to speed achievement of full social and political equality for LGBT people by providing donors and organizations with strategic information, insights, and analyses that help them increase and align resources for highest impact.

Disclaimer: *The opinions expressed in this report reflect the best judgment of CenterLink and MAP based on analyzed data collected from participating LGBT community centers. These opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of our funders, CenterLink members, or other organizations.*

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents findings of a survey of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community centers in the United States, conducted jointly by the LGBT Movement Advancement Project (MAP) and CenterLink (formerly the National Association of LGBT Community Centers). The survey represents the second attempt ever to compile a comprehensive picture of LGBT community centers' staffs and boards, program priorities, constituencies, fundraising, budgets, and technical assistance needs.¹

MAP and CenterLink have two key motivations for fostering better understanding of LGBT community centers. First, a local LGBT community center often is the only LGBT resource directly available to residents of a town or region. The local center provides a safe, supportive environment through which LGBT people can access needed social, educational, and health services. Second, community centers provide an important link between the LGBT movement's grassroots constituencies and the movement's state and national efforts to advance political equality. Centers are often the first (and sometimes only) place that individuals engage with the LGBT movement, thus providing a unique conduit for contacting and mobilizing LGBT individuals to collectively assert their rights.

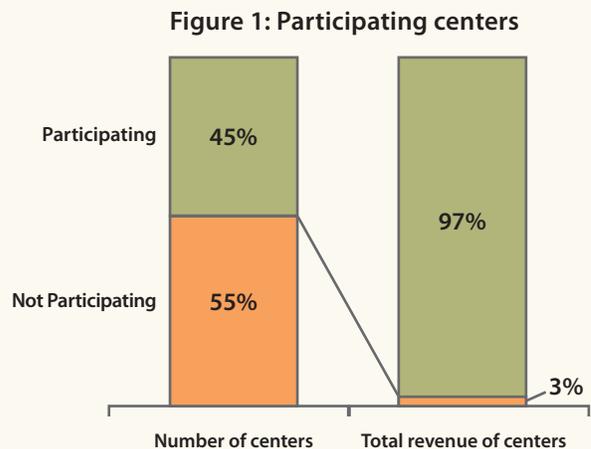
The *2008 Community Center Survey Report* furnishes LGBT movement donors, national and state LGBT organizations, and the community center field itself with a thorough overview of the size, scope, and needs of these institutions. It should be a starting point for organizations and donors interested in engaging with or supporting community centers and their programs and services. Although the report is mostly descriptive (with a main goal to provide basic information to interested donors and organizations), a few recommendations appear in the final section. Because the data were not collected anonymously, funders or community centers are welcome to ask MAP or CenterLink to provide information on individual centers or to identify centers that provide a particular service or serve a specific population.

SAMPLE AND SURVEY METHODOLOGY

In February 2008, CenterLink and MAP sent an online survey to 163 previously identified LGBT community centers. MAP and CenterLink developed the survey with input from several community center executive directors and funders. MAP surveyed several smaller centers by telephone to help them participate.

From the initial sample of 163 centers, we identified 158 that had some level of active operations and programs. Among these, 71 centers completed the survey, representing a 45 percent response rate. (We list these centers and their contact information at the end of the report.) The 71 respondents had combined revenues of \$99.3 million.

For the 87 centers that did not respond to the survey, we collected revenue data from Guidestar.org. Only 16 of these centers had revenue greater than \$50,000 and the largest had a budget of \$450,000. The 87 non-respondents' combined revenue was about \$3.5 million, with most reporting revenues of \$25,000 or less; thus this report covers about 97 percent of the total budgets of all community centers across the country, as shown in *Figure 1*.



All statistics in the report are based on the 71 centers that responded to the survey (unless otherwise noted). Almost all of the largest, but only a few of the smallest, LGBT community centers responded to every survey question.

The report has five main sections. The first looks at the age and infrastructure of community centers. The second examines their financial, fundraising, staff, and board capacities. The third describes their current programs and services, including an overview of policy and civic engagement activities, a demographic overview of clients and patrons, and an analysis of computer-related programs and services. The fourth section considers the technical assistance needs of community centers, as well as reactions to the survey itself. The report concludes with recommendations for strengthening the community center field's overall capacity.

CENTER AGE & INFRASTRUCTURE

LGBT community centers are relatively young institutions, with most (42 centers, or 59 percent) founded some time after 1990 (see *Figure 2*). The average center is 18 years old, while the median² is 15. The oldest center is 39 years old, and the youngest was established within the past year.

The 71 centers are located in 29 different states and the District of Columbia. Most (53 percent) serve multiple counties and cities, a few of which span across more than one state. About 10 percent serve entire states, while the remaining 37 percent focus their programs and services on a single county or city.

¹ Community center leaders fielded a shorter survey in 1994.

² Note that a median is the value that is exactly in the middle of a range of data that is ordered from highest to lowest. Compared to averages, medians usually provide a more realistic snapshot of the data, minimizing the impact of exceptionally high or low values.

Figure 2: Community centers by decade founded

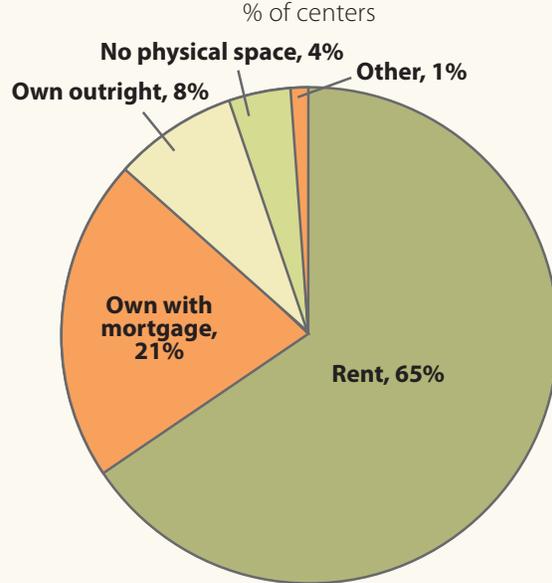


Nearly all LGBT community centers (92 percent) are independent organizations. The remaining 8 percent are affiliates or programs of other organizations, such as statewide advocacy organizations and local community health groups. Of the 65 independent centers, 60 are tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations, while the remaining five are a combination of 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) nonprofit entities.

Most centers (73 percent) have only one physical location, with two centers having no physical location at the time of the survey. The center with the most locations has 11, while the 71 centers combined have 102 outlets. *Figure 3* shows that most centers (65 percent) rent their physical space, with about 30 percent owning their locations (21 percent have a mortgage and 8 percent own their centers outright).

As *Figure 4* shows, nearly two-thirds of community centers have fewer than 5,000 square feet of space. The average center has 9,706 square feet of space, while the median has slightly less than 4,000 square feet.

Figure 3: Center ownership/rental status

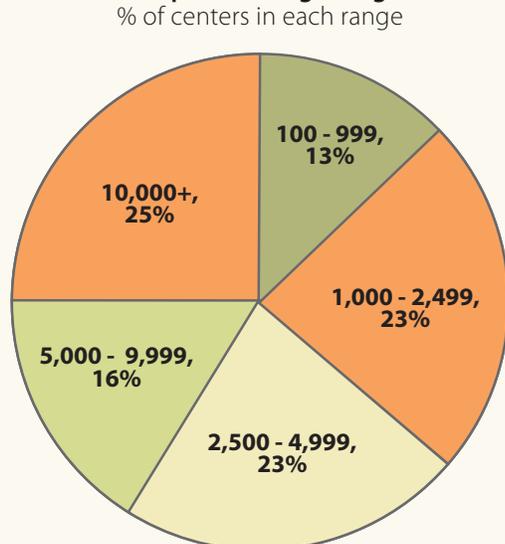


In a typical week, the average center is open to the public for 53 hours, while the median is open for 60 hours. The most any single center is open in one week is 102 hours, while the least is five hours.

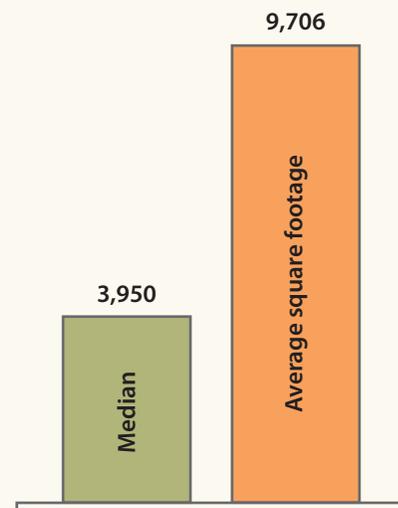
While only a few community centers offer services in braille (15 percent) or with TTY (teletypewriter) capability (15 percent), most have handicap-accessible parking (86 percent) and bathrooms (73 percent). Slightly fewer than half (44 percent) have accessible service desks. Ten centers mentioned that making their facilities more accessible is a near-term, high priority.

Figure 4: Physical Size

4a: Square footage ranges



4b: Median/average square footage



CAPACITY

Budgets

In 2006, LGBT community centers had combined budgets of \$83.5 million, which grew to \$92.6 million in 2007, an 11 percent increase. Growth between 2007 and 2008 is projected to be slightly slower (7 percent), with budgets increasing to \$99.3 million. This growth represents an increase of 19 percent from 2006 to 2008 (see *Figure 5*).

Figure 5: Growth in actual and projected combined budgets
\$ Millions



Individual centers had varied budget growth between 2006 and 2008. At the extremes, one center's budget grew 258 percent during the period, while another's decreased by 40 percent. The average center's budget grew 42 percent from 2006 to 2008 while the median increased by 25 percent.

Figure 6 shows that most of the financial resources across the community center field are concentrated in a handful of institutions. In 2008, for example, the five largest centers accounted for 66 percent of reported budgets (\$65.6 million out of \$99.3 million), while the ten largest held 79 percent (\$78.1 million).³

At the other end of the spectrum, 75 percent of all community centers had budgets under \$1 million in 2008. Together, these centers made up only 23 percent of the field's total combined budget (see *Figure 7*).

The geographic distribution of 2008 budgets shows a similar concentration: 59 percent of all community center resources are located in California; 13 percent in New York; 6 percent in Florida; and 5 percent each in Illinois and Texas. The remaining states hold only 12 percent of the combined budget (see *Figure 8*). If the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center is excluded from the data, the distribution changes somewhat, although California still leads the pack.

Figure 6: Cumulative 2008 budgets
\$ Millions

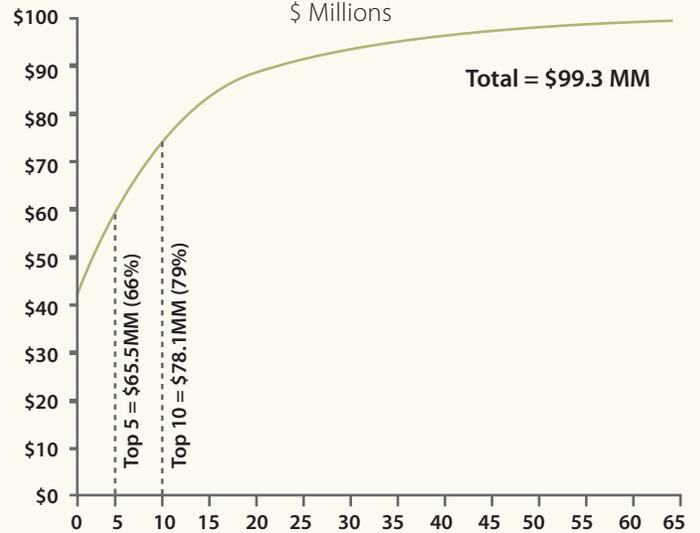


Figure 7: Distribution of centers and combined budgets, by budget ranges

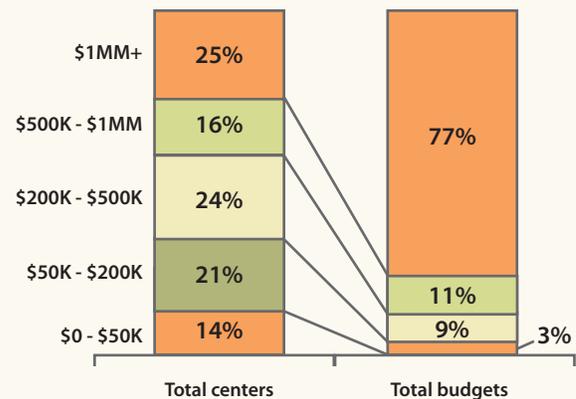
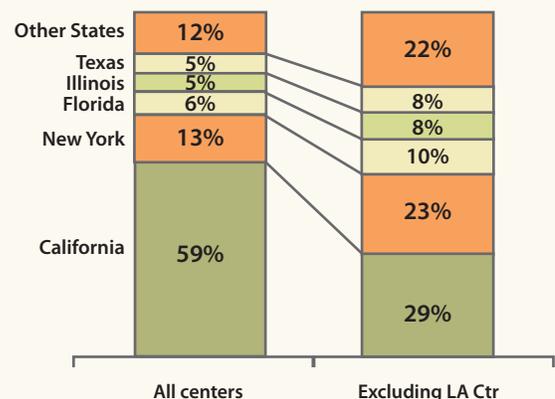


Figure 8: State locations of combined 2008 budgets
% of budgets



³ Appendix Figures A1, A2, and A3 show average and median budget data for 2006-2008 for all centers; centers with budgets under \$500,000; and centers with budgets greater than \$500,000.

Figure 9: Combined 2008 functional expenses by budget size



As *Figure 9* shows, most centers spend a clear majority of their budgets on program-related expenses. The smallest centers (those with budgets under \$50,000) are the exception, spending only 37 percent of their budgets on programs, with 11 percent spent on fundraising and 52 percent on management and general expenses. The largest centers (those with budgets greater than \$1 million) spend 79 percent of their budgets on programs, 10 percent on fundraising, and 11 percent on management and general expenses. These differences are not surprising, given the administrative work involved with launching a new center and the economies of scale associated with running a larger, more established operation.

Most centers (72 percent) report using QuickBooks to manage their finances. The remaining centers use a variety of software programs, including Excel, Money, and Peachtree. A few centers noted that they outsource this work to a third party and were not sure what type of software was used.

Revenue Sources, Fundraising, and Membership Programs

Most community center revenue (41 percent in 2008) comes from government sources, with 17 percent from state government, 15 percent from federal, and 9 percent from local public agencies. Individual donations are the next largest source of revenue, at 22 percent. Foundations and corporations make up just 10 and 5 percent of center revenue, respectively (see *Figure 10*).

Smaller centers, however, have a very different revenue base than the larger outlets, as *Figure 11* shows. Centers with budgets between \$50,000 and \$200,000, for example, rely largely on individual contributions (68 percent) and fees, sales, and rents (17 percent) for their revenue. The largest centers – those with budgets over \$1 million – receive nearly half of their revenue from government sources and less than a quarter from individuals. Foundations make up nearly 20 percent of the revenue of centers with budgets between \$500,000 and \$1 million, which is the highest share of foundation dollars across all ranges.

Figure 10: 2008 revenue sources

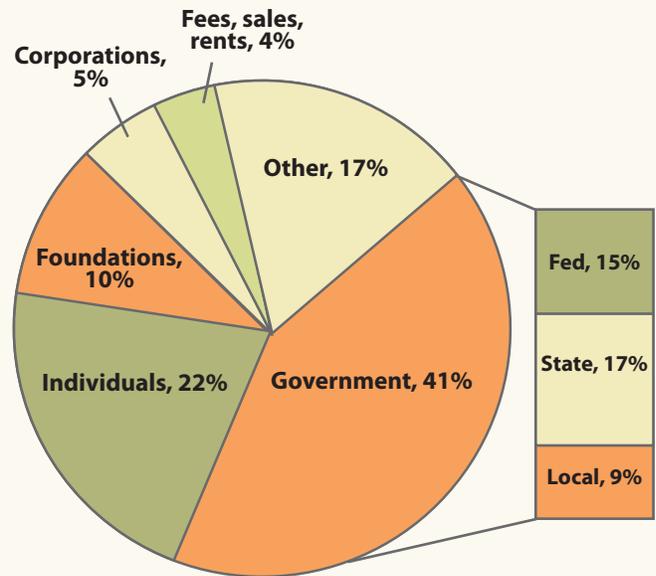


Figure 11: 2008 revenue sources by budget size

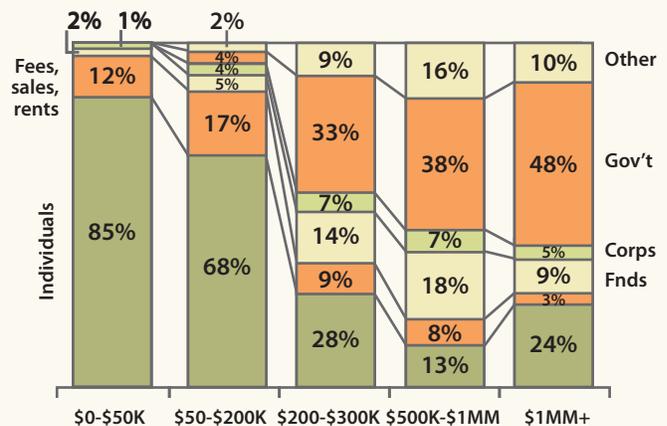


Figure 12: Total number of 2007 donors by range of gift amount



All community centers combined have just over 66,000 individual donors. Most of these (57 percent) gave less than \$100 in 2007 (6,538 gave less than \$25 and 30,844 gave between \$25 and \$99), as *Figure 12* shows. The average center has about 1,400 individual donors, and the median has 206.

The majority of community centers (57 percent) have a formal membership program, with established annual dues and benefits for members. Most centers with a membership program require a minimum annual contribution of \$35 to be considered a member and qualify for any benefits. These benefits generally include free access to center services and events, discounts at local businesses, and free subscriptions to community center newsletters. Several centers noted that they charge a lower membership rate for students, senior citizens, and other people on a low or fixed income.

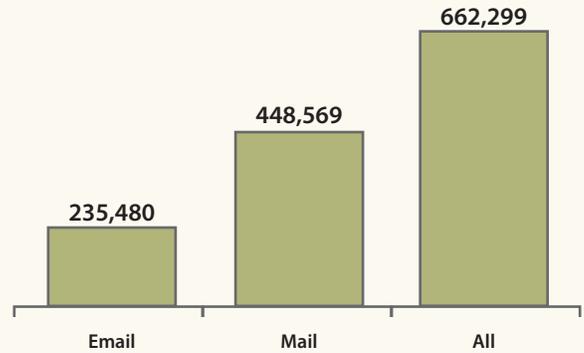
About 20 percent of community centers report using Excel and/or QuickBooks to manage their development work, while 11 percent use DonorPerfect, 10 percent use GiftWorks, and another 10 percent use Raiser's Edge. The remaining 50 percent of centers use a variety of software (everything from Access to Word was mentioned) to manage development.

Center Communications

Combined, LGBT community centers can reach 662,299 individuals through their email and postal ("snail-mail") contact lists, as *Figure 13* shows. The average center can reach 9,740 people through these lists, while the median can reach 3,000 people. Overall, snail-mail lists tend to have more contacts than email lists.

Centers communicate regularly with their members, clients, and patrons through a combination of electronic and hardcopy newsletters. About 80 percent of centers have an electronic newsletter, which is most

Figure 13: Total number of contacts on email and mailing lists
All centers combined



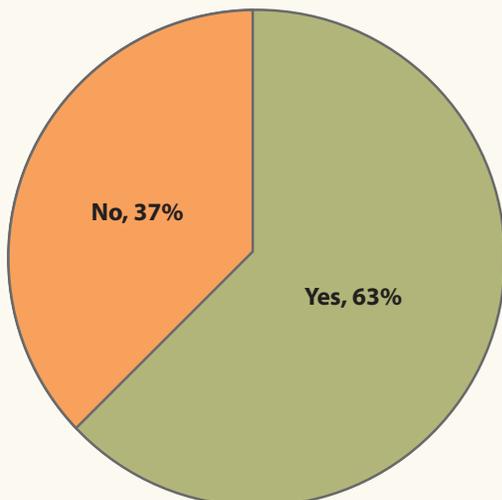
often sent out monthly (29 percent of centers) or weekly (27 percent). The average center with an electronic newsletter sends it to 4,334 individuals, while the median reaches 1,500 people. The highest circulation of an electronic newsletter is 58,000 and the lowest is 58.

About 66 percent of centers regularly send out a hardcopy newsletter or similar publication, with 24 percent mailing them quarterly and 15 percent sending them monthly. The average center sending a hardcopy newsletter sends it to 3,514 people, while the median reaches 1,500. The highest circulation for a hardcopy publication is 31,800 and the lowest is 10.

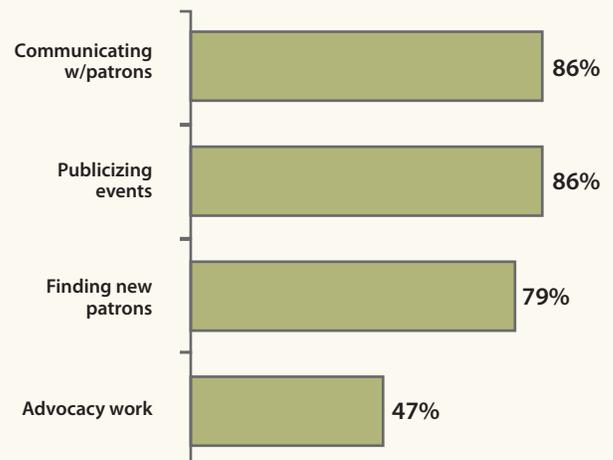
Most centers (63 percent) also report using online social networking websites, such as MySpace and Facebook, to engage with their communities. As *Figure 14* shows, centers use these sites to communicate with patrons, publicize center events, and find new patrons. Centers can create these sites free of charge and maintain them easily, which makes MySpace and Facebook especially appealing to smaller centers without the capacity to regularly manage or update their websites.

Figure 14: Social Networking Websites

14a: Presence on social networking websites
% of centers w/ a profile on Facebook or MySpace (out of 68)



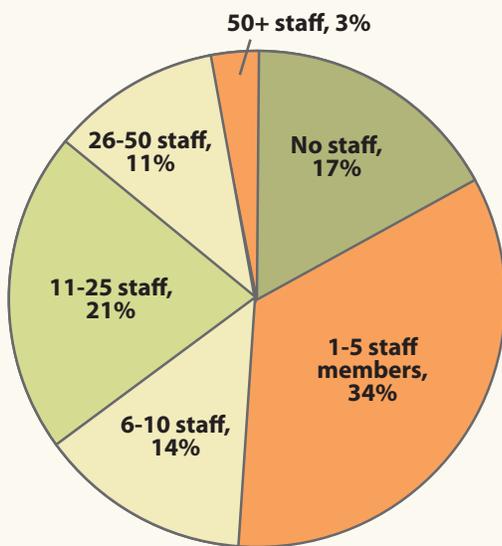
14b: Uses of social networking websites
% of centers (out of 43)



Staffs

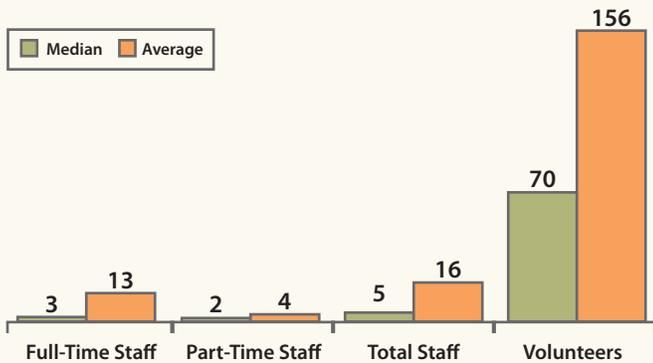
As shown in *Figure 15*, the majority of LGBT community centers have fewer than five staff members. Seventeen percent report no paid staff and 34 percent report one to five paid staff members. Only one-third have more than 10 paid staff members. Raising funds to support staff is often a big challenge for volunteer-led agencies. As one center noted, “We have been declined [foundation] funding because we don’t have adequate staff to maintain programs (no kidding; hence the need).”

Figure 15: Paid staff size
% of centers



All centers combined have 1,125 paid staff members, with 859 working full-time and 266 working part-time. Active volunteers total 10,739 across all centers.⁴ *Figure 16* shows that the average center has 16 paid staff members and 156 volunteers, while the median center has only five paid staff and 70 volunteers.

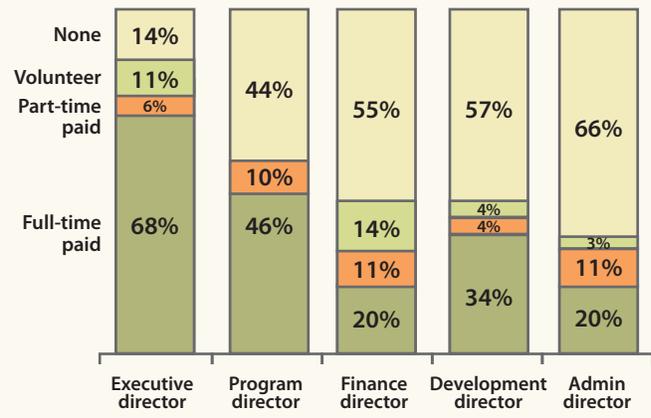
Figure 16: Median and average community centers’ full- and part-time staff members and volunteers



⁴The survey defined an “active” volunteer as someone who donated at least 12 hours of time during calendar year 2007.

Nearly all community centers (85 percent) have an executive director (ED), as *Figure 17* shows. Sixty-eight percent have a full-time paid ED and 17 percent have either a part-time paid or volunteer ED. Most centers (56 percent) also have a paid full- or part-time program director. But most (55 percent) do not have finance directors, development directors (57 percent), or administrative directors (66 percent), even when taking part-time paid and volunteer positions into account.

Figure 17: Status of staff positions
% of organizations



As *Table 1* shows, the tenure of staff in key positions at the average and median center is rather low, ranging from one to three years. The centers with the highest tenure have staff members who have been in their positions from seven to 21 years, but they are the exception, not the rule.

Table 1: Tenure for key staff positions (years in position)

	Executive Director	Program Director	Finance Director	Admin. Director	Develop. Director
High	21	14	18	14	7
Median	2	2	2	1	1
Average	3	3	3	2	2
Low	Less than 1	Less than 1	Less than 1	Less than 1	Less than 1

Looking at staff gender demographics, 45 percent of community center staff members are male and 43 percent are female, as *Figure 18* shows. Six percent identify as transgender, while another 6 percent identify as having a gender identity other than male, female, or transgender. The racial/ethnic make-up of center staff is rather diverse: most staff members (57 percent) are people of color (POC). Nearly one-third (28 percent) of staff members are Latino, while 14 percent are African-American and 4 percent are Asian/Pacific Islander.

Survey respondents identified most of the remaining staff members as white (43 percent), or mixed or another race (11 percent), while a few were not identified as having any race.

More than half (53 percent) of board members are male, while 43 percent are female and 5 percent transgender. A clear majority of center board members are white (78 percent), while Latinos and African-Americans each make up 8 percent of center boards (see *Figure 19*).

Boards

Combined, community centers have 736 board members. The average center has 11 board members, while the median has nine. The largest board has 24 members, while the smallest has just three. Boards are less diverse than staffs across both gender and race/ethnicity.

Some centers noted that they are actively trying to diversify their boards, both in terms of race/ethnicity and gender. Several also said that they serve areas that are not very diverse or where it is difficult for people to be visibly out, which makes finding qualified candidates (of any race, ethnicity, or gender identity) a challenge.

Figure 18: Staff demographics

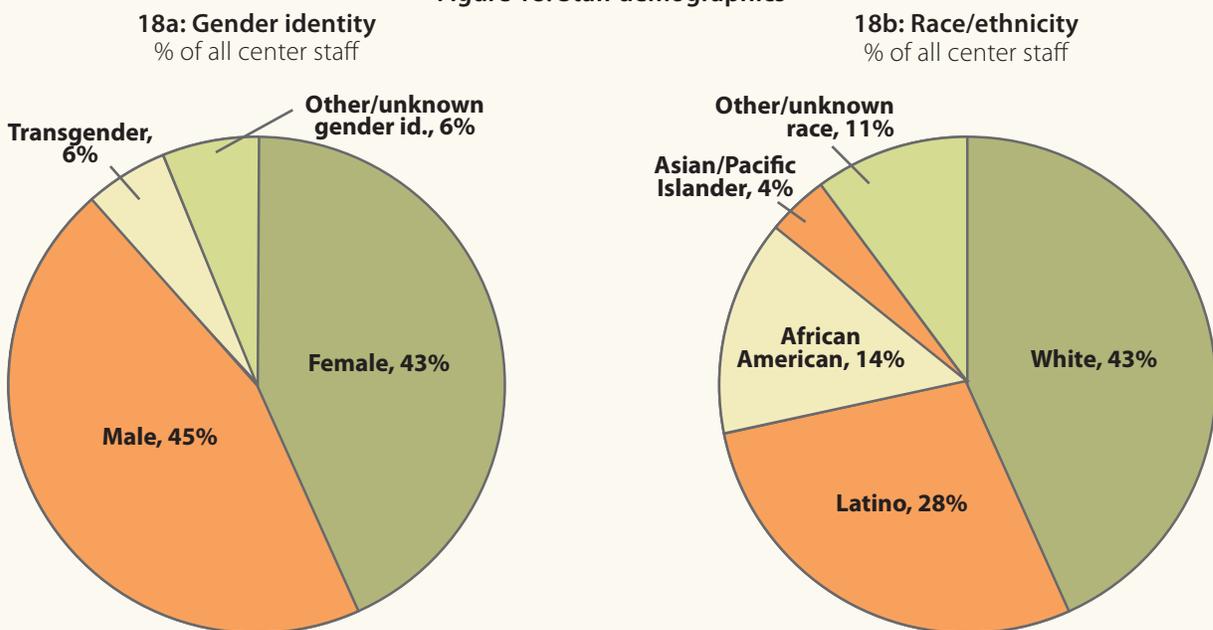
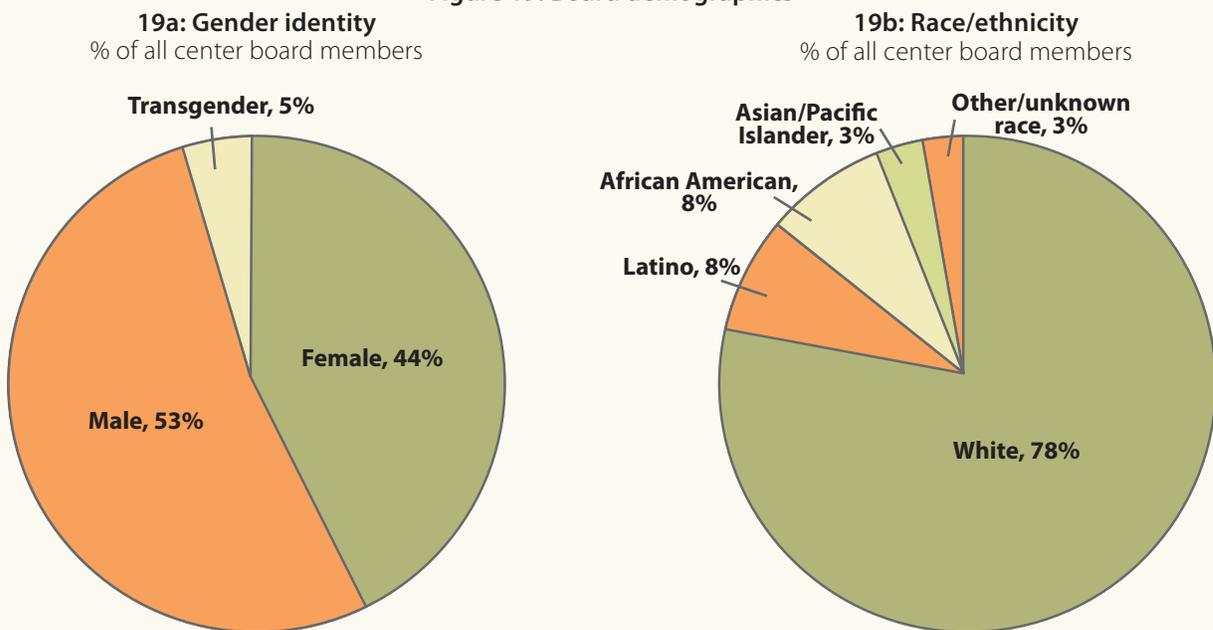


Figure 19: Board demographics



Most LGBT community center boards (62 percent) have “give-or-get” policies, requiring their board members to either donate or raise a set amount of money each year. The average give-or-get amount is \$3,680 and the median is \$1,500.

Among general board activities, survey respondents reported that boards spent about 28 percent of their time on fundraising, 19 percent on strategic planning, and 18 percent engaged in fiscal oversight of the center. The remaining activities included: setting general directions and priorities for their center; public education about LGBT issues; policy advocacy; directly running programs; performing administrative tasks; and, serving as LGBT “ambassadors” to the general public.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Types of Programs

To catalogue the wide range of programs and services that LGBT community centers offer, we provided centers with a “pick list” of possible programs and services, organized into six categories: mental and physical health, arts and culture, legal, information/education, community outreach and training, and policy and civic engagement. *Figures 20 - 25* summarize responses to these questions, indicating the number of centers that provide each of the services listed.

Figure 20: Mental and physical health services/programs
No. of centers offering services (out of 69)



Figure 21: Arts and cultural services/programs
No. of centers offering services (out of 69)

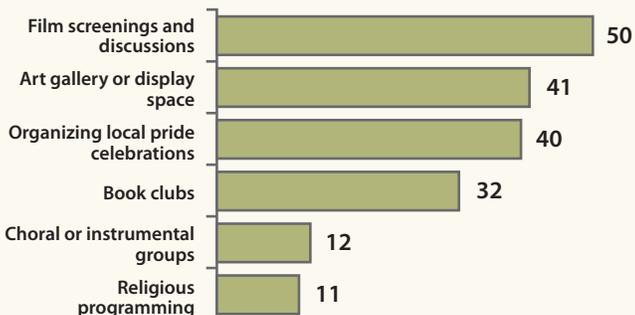


Figure 22: Legal services/programs
No. of centers offering services (out of 69)

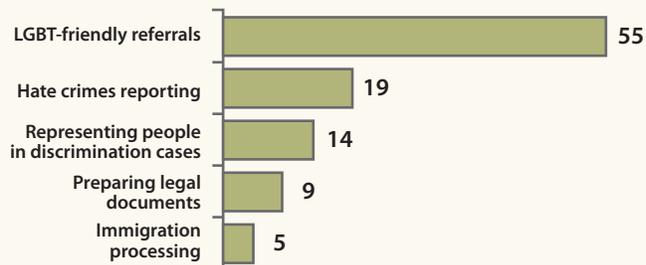


Figure 23: Information or education services/programs
No. of centers offering services (out of 69)

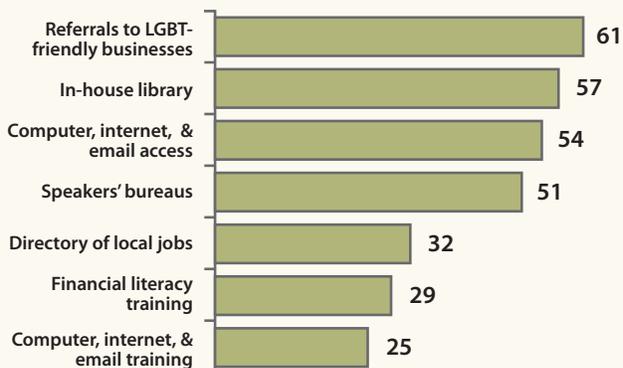


Figure 24: Community outreach and training services/programs
No. of centers (out of 69) offering services that target...

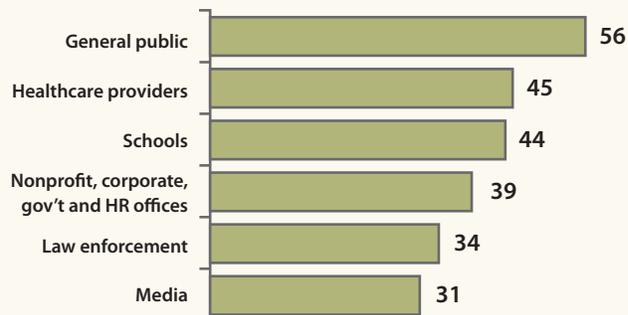
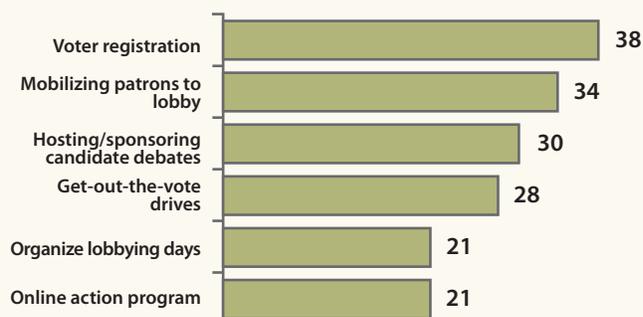
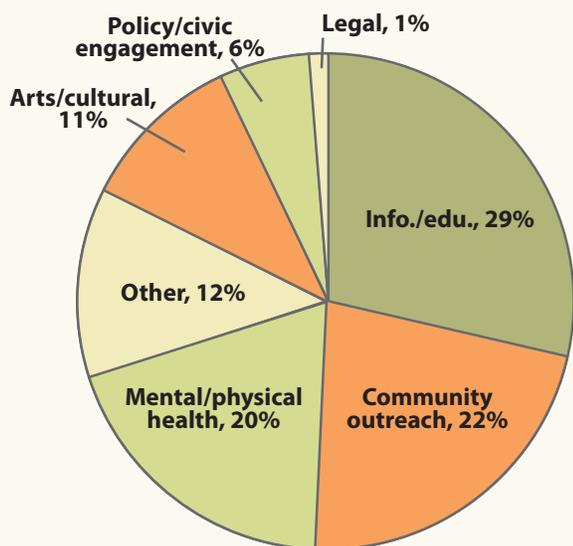


Figure 25: Policy and civic engagement services/programs
No. of centers offering services (out of 69)



Centers spent most of their program budgets on information and education services and community outreach programs (29 and 22 percent, respectively), as *Figure 26* shows. Legal programs are the smallest, with only 1 percent of center program budgets spent on those services. The “Other” category includes activities that do not fit easily into one specific category, such as LGBT history archives, theater-based outreach programs, and general social activities.

Figure 26: Program expenditures by general program areas
Average % of combined program budgets spent



Policy Work

As mentioned earlier, community centers can play an important role in connecting local constituents of the LGBT equality movement with the state and national organizations working to advance pro-LGBT public policies. Figure 25 showed how many centers offer civic engagement programs to mobilize and educate their own constituents (78 percent of all centers offer or provide at least one of the services or programs listed in Figure 25). To better understand how and to what extent community centers directly engage in policy work (rather than through their clients or patrons), we asked additional questions about tactics that centers use for this work.

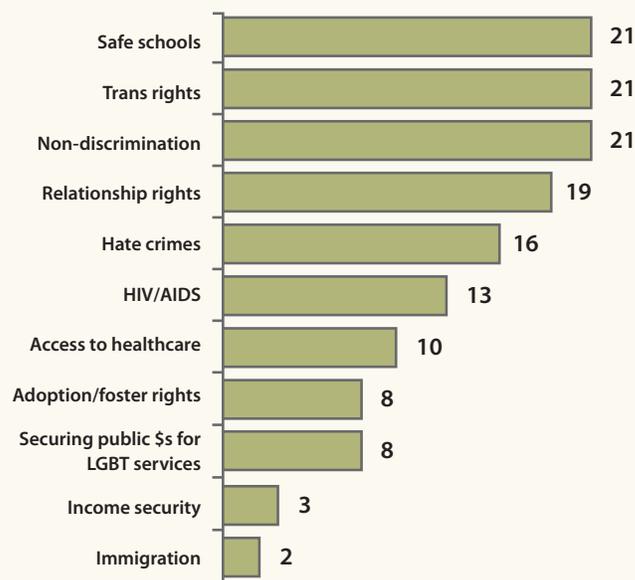
Most centers (44 of the 69 that responded to this section of the survey, or 64 percent) indicated that they engage in direct policy activities. The most common activity is educating the general public about LGBT policy issues (42 centers) followed closely by participating in coalition work related to policy change (40 centers). *Figure 27* shows that many centers also engage in media work and directly lobby lawmakers to encourage policy changes.

The top policy issues that community centers focus on are safe schools policies, transgender rights, and non-discrimination policies. Twenty-one centers mentioned each of those issues as one of their top three policy priorities. Relationship rights are another high priority,

Figure 27: Direct policy work
No. of centers engaging in activities (out of 44)



Figure 28: Top policy issues
No. of centers (out of 44) listing issue as a one of its three highest policy priorities



with 19 centers listing this issue as a top concern. Adoption/foster rights, working to secure public money for LGBT services, income security, and immigration were the four issues least likely to be ranked a high priority (see *Figure 28*).

On average, community centers spend nearly half of their total advocacy time targeting change on the local level, and direct 41 percent of their advocacy time at state government. They spend only 9 percent of their time on the federal level.

LGBT community centers are likely to have at least some contact with the statewide advocacy group that is active in their state. For example, 92 percent of all centers that engage in policy work reported either high (46 percent) or limited (46 percent) engagement with their state group, while only 9 percent reported no engagement (and some of those centers are in states that lack a statewide advocacy organization). Only 28 percent of LGBT community centers reported high engagement with local religious organizations, while another 62 percent reported limited engagement and 10 percent reported none.

People Served

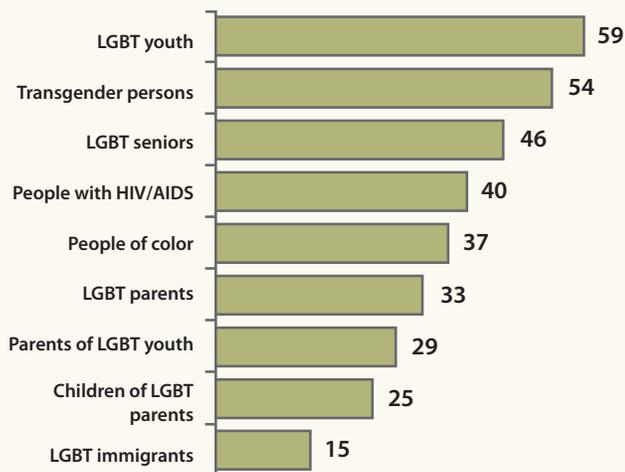
In combination, LGBT community centers serve nearly 40,000 individuals in a typical week, and refer 17,300 people to other organizations or agencies. As *Table 2* shows, the average center serves 608 people in a typical week, while the median serves 150. The busiest center serves 8,250 individuals, while the least busy serves eight.

Table 2: Number of people served in a typical week

	People receiving direct services	People referred to other organizations, businesses, agencies, etc.
High	8,250	11,000
Median	150	40
Average	608	275
Low	8	1
Total	39,512	17,342

Figure 29 shows the number of LGBT community centers that offer services tailored to specific populations. Almost all centers (59 centers, 85 percent) offer services for LGBT youth, while nearly as many offer services for people who are transgender. Programs for LGBT seniors are the third most offered, while parents of LGBT youth, children of LGBT parents, and LGBT immigrants are the populations least likely to have access to services or programs tailored to their needs.

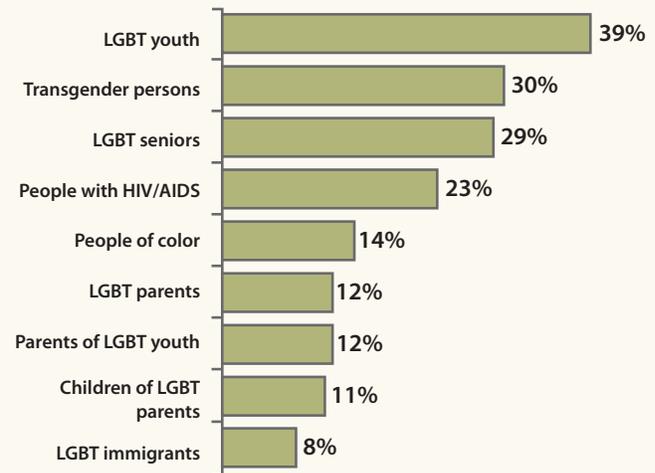
Figure 29: Services for specific populations
No. of centers offering services (out of 70)



LGBT youth are also on top when looking at the resources used to provide services for specific populations, with 39 percent of program service dollars directed to youth programs (see *Figure 30*). People of color and people with HIV/AIDS receive the next highest

shares of program budgets, at around 30 percent each. Programs for children of LGBT parents, LGBT parents, and parents of LGBT youth receive the smallest shares of center program budgets.

Figure 30: Program expenditures for specific populations
Average % of combined program budgets spent



Note: Because clients can fall into more than one category, the totals exceed 100%.

Several centers noted that although they do not have financial resources to spend on specific populations, they still provide those populations with services through volunteers or collaborations with other agencies. For example, 12 centers said that volunteers provide services to transgender people and eight offer volunteer-provided services to LGBT senior citizens. Figure 30 does not reflect these efforts.

About half of LGBT community centers offer at least some services or programs in languages other than English. Many centers, for example, provide immigration and HIV/AIDS services in Spanish, as well as a wide range of programs and services in American Sign Language. Other examples include Affirmation's hotline for people who speak Arabic (Affirmation is located in Ferndale, Michigan; the Detroit metro area has one of the highest concentrations of people of Arab descent in the United States), and the LA Center, which reported that "almost everything is in Spanish; also various Asian languages, and even Russian!"

To get a better sense of the people LGBT community centers serve, we asked for demographic estimates of patrons and clients based on their gender, race/ethnicity, age, household income, and education level. Most centers (84 percent) attempt to collect at least some client demographic information, usually either through information from intake forms or staff/volunteer observations (61 percent of the centers reported using each method). About half of the centers directly survey their patrons to gather this data. A few centers are actively seeking to improve this function, with one stating, "We recognize the need for better demographic information and are currently working with a local university on a community-wide needs assessment to collect this data."

Table 3 presents the gender identity of community center clients, and shows that the average center's patrons are 52 percent male, 46 percent female, and 9 percent transgender.⁵ The median center's clients are very similar to the average, having a clientele that is 50 percent male, 45 percent female, and 8 percent transgender.

Table 3: Gender identification of clients/patrons
Statistics for 61 centers

	Female	Male	Transgender
High	97%	83%	40%
Median	45%	50%	8%
Average	46%	52%	9%
Low	16%	2%	1%

Note: The low statistics exclude zero values.

Figures 31-34 provide data on LGBT community center clients' race/ethnicity, age, household income, and highest educational level attained. Overall, the numbers show that LGBT community centers serve a fairly diverse group of people, across all five measures. And although the majority of clients are white, the client base is racially and ethnically more diverse than the United States as a whole. (The American population is about 69 percent white.⁶) Also keep in mind that, depending on where they are located, some centers serve clients who are nearly all people of color or from lower income groups.⁷

Figure 31: Race/ethnicity of patrons/clients
Averages for 56 centers

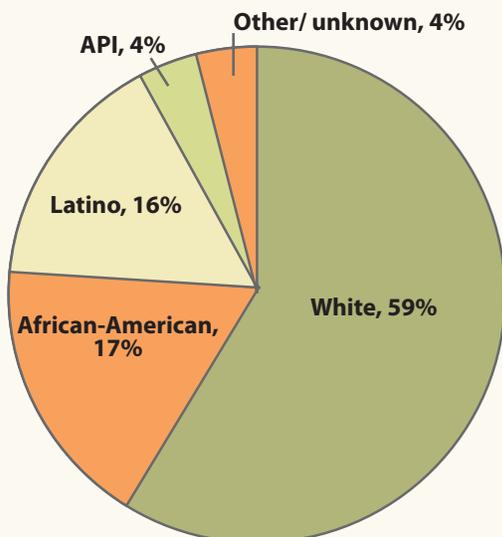


Figure 32: Age of patrons/clients
Averages for 56 centers

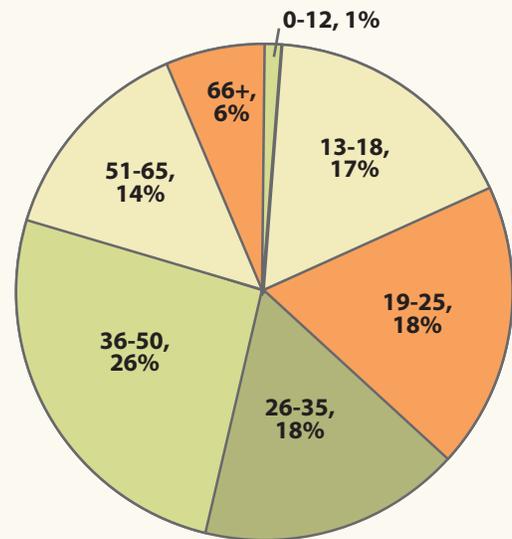
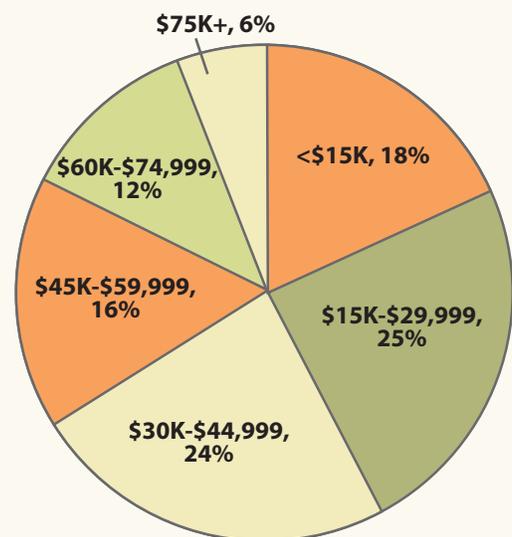


Figure 33: Household income of clients/patrons
Averages for 36 centers



⁵ Totals for gender identification exceeded 100 percent, so we display the data in a table rather than a pie chart.

⁶ United States Census Bureau, 2007.

⁷ Funders interested in targeting specific communities and populations can contact MAP to access the survey data to find the centers engaged with those groups.

Figure 34: Highest education completed of adult patrons/clients
Averages for 32 centers

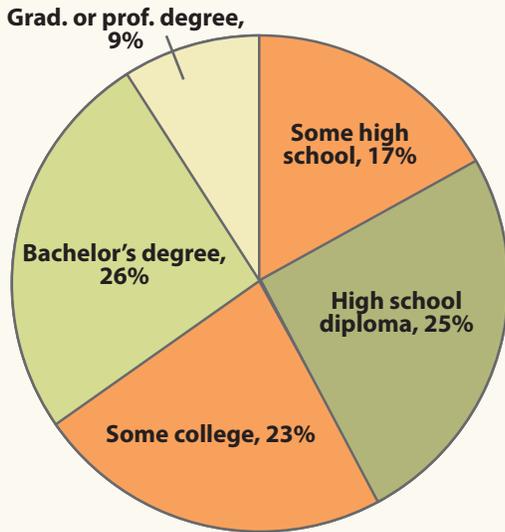
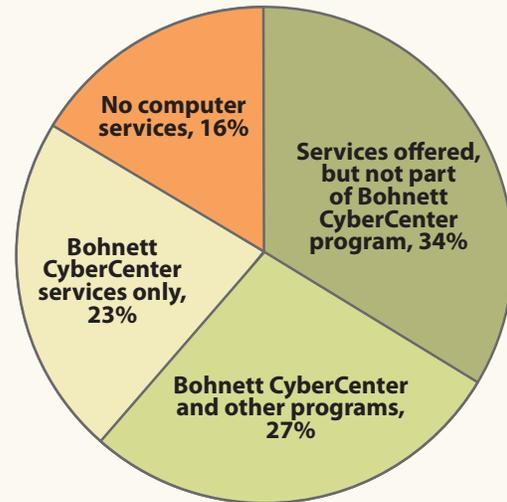


Figure 35: Centers offering computer services
% of centers (64 centers)



Computer Services and Programs⁸

Nearly 85 percent of LGBT community centers provide patrons with some type of computer services or programs. The remaining 15 percent do not provide these services for a variety of reasons, including lack of money to purchase and maintain equipment (70 percent of these centers listed this factor), lack of physical space to locate the equipment (70 percent), lack of staff or volunteer time to run programs or provide upkeep (50 percent), lack of staff or volunteer expertise to oversee services (20 percent), and a limited number of operating hours (20 percent). Establishing new computer programs and services at these centers would be difficult in the short-term, given the range of constraints that they currently face.

Exactly half of the centers in the survey are part of the David Bohnett Foundation's CyberCenter program, and about one-third offer computer programs and services but are not part of the Cyber Center program (see *Figure 35*). This section of the report compares differences between centers that are part of the CyberCenter program (referred to as "Bohnett centers" in the text and figures below) and those that are not, but still provide some computer services (referred to as "other centers").

As *Table 4* shows, the average Bohnett center has more computers and printers than the average other center, and generally newer equipment. In a typical week, the average Bohnett center serves nearly 100 additional patrons and clients than the average other center.

Table 4: Numbers and ages of computer equipment
Averages for 54 centers

	David Bohnett CyberCenter community centers	Other community centers
No. of computers	13	4
Age of computers	3 years	5 years
No. of printers	3	2
Age of printers	3 years	3 years
Monthly users	254	158

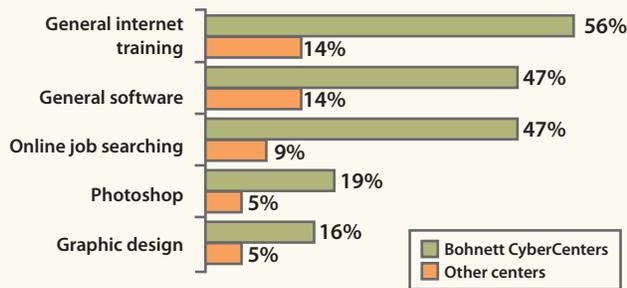
Almost all the Bohnett centers (96 percent) offer programs from the Microsoft Office software suite (e.g., Word, PowerPoint, Excel), compared to 82 percent of the other centers. Eight of the Bohnett centers also offer several Adobe programs, including PageMaker and Photoshop. (With one or two exceptions, the other centers only offered the Microsoft programs.)

Nearly 75 percent of both Bohnett centers and other centers offer patrons high-speed Internet connections, either through DSL or cable lines. Interestingly, survey respondents at Bohnett centers were slightly more likely to know what kind of Internet connection their center had. Bohnett centers are also slightly more likely to offer wireless Internet connections than the other centers (75 percent compared to 68 percent).

⁸ The David Bohnett Foundation's CyberCenter program provides funding for computer equipment at 54 LGBT community centers and college campuses nationwide. The Foundation asked MAP and CenterLink to include survey questions specifically related to this program to help evaluate its impact on community center patrons and clients.

As *Figure 36* shows, the Bohnett centers are most likely to offer computer-training programs related to general Internet use (56 percent of Bohnett centers), general software use (47 percent), and on-line job searching (47 percent). These three services were the most likely to be offered by the other centers, as well, but at much lower rates: 14 percent each for Internet and software use and 9 percent for online job searching. Overall, few of the other centers offered training programs.

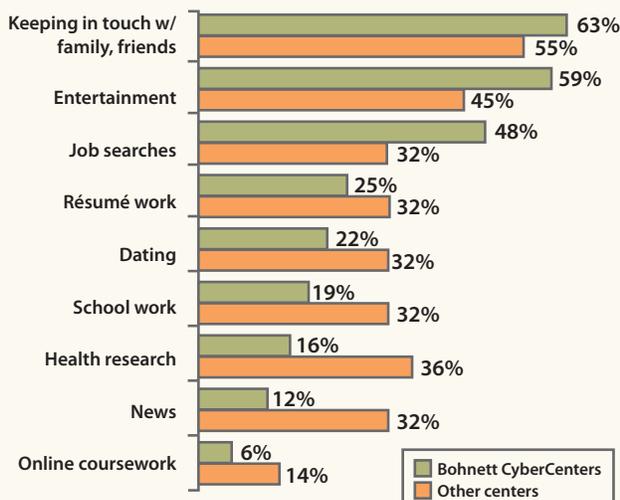
Figure 36: Types of computer training offered



Keeping in touch with family and friends and general entertainment were the top activities of patrons at both Bohnett and other centers, as *Figure 37* shows. Looking for a job online was also a top use for both types of centers, although it was higher at Bohnett centers (48 percent) compared to other centers (32 percent). At the same time, the other centers indicated that their patrons use computer resources for working on résumés, doing school work, researching health issues, keeping up-to-date on the news, and completing online coursework at higher rates than patrons at the Bohnett centers. And overall, although patrons at both types of centers frequently use computer resources for recreational purposes, the data show that Bohnett center patrons are more likely to engage in these activities compared to patrons at other centers.

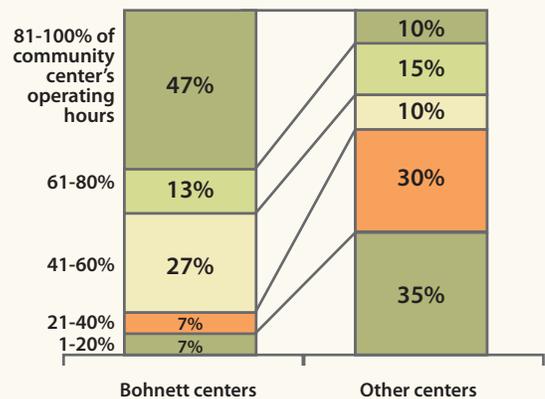
Figure 37: Top patron computer activities

% of centers listing activity as one of top three



We also found differences when looking at how often computer resources are being used at the two different types of centers. Bohnett centers receive much more use, with 60 percent reporting that their computer equipment is being used for at least 61 percent of the community center's total opening hours, compared to 25 percent of other centers reporting a similar rate of use. At the other end of the spectrum, only 14 percent of the Bohnett centers report that their computer equipment is being used less than 40 percent of the community center's total operating hours; 65 percent of the other centers report this rate of use (see *Figure 38*).

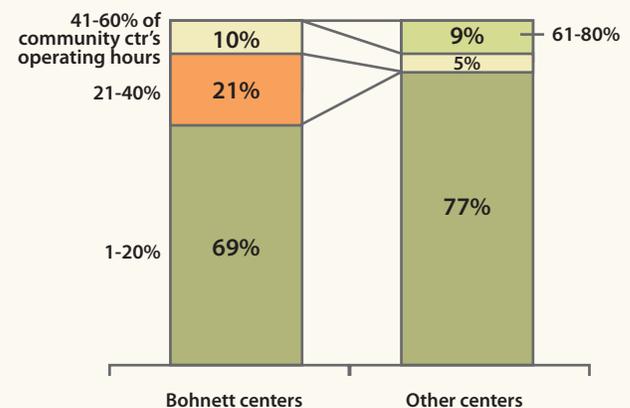
Figure 38: How often computer equipment is being used
% of centers in each range



Even though other centers offer fewer computer resources compared to Bohnett centers, both types report that most of the time patrons do not need to wait to use the equipment. For example, 69 percent of the Bohnett centers reported that patrons had to wait to use the equipment for less than 20 percent of the community center's total operating hours; 77 percent of the other centers reported a similar wait time (see *Figure 39*).

Figure 39: How often there is a wait to use computers

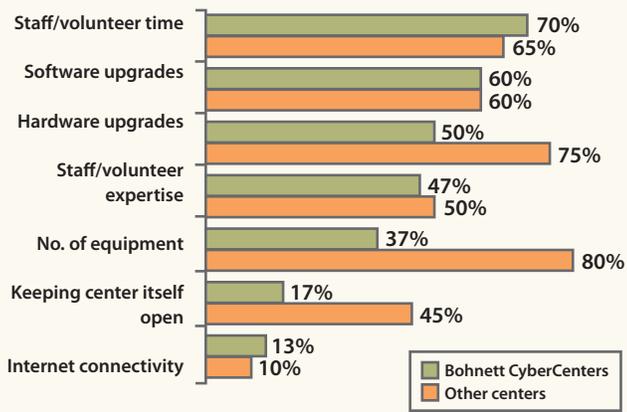
% of centers in each range



Taken together, the information presented in Figures 38-39 suggests that the Bohnett CyberCenter program is a popular service at LGBT community centers. At the same time, the fact that other centers show lower usage rates of computer equipment does not necessarily mean that the demand for these services does not exist in these communities. Instead, it likely indicates that the other centers do not have enough (or new enough) equipment to draw in large numbers of users.

In fact, *Figure 40* shows that a limited number of equipment and basic hardware upgrades are the other centers' biggest challenges to maximizing their computer programs and services. Eighty percent of the other centers listed equipment shortages as a challenge, compared to 37 percent of Bohnett centers. Similarly, 75 percent of the other centers listed hardware upgrades as a challenge, compared to 50 percent of Bohnett centers. The Bohnett centers' biggest challenges include having adequate staff or volunteers to manage or oversee computer services (70 percent of Bohnett centers listed this challenge, compared to 65 percent of other centers) and needing software upgrades (60 percent of both Bohnett and other centers listed this as a challenge). Many other centers were also concerned with keeping the community center itself open, which was much less of a challenge for Bohnett centers, suggesting that the latter are more established and stable organizations.

Figure 40: Challenges to maximizing computer resources and services
% of centers indicating challenge

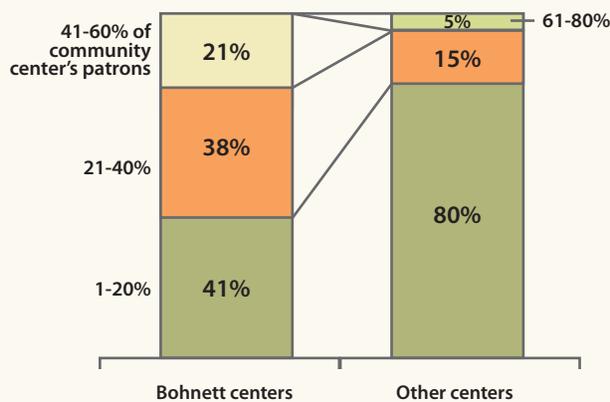


Several of the other centers added comments to their survey responses about their need for better and additional computer equipment. One center said, "Our computers are very old and slow. They are not able to take advantage of the speed of our Internet service. We only have two computers available, and often they are both in use. We could definitely use an upgrade." Another stated, "We don't have designated public computers but we make available our office computer for those who need them...particularly during non-office hours."

While conducting the survey over the telephone with one center, which is not part of the Bohnett program, its executive director stated that she had 93 youth waiting to use the six computers in her center. She said that patrons generally sign up to use the computer in 15-minute increments, because of the consistently high demand for the stations. She also said that most of the time the youth will sit four to a computer.

Figure 41 shows that community centers that are part of the Bohnett Foundation's CyberCenter Network are more likely to report that patrons use only the computer resources when visiting their centers. For example, 38 percent of Bohnett centers report that 21 to 40 percent of community center patrons are primarily interested in computer services, compared to just 15 percent of the other centers. Even more striking, 80 percent of the other centers report that only 1 to 20 percent of all community center patrons are primarily interested in using computer services, compared to 41 percent of Bohnett centers.

Figure 41: Percent of clients who patronize community center primarily to use computer services
% of centers in each range



Just as we asked for the demographics of their community centers' patrons and clients, we also asked survey respondents for the demographics of patrons specifically using computer resources. One-third of the Bohnett centers and one-half of the other centers do not track this demographic information, and only a few of these groups offered estimates for these questions. Of the centers that do collect this information, very few formally surveyed their patrons (16 percent of the Bohnett centers and 9 percent of the other centers), choosing instead to rely on intake form information (38 percent of Bohnett centers and 14 percent of other centers) or data from staff or volunteer observations (34 percent of Bohnett centers and 41 percent of other centers).

With those caveats in mind, *Table 5* and *Figures 42-45* below show data on the gender identity, race/ethnicity, age, household income, and highest educational level attained of computer services patrons and clients at Bohnett centers and other centers.⁹

The average other center serves a higher percentage of women compared to the average Bohnett center (45 percent vs. 37 percent), and also has a higher percentage of transgender patrons (14 percent vs. 8 percent). Bohnett centers serve a higher percentage of people of color compared to other centers (47 percent vs. 40 percent). But overall, given the statistic cited earlier that 69 percent of the US population is white, both types of computer centers are serving a relatively large proportion of people of color. Most users of computer equipment at both types of centers are between ages 13 and 35 and have a household income of less than \$30,000.

Finally, we asked respondents to estimate how many clients had access to a computer at home. Unfortunately, very few centers answered this question. Understanding this information could help some community centers provide more relevant services for their patrons, as well as make a stronger case for funders to support these services and programs.

Table 5: Gender identification of computer services and programs clients/patrons

	Female		Male		Transgender	
	Bohnett	Other	Bohnett	Other	Bohnett	Other
High	77%	75%	95%	90%	30%	60%
Median	40%	50%	60%	50%	5%	6%
Average	37%	45%	61%	52%	8%	14%
Low	5%	10%	23%	25%	1%	1%

Note: The low statistics exclude zero values.

Figure 42: Race/ethnicity of computer services and programs patrons/clients

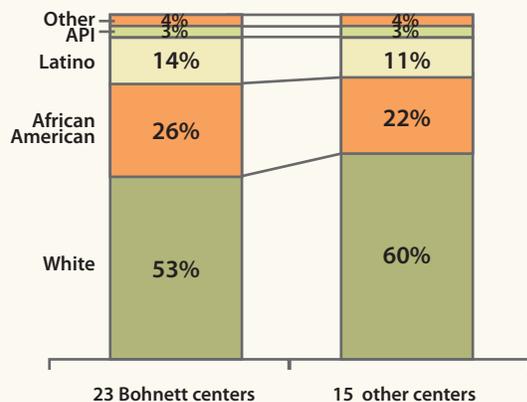


Figure 43: Age of computer services and programs patrons/clients

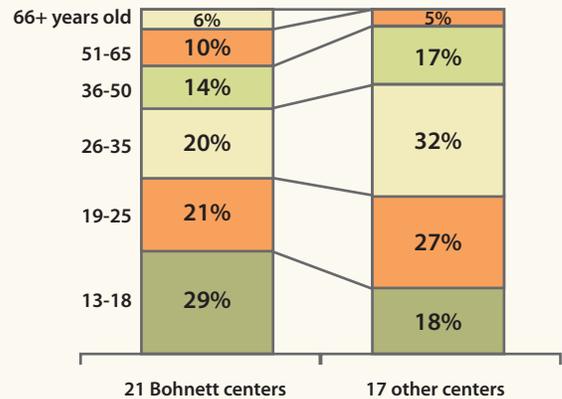


Figure 44: Household income of computer services and programs clients/patrons

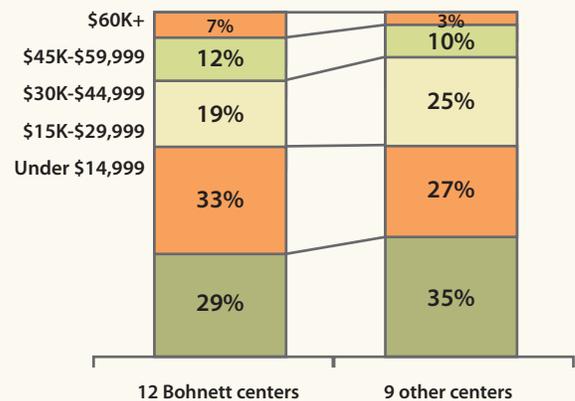
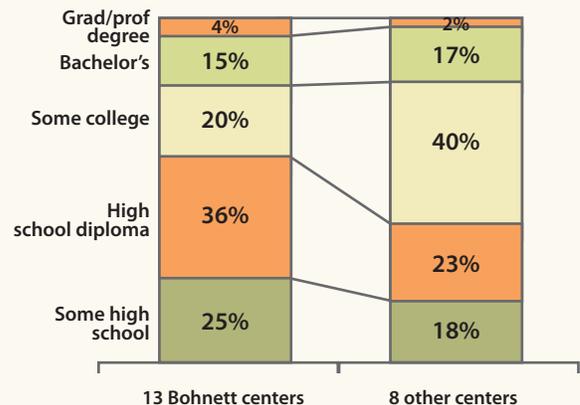


Figure 45: Highest education completed of adult computer services and programs patrons/clients

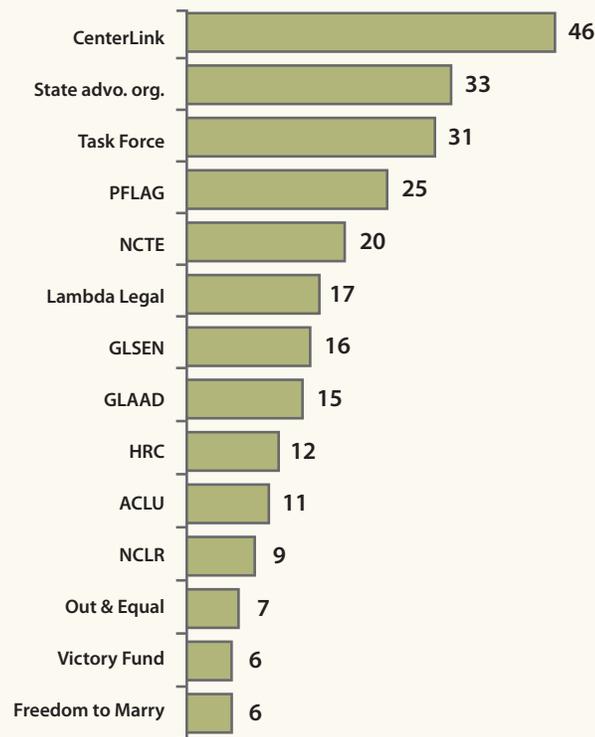


⁹ Totals for gender identification exceeded 100 percent, so we display the data in a table rather than a pie chart.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Not surprisingly, LGBT community centers rely on CenterLink more than any other LGBT movement organization for technical assistance. *Figure 46* shows that 46 centers said they received help from CenterLink in the past 12 months. After CenterLink, 33 centers said they received support from their statewide advocacy organization, and 31 listed the Task Force. Twenty or more centers also indicated working with PFLAG and the National Center for Transgender Equality in the past year. *Figure 46* provides a full list of technical assistance providers included in the survey and the number of community centers receiving services from each.

Figure 46: Number of centers (out of 68) receiving services or technical assistance from...

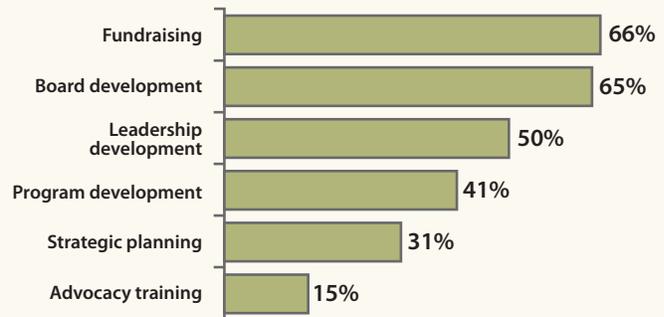


Note: Three centers receive services or TA from Pride at Work, AFL-CIO; another three from NBJC; and two centers receive services or TA from Immigration Equality.

We also asked about the types of technical assistance centers would like to receive from CenterLink in the future. *Figure 47* shows that fundraising assistance tops the list, followed by help with board development, leadership development, and program development. Strategic planning help and advocacy training were at the bottom of the technical assistance list.

The low number of votes for strategic planning help is not surprising, considering that 60 percent of the community centers say they already have a strategic plan. Further, nearly half (46 percent) of the centers that currently lack a strategic plan said they were working

Figure 47: Top technical assistance and training priorities
% of centers listing service as one of top three wanted from CenterLink

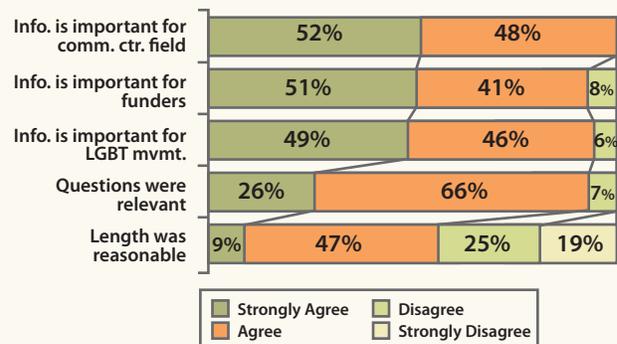


on creating one. Most centers (56 percent) also have development plans in place, and similar to strategic plans, many (32 percent) of those that do not currently have a plan are working to create one.

Survey Evaluation and Future Research

The survey's final question asked respondents what they thought of the survey itself. As *Figure 48* shows, all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the information collected in the survey was important for the community center field to know. Further, most agreed or strongly agreed that: the information was important for the larger LGBT movement to know (95 percent); the information was important for funders to know (92 percent); and, the questions were relevant to their work (92 percent). Although a majority of survey respondents (56 percent) thought that the survey's length was reasonable, many also thought it was too long. One respondent spoke for many others when she said, "The time commitment for this survey seemed really big for busy people."

Figure 48: Survey feedback



At the same time, some of those who expressed concern about the survey's length qualified their comments to some degree. For example, one respondent, after attempting to complete the survey a few times, stated, "This [survey] really shows me how much we don't know about ourselves. And these are things we should know."

Similarly, another respondent noted, “We’re realizing we need to start collecting [demographic information] for ourselves, our funders, our community. This survey will serve as a good model for what we should be collecting, and how.”

Another respondent said, “I started filling this out, and truly when the survey started asking me about money figures and such, I had to stop. We currently do not have an Executive Director and I have no access to much of this information. To tell you the truth, I got more depressed the more I delved into this survey, because I [just don’t have] the information that you need.” Similarly, another noted, “This was a very difficult survey for an organization that is currently trying to open its doors. I found myself overwhelmed by what we have not yet done or even considered.”

Several respondents suggested that MAP and CenterLink should divide future versions of the survey into distinct sections (e.g., finance, programs, demographics), each with its own timeline. Centers could then more easily divide up the labor required to complete it. Others suggested shorter surveys for small or start-up centers. Although we have not yet determined the format of future versions of the survey, changes will be made to reduce the time needed to complete it.

CONCLUSION

Despite the key roles that LGBT community centers can play in towns, cities, and the LGBT movement, many are small institutions with few or no paid staff members. Staff turnover is high, making it difficult for community centers (especially those located in rural or otherwise isolated areas) to grow stable, well-funded operations. Many centers also do not have the ability to easily track or accurately report on their finances or the people they are serving.

The following programs and interventions could help overcome these (and other) challenges:

- **Fundraising capacity development:** This type of training should be tailored to centers based on their financial size. The smallest centers need help raising money from individuals and foundations, while the largest need help navigating public sources of support. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work for the field.
- **Staff and board recruiting:** Centers need help recruiting diverse, qualified people to their staffs and boards. Low-cost ways to improve current recruitment strategies include developing common job descriptions for basic center positions, and disseminating information on best practices for recruiting staff or board members. Further, targeted funding to increase salaries would likely help reduce turnover rates among staff.

- **Staff and board training:** We found that half of all community centers in the survey spend less than \$3,000 on staff training in a typical year. Centers themselves identified board training as a top priority in the near term. Given other efforts in the LGBT movement (and in the nonprofit sector in general) to develop and train staffs and boards, foundations could support the community center field to review these other resources and adapt them for community center use.

- **Improved demographic and financial data:** To most effectively serve their clients and patrons, centers need to know which groups of people in their communities are most in need of their services. And to improve their prospects of receiving public grants or private donations, centers need to more accurately track their financial information and be better able to report it to potential donors. The community center field could develop programs to perform community needs assessments and track client demographics, as well as train the field in nonprofit financial and accounting practices. Again, these programs likely can be based on systems that other nonprofits already use.

- **Connecting community centers with ally organizations:** Our survey findings suggest that more can be done to connect community centers with statewide LGBT advocates and local LGBT-friendly religious organizations. The field could develop programs and trainings to help community centers more frequently and effectively work with the Equality Federation (the umbrella group of statewide advocacy organizations) and the religious outreach programs at national LGBT organizations. Given their relatively small financial size, community centers can increase their political reach through such partnerships.

To bring attention to the above issues and the role LGBT community centers play in their communities, MAP and CenterLink plan to conduct this survey on a regular, ongoing basis. We believe collecting this data will bring more attention to these organizations, as well as help them grow as individual institutions and players in the larger LGBT movement for social and political equality.

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PARTICIPATING CENTERS

Arizona

Prescott Pride Center

PO Box 3765
Prescott, AZ 86302
(928) 445-8800
www.prescottpridecenter.com

Wingspan

425 E 7th St
Tucson, AZ 85705
(520) 624-1779
www.wingspan.org

California

Bienestar

5326 E Beverly Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90022
(323) 727-7896
www.bienestar.org

Billy DeFrank LGBT Community Center

938 The Alameda
San Jose, CA 95126
(408) 293-2429
www.defrank.org

The Center OC

12752 Garden Grove Blvd, Ste 106
Garden Grove, CA 92843
(714) 534-0862
www.thecenteroc.org

Desert Pride Community Center

611 S Palm Canyon Dr
Palm Springs, CA 92264
(760) 327-2313
www.desertpridecenter.org

The Diversity Center

PO Box 8280
Santa Cruz, CA 95061
(831) 425-5422
www.diversitycenter.org

L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center

1625 N Scharder Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90028
(323) 993-7400
www.lagaycenter.org

Lighthouse Community Center

1217 A St
Hayward, CA 94541
(510) 881-8167
www.lgbtlighthouse.com

Outlet Program

711 Chruch St
Mountain View, CA 94041
(650) 965-2020
www.projectoutlet.org

Pacific Center for Human Growth

2712 Telegraph Ave
Berkeley, CA 94705
(510) 548-8283
www.pacificcenter.org

Pacific Pride Foundation

125 E Haley St, #A-11
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 963-3636
www.pacificpridefoundation.org

Rainbow Community Center

3024 Willow Pass Rd, Ste 200
Concord, CA 94519
(925) 692-0090
www.rainbowcc.org

Sacramento Gay & Lesbian Center

1927 L St
Sacramento, CA 95811
(916) 442-0185
www.saccenter.org

San Francisco LGBT Community Center

1800 Market St
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 865-5664
<http://sfcenter.org>

Solano Pride Center

1125 Missouri St, Ste 203D
Fairfield, CA 94533
(707) 427-2356
www.solanopride.org

Stonewall Alliance Center

PO Box 8855
341 Broadway, Suite 416
Chico, CA 95927
(530) 893-3336
www.stonewallchico.org

San Diego LGBT Community Center

PO Box 3357
San Diego, CA 92163
(619) 692-2077
www.thecentersd.org

Ventura County Rainbow Alliance

4567 Telephone Rd, Ste 100
Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 339-6340
www.lgbtventura.org

Colorado

The GLBT Community Center of Colorado

PO Box 9798
Denver, CO 80209
(303) 733-7743
www.glbtcOLORADO.org

Pikes Peak Gay & Lesbian Community Center (The Pride Center)

2508 E Bijou St
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(719) 471-4429
www.yourpridecenter.org

District of Columbia

The DC Center

1111 14th St NW, Sutie 350
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 682-2245
www.thedccenter.org

Florida

Compass

7600 S Dixie Hwy
West Palm Beach, FL 33405
(561) 533-9699
www.compassglcc.com

Gay and Lesbian Community Center of South Florida

1717 N Andrews Ave
Ft Lauderdale, FL 33311
(954) 463-9005
www.glccsf.org

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Community Center of Central Florida

946 N Mills Ave
Orlando, FL 32803
(407) 228-8272
www.glbcc.org

Metro Centers

3170 3rd Ave N
St. Petersburg, FL 33713
www.metrocenters.org

Georgia

YouthPride

1017 Edgewood Ave
Atlanta, GA 30307
(404) 521-9711
www.youthpride.org

Illinois

Center on Halsted

3656 N Halsted
Chicago, IL 60613
(773) 472-6469
www.centeronhalsted.org

Louisiana

Lesbian and Gay Community Center of New Orleans

2114 Decatur St
New Orleans, LA 70116
(504) 945-1103
www.lgccno.net

Maryland

Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Baltimore

241 W Chase St
Baltimore, MD 21201
(410) 837-5445
www.glccb.org

Michigan

Affirmations

290 W Nine Mile Rd
Ferndale, MI 48220
(248) 398-7105
www.goaffirmations.org

Kalamazoo Gay Lesbian Resource Center

629 Pioneer St
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 349-4234
www.kglrc.org

Karibu House

17800 Woodward Ave, LL4
Detroit, MI 48203
(313) 865-2170 ext 3
www.karibuhouse.org

YWCA Out & Affirmation Center

508 Pleasant St
St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 985-9622
www.outcenter.org

Minnesota

District 202

1601 Nicollet Ave, S
Minneapolis, MN 55411
(612) 871-5559
www.dist202.org

OutFront Minnesota

310 38th St East, #204
Minneapolis, MN 55409
(612) 822-0127
www.outfront.org

Missouri

The Center Project

c/o Unitarian Universalist Church
2615 Shepard Blvd
Columbia, MO 65201
www.thecenterproject.org

The LGBT Community Center of Metropolitan St. Louis

PO Box 19071
St. Louis, MO 63118
(618) 222-7431
www.info@findmycenter.com

Nevada

Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Southern Nevada

953 E Sahara Ave, B31
Las Vegas, NV 89104
(702) 733-9800
www.thecenterlv.com

New Hampshire

Seacoast Outright

PO Box 842
Portsmouth, NH 03801
(603) 431-1013
www.seacoastoutright.org

New Jersey

Pride Connections Center of NJ (Hudson Pride Connections)

32 Jones St
Jersey City, NJ 07306
(201) 963-4779
www.prideconnections.org

New Mexico

New Mexico GLBTQ Centers

PO Box 2371
Las Cruces, NM 88004
8882869306
www.newmexicoglbtqcenters.org

New York

Audre Lorde Project

85 S Oxford St
Brooklyn, NY 11217
(718) 596-0342
www.alp.org

Bronx Community Pride Center

448 E 149th St
Bronx, NY 10455
(718) 292-4368
www.bronxpride.org

Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley

875 E Main St, Ste 500
Rochester, NY 14605
(585) 244-8640
www.gayalliance.org

Gay & Lesbian Youth Services (GLYS) of Western New York

371 Delaware Ave
Buffalo, NY 14202
(716) 855-0221
www.glyswny.org

Hudson Valley LGBTQ Center

PO Box 3994
300 Wall St
Kingston, NY 12402
(845) 331-5300
www.lgbtqcenter.org

The LGBT Community Center - NYC

208 W 13th St
New York, NY 10011
(212) 620-7310
www.gaycenter.org

The Loft

180 E Post Rd, Lower Level
White Plains, NY 10601
(914) 948-2932
www.loftgaycenter.org

Long Island Gay and Lesbian Youth (LIGALY) and The Long Island GLBT Community Center

34 Park Ave
Bay Shore, NY 11706
(631) 665-2300
www.ligaly.org and www.liglbcenter.org

Pride Center of Western New York

18 Trinity Pl
Buffalo, NY 14201
(716) 852-PRIDE
www.pridecenterwny.org

North Carolina

Triangle Community Works

410 N Boylan Ave
Raleigh, NC 27603
(919) 256-3749

www.tcworks.org

Ohio

Center on High

1160 N High St
Columbus, OH 43201
(614) 299-7764

www.stonewallcolumbus.org

Kaleidoscope Youth Center

1904 N High St
Columbus, OH 43201
(614) 294-5437

www.kaleidoscope.org

LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland

6600 Detroit Ave
Cleveland, OH 44102
(216) 651-5428

www.lgbtcleveland.org

Oklahoma

Dennis R. Neill Equality Center

621 E 4th St
Tulsa, OK 74120
(918) 743-4297

www.okeq.org

Herland Sister Resources

2312 NW 39th St
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
(405) 521-9696

www.herlandsisters.org

Oregon

LGBTQ Community Fund (Q Center)

PO Box 2183
Portland, OR 97208
(503) 234-7837

www.pdxqcenter.org

Pennsylvania

William Way Community Center

1315 Spruce St
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 732-2220

www.waygay.org

South Carolina

Harriet Hancock Community Center

1108 Woodrow St
Columbia, SC 29205
(803) 771-7713

www.scpride.org

South Dakota

Centers for Equality

3600 S Minnesota Ave, Ste 1
Sioux Falls, SD 57105
(605) 331-1153

www.glbtccommunitycenter.org

Tennessee

Memphis Gay & Lesbian Community Center

892 S Cooper St
Memphis, TN 38104
(901) 278-6422

www.mglcc.org

OutCentral

PO Box 331935
Nashville, TN 37203
(615) 294-4834

www.outcentral.org

Texas

Out Youth

909 E 49 1/2 St
Austin, TX 78751
(512) 419-1233

www.outyouth.org

OUTstanding Amarillo

PO Box 33561
616 S Harrison
Amarillo, TX 79101
(806) 337-1688

www.outstandingamarillo.org

Resource Center of Dallas

2701 Reagan
Dallas, TX 75219
(214) 510-0144

www.rcdallas.org

Utah

Utah Pride Center

355 N 300, W
Salt Lake City, UT 84103
(801) 539-8800

www.utahpridecenter.org

Vermont

RU12? Community Center

PO Box 5883
Burlington, VT 05402
(802) 860-7812

www.ru12.org

Washington

Rainbow Center

741 St Helens
Tacoma, WA 98402
(253) 383-2318

www.rainbowcntr.org

Wisconsin

Milwaukee LGBT Community Center

315 W Court St
Milwaukee, WI 53212
(414) 271-2656

www.mkelgbt.org

OutReach Inc

600 Williamson St, Ste P1
Madison, WI 53703
(608) 255-8582

www.outreachinc.com

Figure A1: Median and average community centers' budgets



Figure A2: Median and average community centers' budgets; centers with budgets <\$500,000



Figure A3: Median and average community centers' budgets; centers with budgets \$500,000+



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movement advancement project ▶

2215 Market St. • Denver, CO 80205
Fax: 303-292-2155 • www.lgbtmap.org



CENTERLINK
THE COMMUNITY OF LGBT CENTERS

1325 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 700 • Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-824-0450 • www.lgbtcenters.org