

Great turnout for 2011 Family Matters Conference

The 2nd Annual PFP Family Matters Conference took place Saturday, **October 15** in the Widener University Center. It was bedecked with rainbow flags for the occasion! The conference cosponsors were Widener's Center for Social Work Education and the Graduate Program in Human Sexuality.



Over 120 members of the LGBTQ community participated in **workshops and panels** as varied as "Becoming Parents: Negotiating the Transition to Parenthood" with Robin Brennan and PFP board member Andrew Altman to "Adoption Options" with PFP Board Member and Conference Coordinator Marla McCulloch to "Stress Relief for the Whole Family" with Rik and Anna-Sara Fire. [View the complete list of workshops.](#)

Four teenagers with LGBT parents joined us at lunch for the very popular **Ask the Experts!** panel. Questions for the teens ranged from "What's the best and worst thing about having two moms or two dads?" to "What advice do you have for LGBT parents?"



Articulate answers included discussion of having peers think that they were gay or lesbian, and urging parents to be honest and direct when answering kids' questions about their family.

Feedback from conference participants was overwhelmingly positive.

"My son really liked the workshop where we drew art about our family. We look forward to coming to more events in the future," said new member Angelica DeLeon, pictured with her son.



When not in workshops, attendees visited the many **vendor tables** for resources and information. Everything was available from [Equality PA](#) to the [Women's Therapy Center](#) to haircuts by Jacsen Callanan from Flo Designs.

Other vendors included the [Independent Adoption Center](#), [The Philadelphia School](#), [Queer Tees for our Cutie Kids](#), [Say I Do LGBT Wedding Expo](#), Village of Radical Healing, [Wells Fargo Financial Advisor Jayden Sampson](#), [RMA of Philadelphia](#) and attorneys [David Berman](#) and [Jerner & Palmer, PC](#).

While parents enjoyed the conference, kids had fun in the **Kids Zone** with arts and crafts, puzzles and toys. Special thanks to PFP Board Member Robin Matthews for coordinating the kids area, volunteers and activities.

At the end of the day, Jenn Santisi led a percussion workshop for a dozen little drummers and then performed for the group, pictured.



Special thanks to all the board members, presenters, volunteers, the [dmhFund](#) and Widener University for making this event possible!

We've already started planning for next year's conference.

If you'd like to be involved in putting together Family Matters 2012, please e-mail Stephanie at stephanie@phillyfamilypride.org.

Thanks to Allyson Hamm of [Equality PA](#) and PFP's Kelly Durand for the photos!

An advertisement for Cafe Press featuring Philadelphia Family Pride merchandise. It includes a white mug with the PFP logo, a black long-sleeved shirt, a white and red raglan t-shirt, a blue t-shirt, and a white onesie, all with the PFP logo. The logo consists of a rainbow flag and the text "Philadelphia Family Pride".

Visit the **Philly Family Pride Cafe Press** store for your PFP logo gear: adult and kids t-shirts, tote bags, mugs, onesies and more! www.cafepress.com/PhillyFamilyPride

Castle Bounce a hit at OutFEST!

This year, PFP sponsored a castle moon bounce at the Family Zone in the gayborhood as part of this year's OutFEST block party.

Over 75 kids bounced away over the course of the afternoon as parents stood around and chatted - some for hours while the little ones tired themselves out. We also provided Halloween crafts and fun giveaways - including tiny rubber rats and skeleton erasers.



At 2pm, a few of us walked over to watch the unveling of the [historical marker](#) in front of Giovanni's Room to mark the oldest LGBT bookstore in the country.

Back at the Family Zone, Community Coordinator Stephanie Haynes and PFP Board Chair Marc Berman talked to passers by, handed out conference flyers, sold [PFP t-shirts](#) and signed up new members to our e-mail list. Welcome!

PFP member Lauren Weil stopped by to help out and let folks know about New Hope Celebrates, the New Hope Pride celebration - set for May 14-20, 2012.



PFP Getting Ready for 2012

Seeking Board Nominations

Do you want to help make our great organization even better? We're looking for folks with ideas and enthusiasm to join our friendly, talented board for 2012.

Responsibilities include attending nine board meetings a year, participating in planning discussions, and attending major events. Find out how giving a little bit of time makes a big difference for LGBTQ parents and our kids.



For more information on various board positions, or to submit your name, please contact PFP Board Chair [Marc Berman](#) by December 1.

Women, people of color and members of the transgender community encouraged to apply.

Extreme Makeover: Website Edition

Look for a redesigned PFP website in early 2012. New features will include an event driven home page, and more frequent photo updates from recent events. We're also looking to you, our members, for suggestions. Please e-mail PFP Board Member Bill Stevers (bill@phillyfamilypride.org) and let him know your ideas.

Membership Renewals

We're going green again this year and saving money by **e-mailing our membership renewals**. You'll be able to renew electronically with Paypal, send us a check, or renew in person at the New Year's Day Brunch.

Look for your membership renewal in the coming weeks. Please renew by January 1 and keep PFP strong. (If you joined after October 10 this year, your membership is good for 2012. If you're not a member, [join today!](#))

Member Milestones

♥ Melissa Smith and Rosanne DiGiovanni welcomed their first child, Colin, on September 13, 2011, a little earlier than expected. He was 3 lbs, but is now a healthy 6 lbs and growing like a weed.

♥ Despite the snow, family and friends of Marcy Boroff and Maria Veneziano gathered at Mishkan Shalom on October 29th to celebrate as their daughter, Hannah Adams Boroff, became a Bat Mitzvah. The weather was deemed appropriate, as Hannah's Torah portion was the story of Noah and the Ark.



♥ Kala Pierson, Deirdre Cusack and Jeremy

Peirce (parents of Noah Cusack) were married on the 10th of September at Philadelphia's Magic Gardens.

♥ Marla McCulloch and Jennifer Santisi celebrated their 10th anniversary on October 31st and their daughter Michaela's 7th birthday on October 20th.



If you have a milestone you'd like included in a future newsletter, please [e-mail Stephanie](#).



UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, November 5: Meet other PFP families at Valley Green Inn at 10 a.m. for a [fall hike](#) in the Wissahickon.

Sunday, November 6: [Gazillion Bubbles](#) show at the Merriam Theater. Tickets are sold out!

Saturday and Sunday, November 12-13: Back by popular demand - PFP's [Neighborhood Potlucks](#). Find one near you and RSVP today!

Saturday, November 19: Meetup with the infant/toddler group at Smith Playhouse, 10 a.m. [More info](#).

Saturday, December 3: Join PFP members for a [Holiday Party for Grown-Ups](#) at the home of Marc & David Berman in Ambler.

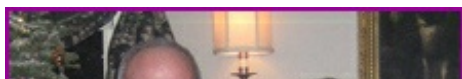
Sunday, January 1, 2012: Save the date for our annual New Year's Day Potluck Brunch, held again this year at Mishkan Shalom in Roxborough, 11am - 2pm.

Keep an eye on your e-mail and our [Facebook page](#) and [Twitter feed](#) for more upcoming events.



PFP Member Family Profile

PFP members Bob Brown and Sam DiFalco are the proud dads of Michael, 16, a 10th grader at The School at Church Farm and Nicholas, 13, a middle

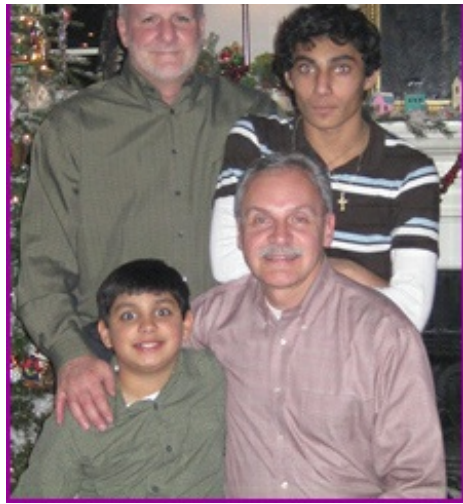


son of Sharon Fann and Nicholas, 15, a middle school student at the Lewis School. They live in Langhorne and first joined PFP in 1998.

Bob is a Human Resources Manager presently working at the Fashion Institute of Technology in NYC. Sam is a retired Human Resources professional.

Michael spends his time playing soccer, basketball and track and recently was on the teen panel at the Family Matters Conference. Nicholas enjoys playing soccer and his video games.

The couple adopted Michael from Russia when he was 2 from an orphanage he was in since birth. They adopted Nicholas from Romania when he was 2 and was in a foster home.



"We joined PFP so that we could meet other gay parents like ourselves. I think growing up in a gay household has taught the boys respect for others who may be different and acceptance of all people." Bob said.

Their favorite PFP events are the neighborhood potlucks, which they have hosted a few times. "It gives us a chance to connect with local gay parents we have not had the opportunity to meet," said Sam.

The Brown-DiFalco's enjoy joining their friends from Philadelphia and beyond at Family Week in Provincetown, and have done so since their boys were toddlers.

"We've built such a strong bond with families like our own. I think it is important for our sons to see other gay families and know that we are not that different after all," added Bob.



Suggestions for what else we should include in our newsletter? Want to sponsor our next issue?

Contact Stephanie Haynes, PFP Community Coordinator at stephanie@phillyfamilypride.org.

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