

Aging with Pride

National Health, Aging, Sexuality and Gender Study

Summer 2016 Newsletter

Welcome

We are very excited at *Aging with Pride: National Health, Aging, Sexuality and Gender Study*. We have just finished the second year of the longitudinal study and nearly all of our participants completed the second questionnaire. Our third questionnaire will be mailed in the Fall of 2016. Soon we will be able to analyze study findings to see what predicts changes in health over time for LGBT older adults. We know LGBT older adults are a resilient population and we will be able to see what characteristics such as health behaviors, life events, or support networks helped them age successfully, and for some, what characteristics may have impeded their positive aging.



Our new Center, the LGBT+ National Aging Research Center, serving as a clearinghouse for exciting new research developments in LGBT aging and cross-generational issues in our communities, has been created. Please [click here](#) for a PDF of our Center's new fact sheet: **Addressing Social, Economic, and Health Disparities of LGBT Older Adults and Best Practices in Data Collection.**

Our research team continues to disseminate research findings through widely read publications and conference presentations so that the valuable life experiences of LGBT older adults can make a difference now and in the generations to come. Please visit our website (Age-Pride.org) for our publications and other information.

Best wishes,



Karen I. Fredriksen-Goldsen, PhD

Professor

Director, LGBT+ National Aging Research Center

PI, *Aging with Pride: National Health, Aging, Sexuality and Gender Study*

University of Washington

Quick Notes

Just released: *Generations*, the journal of the American Society on Aging, released their first issue on LGBT aging this summer, featuring the innovative work occurring across the nation to better serve LGBT older adults. Many *Aging with Pride* community partners contributed to this issue. [Click here](#) to visit their website and see this special issue.

Just released: *An Aging World: 2015*, the latest in a series of reports published by the U.S. Census Bureau, includes information about LGBT older adults for the first time. [Click here](#) to view this report and the article *Global Aging and Minority Populations: Healthcare Access, Quality of Care, and Use of Services* by Karen Fredriksen-Goldsen.

Upcoming: *The Gerontologist*, a leading, national gerontological journal is publishing a special supplement on LGBT aging. It will showcase the findings from *Aging with Pride* and report on the science of conducting cutting-edge research with LGBT older adults, their kin and caregivers.

PBS's Next Avenue named Karen Fredriksen-Goldsen as a top 50 Influencer in Aging. [Click here](#) to see the full list of the 50 top influencers in aging in America.

Welcome, Kathleen Sullivan, PhD, a longtime national advocate for LGBT seniors and their families and caregivers, who has joined our team as Executive Director of Generations with Pride. Kathleen will be leading Generations with Pride to develop and test the first evidenced-based training and support cross-generational programs in the country designed to address the growing needs of LGBT seniors and the practitioners who are serving them as well as the generations to come.

*“The LGBT community has stepped up
in the past to address coming out, AIDS,
and civil rights.*

The next wave has to be aging.”

63-year-old participant



Updates from our Community Partners



GRIOT (Gay Reunion In Our Time) Circle, a partner with *Aging with Pride: National Health, Aging, Sexuality and Gender Study*, seeks to provide a healthy and non-discriminatory environment for aging LGBTQ People of Color. Based in Brooklyn, GRIOT Circle is an organization which applies a comprehensive service modality that provides LGBTQ People of Color with

services, space, and programs in a culturally competent manner. As a marginalized and nearly invisible population, GRIOT Circle recognizes that LGBTQ People of Color experience different and unique barriers compared to the non-Hispanic White LGBTQ aging communities. Furthermore, they recognize that every community and population warrants distinct organizations and services to effectively serve them.

This organization works to honor and preserve histories and traditions, while acknowledging and discussing the stigma and oppression of racism and homophobia. The organization reaches out to the community by sending Ambassadors, who are members, to connect with potential members and institutions which may otherwise be difficult to reach. These Ambassadors are valuable outreach partners and provide access to training and information services. GRIOT Circle and *Aging with Pride* have come together to examine and understand the difficulties these underserved populations face.

Working together, GRIOT Circle has helped *Aging with Pride* further their research in the field of LGBTQ aging, and in turn gained more information regarding the risks of the populations they serve. Among others, GRIOT Circle provides health and wellness programs, case management services as well as leadership and advocacy tools and opportunities to its members in an open and affirming environment. *Aging with Pride* is happy and excited to be partnering with such a pioneering organization.

Katherine Acey
Executive Director, GRIOT Circle

Updates from our Community Partners

Los Angeles LGBT Center's Senior Services Program

The Los Angeles LGBT Center's Senior Services Department officially started in 1998 when a small group of seniors approached the Center about creating social events for older LGBT adults. They felt Center programs only targeted youth while adults over 50 felt left out and invisible. Soon small social events were created and run by volunteers until funding was allocated to hire a full-time staff person to provide a more dedicated program. The program quickly grew to 100 members and a number of annual events were started including the first Senior Prom held in 1999. Approximately 50 LGBT seniors attended the first prom at the Village. Today the annual Senior Prom is the premier event for the department with over 300 LGBT older adults in attendance.



**LOS
ANGELES
LGBT
CENTER**

Now eighteen years later the Senior Services Department provides 3,500 LGBT older adults approximately 140 social, educational, and enrichment activities a month at four locations including; The Village, Triangle Square Apartments, MCC in the Valley, and its newest location Mi Centro in East L.A. Notable programs include the LGBT Veteran's Initiative, the nation's first program ensuring LGBT senior vets are awarded the benefits they are due and Comunidad, serving east L.A.'s LGBT senior Latin community.

In 2014, the Los Angeles LGBT Center became the Social Services partner at Triangle Square Apartments, the nation's first affordable housing project for low-income LGBT seniors 62+. Triangle Square provides 104 units of affordable housing for 109 LGBT seniors and is nationally recognized as the premiere LGBT senior housing project.

In 2019, the Los Angeles LGBT Center is scheduled to open its newest mixed-use facility, the Anita May Rosenstein Campus which will include approximately 100 units of affordable housing for LGBT seniors and a dedicated senior center.

Tripp Mills

Deputy Director of Senior Services, Los Angeles LGBT Center

Pets and the Aging LGBT Population

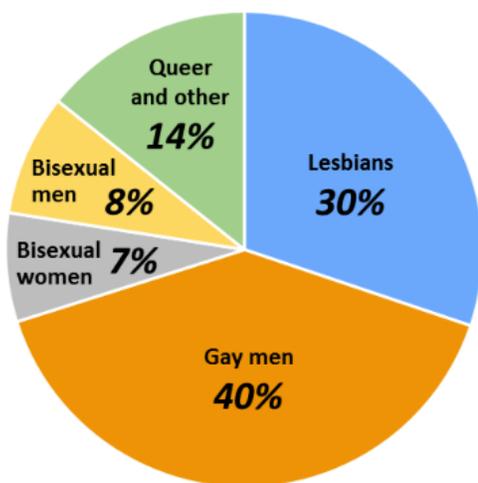
Through surveys and in-person interviews, *Aging with Pride* gathered information from our participants about their pets, and how those pets influence their lives. We learned that pets are very important to the aging LGBT population in exciting and interesting ways. Our participants referred to their pets as their family, their source of love and affection, and even as a reason for living. This is especially important because, as we know from prior research, many LGBT individuals live alone in old age, and may be at an elevated risk for depression.



Our survey gleaned important demographic information about LGBT people who have pets, and provided interesting data regarding perceived social support. We found that midlife and older LGBT adults who are younger, female, have a higher income, and are living with disability are more likely to have a pet. Midlife and older LGBT adults living with a pet report higher levels of perceived social support regardless of their demographic characteristics. The positive association between

having a pet and perceived social support was strong particularly among those with a disability and limited social network. Overall, these findings show that more research needs to be done regarding how pets contribute to mental and physical health of the aging LGBT population.

At a Glance: Findings from *Aging With Pride*



23%
people of color

63%
own their home

17%
transgender

37%
live with disability

36%
4 years of college
or more

43%
live alone

14%
military service

28%
below 200% of
poverty level

Aging with Pride

Aging with Pride: National Health, Aging, Sexuality and Gender Study is the first ever federally-funded and largest on-going national project designed to deepen our understanding of how various life experiences are related to changes in health, aging and well-being over time for LGBT adults 50 years of age and older. Across the nation 2,450 LGBT adults are participating in this ground-breaking project which is a collaboration between 17 community agencies serving LGBT older adults and the LGBT+ National Aging Research Center at the University of Washington. Our community collaborators are Center on Halsted, FORGE Transgender Aging Network, Gay & Lesbian Services Organization, GLBT Generations, GRIOT Circle, LGBT Aging Project/The Fenway Institute, Los Angeles LGBT Center, Mary's House for Older Adults, Inc., Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, Montrose Center, Openhouse, SAGE, SAGE Atlanta/The Health Initiative, SAGE Metro St. Louis, Senior Services, Utah Pride Center, and ZAMI NOBLA.

The Seattle research team includes Karen Fredriksen-Goldsen (Principal Investigator), Hyun-Jun Kim, Charles Emler, Anna Muraco, Chengshi Shiu, Amanda Bryan, Jayn Goldsen, and Sarah Jen.

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