



Funding LGBTQ Youth Executive Summary

The Board of the Delaware Valley Legacy Fund (DVLV) determined that funding youth-serving organizations and programs is a priority in its outreach and grant making efforts. The primary focus of incorporating change to improve the lives of LGBTQ youth centers on the following:

- 1. Decreasing discrimination and prejudice**
- 2. Increasing safety, support, and affirmation**
- 3. Improving the quality of education and access to employment**

The DVLV's Board of Directors and Executive Director believe that schools, social service agencies, religious-based organizations, hospitals and other agencies that serve youth require a greater understanding of the unique issues and challenges facing LGBTQ youth. As research indicates, youth are coming out at earlier ages and as a result organizations are facing growing numbers of LGBTQ youth requiring services.

The multiple levels of homo/bi/transphobia coupled with heterosexism within our society impacts us all, but especially youth who may not have the resources, tools or perceived authority to advocate for themselves. Four out of five LGBTQ students experience verbal, physical and sexual harassment frequently or often in their schools (GLSEN National School Climate Survey, 2005.) These are the very same environments where youth spend a majority of their time and that have the most impact on their development. Youth also witness local and national policies and laws that represent unequal access to human rights for people who identify as LGBTQ.

Now more than ever, institutions that work with youth need to have the tools and resources to provide a supportive and affirming environment. We have an opportunity and responsibility to care for the younger members of our community. On both an immediate and preventative level we can do this by providing resources, education and support to the teachers, parents, physicians, clergy, counselors and other adults who can make a difference in the everyday lives of LGBTQ youth.

Therefore, DVLV wants to support organizations and agencies that address the needs of LGBTQ youth. Please review the accompanying list of organizations and groups that serve the region's LGBTQ youth and families ([The Delaware Valley Legacy Fund Community Resource Guide.](#)) In addition, enclosed in this packet is a report compiled by the *Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues* about programs and institutions that provide support to LGBTQ youth. We hope that you will find this information helpful and we welcome your input and support. **We also look forward to learning more about the efforts of your own philanthropy and the generosity of your institution, corporation, or foundation.**