

Executive Summary of the Rainbow Fund of Bucks County Community Scan 2010

The Rainbow Fund of Bucks County, a newly established fund administered by the Delaware Valley Legacy Fund, seeks to improve the quality of life for the Bucks County LGBTQ community through grantmaking targeting to meet existing service gaps. Governed by a steering committee comprised of local LGBTQ citizens, the Rainbow Fund brings together local expertise and resources in order to identify and meet outstanding community needs.

In 2009, the steering committee of the Rainbow Fund launched a community scan in order to gain a better understanding of the needs and priorities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) residents of Bucks County, Pennsylvania and Hunterdon and Mercer Counties in New Jersey. The Fund collected information through two focus group meetings and three surveys (individually targeting youth, adults, and non-profit organizations) conducted during the fall and winter of 2009. Approximately 100 individuals and 10 community-based organizations participated in this process.

Key priorities identified through this process include:

- Lack of cohesion in regional LGBTQ community/infrequency of community events
- Lack of safe and free gathering places, particularly for youth
- Safety concerns of LGBTQ youth school environments
- Widespread unawareness of existing resources
- Lack of transport or finances in order to access existing services

Key recommendations made include:

- **Physical and/or virtual community centers** to reduce isolation and enhance community connections for LGBTQ people and families;
- **Mentoring programs** and visible adult role models for youth, and support structures for elders.
- **Expanded LGBTQ resources at area schools**
- **Expanded community-wide events**
- **Online bulletin board** for local community resources and information.
- Provide resources and support for **parents of LGBTQ youth**
- Support low cost **counseling services**
- Provide support for **educational scholarships**

- Support establishment of a **toll-free hotline for LGBTQ youth**
- **Expand outreach and marketing of existing programs** and services targeting the LGBTQ communities