2026 Community Report

Marin LGBTQ Center
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Mission

The Marin LGBTQ Center is creating a community where all LGBTQ+ people are valued, respected and empowered to live with authenticity and pride, while providing a safe haven and hub for connections, support and community building in Marin County.

With continued community support and investment, the Marin LGBTQ Center will expand its reach, strengthen its infrastructure, and ensure that no LGBTQ+ person in Marin has to navigate life without support or connections.

Purpose & Vision

Launched in 2024 through the visionary leadership of Rev. Janie Spahr and William Otton, the Marin LGBTQ Center is an activity and communication hub for LGBTQ+ people to find each other, share their experiences, and receive new ideas for living fully, in the face of ongoing prejudice and exclusion. Our purpose is to end the torment of being 'othered' and live the triumph of being ourselves.

LGBTQ+ people of all ages — from trans and nonbinary youth to seniors— are welcomed exactly as they are. People arrive often carrying the weight of rejection, fear, isolation, and find a place where they can build confidence and visibility without having to explain, defend, or dimish who they are.

The Marin LGBTQ Center transforms isolation into belonging and vulnerability into courage. We create spaces where people can remove the masks they have worn to survive and reconnect with their authentic selves.

> "I took my kids to the Marin lgbtq family camp every summer so they could see they were not alone. We stood speechless at the registration table seeing the meadow filled with ALL queer families. In that moment, we set down the pain of exclusion and stepped into that meadow with the joy of belonging."

We cultivate allies throughout Marin County that serve as both an anchor and a bridge connecting people to resources, care, and support when they need it most.

Every life touched by the Center becomes part of a larger legacy: proof that love, affirmation, and community have the power to outlast fear and exclusion.

Organizational Capacity & Accomplishments

Impact Highlights to Date

- 11-member working Board of Directors with active committees
- Youth program (Q-Nest) serving approximately 40 students bi-monthly
- Participation in 14 Pride and LGBTQ+ community events across Marin
- Mailing list of over 600 community members
- $150,000 raised in startup support
- Over $100,000 raised at inaugural Annual Awards Luncheon (203 attendees, 30 sponsors, 40 volunteers)

Infrastructure

The Marin LGBTQ Center is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization led by a diverse, working Board of Directors of 11 members, elected officers, and five active committees. Strategic priorities are developed through board retreats and ongoing planning. The Center has established a strong operational infrastructure, including banking relationships and formal fiscal policies to ensure accountability and stewardship.

A Volunteer Coordinator supports a growing volunteer program that expands engagement community across the community. The Center has secured shared office space at the Multicultural Center of Marin in San Rafael, providing a accessible and welcoming operational home. Core communication and administrative systems have been established, including donor management, phone infrastructure, and outreach tools.

Programs & Community Events

In 2025, the Marin LGBTQ Center launched Q-Nest, a youth program offering twice-monthly support groups serving approximately 40 students. The program maintains partnerships with local middle and high schools and participates in Back-to-School nights to increase visibility and support for LGBTQ+ youth and families.

The Center has hosted a wide range of community-building events, including listening sessions, open houses, a transgender family event, poetry gatherings, and intergenerational arts activities. The organization has also participated in 14 Pride and LGBTQ+ community events across the region, strengthening visibility and connetion across Marin County.

Communications

- Created logo, initiated social media platforms, established temporary website, with permanent website now under construction to serve as information hub for the LGBTQ community
- Distributed monthly news announcements about the Center's and other LGBTQ activities
- Mailing list has grown to over 600 participants

Fundraising & Financial Development

The Center has raised approximately $150,000 in startup funding from individual donors and faith communities, enabling early organizational growth and the ability to begin hiring part-time staff.

In October 2025, the Center hosted its first Annual Awards Luncheon & Celebration at Unity in Marin. The sold-out event welcomed 203 attendees, engaged 40 volunteers, featured three honorees, secured 30 sponsors, and raised more than $100,000 in support of the mission. The 2026 Celebration is scheduled for October 24 at the Osher Marin JCC.

The organization also received its first startup grant of $10,000 from the Horizons Foundation and established the Marin LGBTQ Center Fund at the Marin Community Foundation to support long-term sustainability and philanthropic growth.

Building on Success, Next Steps

As the Marin LGBTQ Center continues to grow, our vision is to deepen programs and services that reduce isolation, strengthen mental health and resilience, and build lasting community connections for LGBTQ+ people across Marin County. We believe in the power of bringing all segments of society together, like working families, educators, service providers, young, old, professionals, artists, spiritual leaders, public officials, and businesses – to uplift and celebrate LGBTQ+ lives through events, education, storytelling, arts, culture, and shared community experiences. In doing so, we are building not only support and resources for LGBTQ+ people, but also a stronger, compassionate Marin rooted in belonging, visibility, and shared humanity future for generations to come.

Your participation by giving and volunteering will help us continue the momentum we've built creating our Center to become a trusted resource and gathering place where LGBTQ+ people and allies find belonging, hope, and purpose.

Specific 2026/2027 Goals

- **Permanent Community Space & Office**

We have already outgrown our temporary space! Now, we are seeking a larger, more accessible community space with offices where people can gather, connect, access resources, attend support programs, and build community in a welcoming environment.

- **Website and Digital Presence**

The organization is developing a professional website and digital communications platform to increase visibility, share resources, promote events, connect volunteers and donors, and make support easier to access for the broader community.

- **Operational and Program Funding**

Sustainable funding is essential to support staffing, outreach, programming, event production, community partnerships, and long-term organizational growth.

Special Thanks

Top Donors

Cindy Acker
Marcey Adelman
Debra Alcouloumre
Raymond Bagnuolo
Julie Beach & Lisa Zimmerman
Al Bedecarre
Henry Thomas Bell
Michele Bruck
Barbara Buckley & Barb Hargrave
Mary Jane Burke
Gerard Buulong & Fred Silverman
By The Bay Health
Wendy Cadden
Canis Major Fund for Marin
Rev. Scott Clark & Jeff Wilson
Community Congregational Church of Tiburon
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Ruth & Bob Dell
The Della Valle Family Fund
Diane DiRoma
William Otton & Dennis Elder
Claudia Elkin
First Congregational Church of San Rafael
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Sherry Green & Gael Chandler
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Board of Directors

Officers Rev. Dr. Jane Spahr, Honorary Chair | Laura McMahon, President | Sherrie Holmes, Vice President | Karyn Kleinman, Treasurer | Jamie Magel, Secretary
Members Jeanette Au | Julie Beach | Tom Bell | Claire Ernst | Kate Kain | Chaplin Chitoka Webb

Previous Members William Otton, Founding President | Romario Conrado | Mila Eliaschev Elizabeth Max | Geri Randall | Miguel Ruelas | Iara Anias Valencia

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Contact Information

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Tax deductible 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization EIN: 33-1373383

MARIN LGBTQ CENTER

Second Annual Awards Luncheon Fundraiser

Saturday, October 24, 2026

Osher Marin JCC

San Rafael, CA

SAVE THE DATE!