



Building a Foundation for All

## PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release:** Thursday, November 13, 2014

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### **Pride Foundation Awards Grants to 56 Organizations Supporting LGBTQ Community in the Northwest** *Five Montana Organizations among Grantees*

*Seattle, WA*—Pride Foundation announced today that it has awarded \$303,775 to 56 organizations that support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) youth, adults, and families in the Northwest. A total of \$30,000 was invested in five organizations in Montana—Bridgercare, Gender Expansion Project, NCBI Missoula, Open AID Alliance, and Tumbleweed Program, Inc.

While advocates hope to have a positive ruling on marriage equality in Montana by the end of the year, the majority of LGBTQ residents in the state are still not protected against discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations. Progress has been made to protect LGBTQ residents at the local level through non-discrimination ordinances, but much remains to be done before LGBTQ people are able to live openly and safely in their home communities.

By directing resources to those who remain most invisible and vulnerable despite recent progress, Pride Foundation's community grants program is making an important statement about the work that lies ahead and the continued need in the LGBTQ community.

"Our grantees reflect the diversity of our community, and the breadth of issues affecting LGBTQ people throughout their lives," said Kris Hermanns, Executive Director of Pride Foundation. "When viewed collectively, these investments paint a comprehensive picture of the road ahead—from safe schools, to workplace equality, to culturally-competent healthcare and social services, to food and housing security, to elder care."

All of the grantees in Montana are focused on filling gaps in services for the LGBTQ community. Two of this year's grantees—Bridgercare and Tumbleweed—are new grantees that are each addressing an area of great need in the LGBTQ community: healthcare access and youth homelessness.

Pride Foundation's 2014 Grants in Montana include:

**Bridgercare (Bozeman):** \$7,500 to expand Bridgercare's services and efforts to include mental health care, hormone therapy, community outreach, and organizational inclusiveness for underserved LGBTQ individuals and communities in south central Montana.

**Gender Expansion Project (Missoula):** \$5,000 to support the upcoming 2015 Gender Expansion Transgender Health Conference—the only conference specifically focused on the health and well-being of individuals of gender diversity between Seattle, WA and Philadelphia, PA.

**NCBI Missoula (Missoula):** \$5,000 to support NCBI's Queer Youth Support & Empowerment Programs, which empower LGBTQ and allied youth to be role models and change agents in schools and communities.

**Open AID Alliance (Missoula):** \$5,000 to support the organization's new pilot program, a community-based Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing program.

**Tumbleweed Program, Inc. (Billings):** \$7,500 to support Tumbleweed's programming to protect LGBTQ youth from the harm of homelessness and to support them in becoming safe and self-reliant as they move from adolescence to adulthood.

"By supporting our queer and allied youth, we are targeting homophobia, breaking isolation, dismantling barriers, and building bridges," said Mel Fisher, Development and Communications Specialist at NCBI Missoula. "We are creating role models and change agents to inspire others to stand up, speak out, and get involved."

LGBTQ issues only receive [0.26% of total foundation dollars](#) (26 cents for every 100 dollars), making Pride Foundation's work even more critical.

In addition to their community grants program, Pride Foundation also makes investments in LGBTQ youth, adults, and families through a scholarship program, donor-advised, and donor-designated funds. In total, the foundation has invested nearly \$7.1 million this year to support LGBTQ people in their local communities.

"In all that we do, we are focusing our resources and grant dollars on bridging the gap between legal victories and the ability for all LGBTQ people to be who they are, where they are," said Hermanns. "We are honored to partner with wonderful organizations and individuals throughout our region and country that share our values and hopes for our community."

The full list of Pride Foundation grantees and project descriptions is available at [www.pridefoundation.org/grantees](http://www.pridefoundation.org/grantees).

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*Pride Foundation is a regional community foundation that inspires giving to expand opportunities and advance full equality for LGBTQ people across the Northwest. Learn more at [www.pridefoundation.org](http://www.pridefoundation.org).*