



September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

My name is David Fleishman, Executive Director of 4Cs of San Mateo County and I am writing to strongly support the two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

As the county's resource and referral agency, 4Cs connects individuals with programs and services so that they can live and thrive in our diverse community. Pride Center offers services that span from drop-in centers to case management to peer support and more to an underserved population in San Mateo County. The first of its kind in San Mateo, the Pride Center needs to continue and expand their services.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

4Cs of San Mateo County joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on mitigating inequities and ensuring services are provided that will support the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

I hope that you will decide favorably regarding the Pride Center's current and future funding. Thank you for your consideration.

In partnership,

David Fleishman
Executive Director
4Cs of San Mateo County



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
& RECOVERY SERVICES**

Service Connect
550 Quarry Road, 3rd Floor
San Carlos, CA 94070
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SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

We, Desirae Miller, BHRS Case Manager/Assessment Specialist II and Chyvonne Washington, Family Health Services Community Program Supervisor, are the Co-Chairs of the African American Community Initiative. We strongly support the two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSa Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

We are appreciative that there is a safe place for the LGBTQ+ consumers of San Mateo County to receive strength based and trauma informed services. The presence of the Pride Center has given us as service providers a resource for our consumers who have been in the process of coming out to their family, experiencing gender identity crisis, changing their gender role and those who have completed the transition. This is a resource that prior to the opening of the pride center was not available, leaving our LGBTQ+ community in risky situations. The services offered at The Pride Center allow the community to have a healthy coping tool. It gives a great sense of pride to inform family, friends, community members and consumers, that there is a safe place for the LGBTQ+ community that encourages growth, provides community inclusion, and ultimately is a safe place.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

The African American Community Initiative joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES

stigma, trauma informed services, crisis management, discrimination, and inequities to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

The African American Community Initiative stand in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration,

Warm Regards,

Chyvonne Washington, Family Health Services Community Program Supervisor,
Desirae Miller, BHRS Case Manager/Assessment Specialist II
Co-Chairs
African American Community Initiative



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Aging & Adult Services
San Mateo County Health

MAILING ADDRESS
PO Box 5892
San Mateo, CA 94402

LOCATION ADDRESS
225 37th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403

smchealth.org

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

Aging and Adult Services (AAS) in San Mateo County Health strongly support the two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The San Mateo County LGBTQ+ older adult and people with disability community greatly benefits from the Pride Center as a safe and supportive place to congregate and receive culturally appropriate services. For LGBTQ+ older adult clients and clients with disabilities, this center is a lifesaving environment given the isolation and fear of discrimination this population has faced all their lives and is a place where they can be seen as a whole person.

The Pride Center's convenient location between the two metropolitan LGBT centers, SF LGBT center in the north, and Billy DeFrank in the south both 25 miles on either direction makes the Pride Center the most accessible place for the LGBTQ+ community. This is especially necessary for older adults and people with disabilities who identify with the LGBTQ+ community because transportation and accessibility are one of the top barriers to accessing resources.

The partnership between AAS and the Pride Center has been of paramount importance to the implementation of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity data collection, as stipulated by AB 959. The Pride Center trained all AAS staff and provides ongoing provided expertise and technical assistance that has prepared our workforce not only for the data collection of SOGI questions but to better serve the LGBTQ+ population in our County.

In addition to acting as a consultant to inform San Mateo County's culturally sensitive services, the Pride Center is a hub for collaboration and planning with community based agencies county-wide. The Pride Center's strong advocacy for



SAN MATEO
COUNTY HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

client centered services has been instrumental in developing policies to better serve the LGBTQ+ by San Mateo County Health.

AAS joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

AAS stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Chris Rodriguez
Deputy Director
San Mateo County Health
Aging and Adult Services

Gladys Balmas
Health Services Manager
San Mateo County Health
Aging and Adult Services



Aragon High School

900 Alameda De Las Pulgas, San Mateo, CA 94402-3399

www.smuhsd.org/aragonhigh

Excellence and Equity

Telephone (650) 558-2999

September 12, 2018

Toby Ewing

Executive Director

Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission

1325 J Street, Suite 1700

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

As a classroom teacher and Gender and Sexuality Club advisor at Aragon High School, a member of the San Mateo Union High School District LGBTQ+ Taskforce and the San Mateo County Office of Education's LGBTQQ Alliance, I directly see the impact that the San Mateo Pride Center has on our community and our students. That is why I strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The Pride Center has filled an important gap in San Mateo County's mental health services for the LGBTQ+ population in the community. Specifically, the outreach for youth in our community has made a marked difference. Prior to the existence of the Pride Center, *a few* community organizations did *some* outreach to LGBTQ+ youth, one of the most at-risk populations. With the creation of the Pride Center, community groups are inspired and motivated to connect, share, and foster change up and down the San Mateo Peninsula.

The Pride Center outreach is directly impacting students in San Mateo county. With the help of the Pride Center, for the first time on the Peninsula, GSA club advisors are meeting regularly to discuss practices and share experiences. These gatherings are supporting teachers, staff, and administrators. But, most importantly, they are helping schools better serve LGBTQ students. It should be noted that the Pride Center was contracted by the San Mateo Union High School District to conduct onsite professional development for all teachers, staff, administrators, and district office personnel.

Additionally, the Pride Center has become an integral part of our Gender and Sexuality Club on Aragon's campus. Not only have they come to school to do trainings for staff and students, their events connect our students to the greater LGBTQ+ and ally

communities. Weekly, my students review the wide offerings at the Pride Center. Movie Night, drop-in hours, Trans Talk are just a few that our students are regularly participating in.

A connection to the greater San Mateo community confirm for my students and their families that there is a place for their authentic-self in our society. Too often, students look to an uncertain future and do not see themselves thriving. Thanks to the services and outreach of the Pride Center, our students feel validated at their present stage of life. They are counting on and expecting these resources to be available for them now and in the future.

I have seen first-hand how the Pride Center's innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

I would join the chorus of praise for the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on preprofessional development and outreach that reduces stigma and discrimination in our community.

Clearly, I stand in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vincent Bravo
Aragon High School Teacher / GSA Advisor



Arts Unity Movement

149 South Blvd.
San Mateo, CA 94402

650569-1276 650 703-3309

www.artsunitymovement.com

artsunitymovement@gmail.com

September 7, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing

My name is Roberta Wentzel-Walter. I am a co-founder and Director of a non-profit organization called Arts Unity Movement. We are affiliated with the BHRS Contractors Association. I strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The San Mateo County has been a pioneer in providing a safe space and resource center for the LGBTQ community. The center has filled a much needed function. I have heard from many of the people we serve that the Pride Center has been an important resource for them. It has been the consensus of my colleagues at the BHRS Contractors Association that the Pride Center is providing valuable support. I have been active in spreading the word about the ground breaking resource.

The Pride Center was in the planning stages for a very long time. As a consequence the needs of the community have been carefully thought out so that wrap around services can be provided. The center provides a focal point for the community by providing a drop in center and many social events such as Intergenerational Dinner and discussion groups, as well as practical services such as clinical services, case management and a resource center.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

I stand in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Roberta Wentzel-Walter MA ATR BC
Co-Founder and Director
Arts Unity Movement





MOVING EQUALITY FORWARD

October 7, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for San Mateo County Pride Center

Dear Mr. Ewing:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Bay Area Municipal Elections Committee (BAYMEC) in support of the two-year extension of time and funding for the San Mateo County Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

BAYMEC has advocated for the civil rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) people since 1984 in the counties of San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and Monterey.

The Pride Center was a vision ten years in the making, and since its opening last year has provided critical resources and space for the LGBTQ community of San Mateo County. Not only does the Pride Center provide a suite of vital services—peer support groups, drop-in and by appointment counseling and therapy services, case management, gender and name change assistance, and a general resource center—the Pride Center also builds resilience through community. The Pride Center does this through a number of fun and inclusive events, such as their Queer Prom and the Intergenerational Dinner, as well as educational events and workshops open to the public.

The Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, provided needed services to the LGBTQ community that they would not otherwise have. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Pride Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages.

BAYMEC strongly supports the Pride Center's effort to improve and expand services throughout the county, and to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ community.

BAYMEC is proud to submit this letter of support. We are thankful for your leadership on and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul A. Escobar".

Paul A. Escobar
BAYMEC President

1855 Hamilton Avenue
Suite 203
San Jose, CA
95125

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

My name is Shannon Henricks, and I'm a counselor at Capuchino High School and the adviser for our SAGA club (Sexuality and Gender Alliance) and strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, a MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

I have been a counselor for 18 years on the peninsula. We have always had a need for LGBTQ youth support. Often times parents are not comfortable sending their teen to the city to visit Queer youth agencies. Having the Pride Center so accessible for our youth, as well as training for our staff has filled a much needed gap. From Queer Prom, to movie nights, to intergenerational dinners, the Pride Center continues to offer relevant events for our youth; events that resonate with them, and where they are able to spend time with peers that share common experiences.

The Pride Center has and continues to come out to our schools to train faculty and staff on the Gender Binary. My teachers are passionate about supporting all their students. They understand that, often times, our trans youth are not being accepted for who they are at home. It's even more important that our Trans youth feel connected and supported in their school setting. That starts with proper professional development for our adults on campus.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

Capuchino's SAGA group joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma, trauma informed services, crisis management, marginalization, discrimination, inequities to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

Capuchino High School stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Shannon Henricks, Counselor
Department Chair
SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Alliance) Advisor
Capuchino High School
San Bruno, CA



September 18, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

I am the Executive Director of CASA of San Mateo County and our nonprofit agency strongly supports the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

CASA of San Mateo County serves Foster children/youth and Delinquent youth in San Mateo County and are well aware of the trauma and obstacles that LGBTQ+ children/youth/adults face in our community. Our CASA volunteers have supported LGBTQ+ youth through the years and we are very pleased with our partnership with the San Mateo County Pride Center. The mental health wellness and recovery services had not been available to our youth in the past and definitely fill a much needed void. As a result, we had to look to other counties to find resources and we are so grateful that those services are now available in our own county.

We recently had a very well received and informative training for our CASA volunteers by volunteers and staff of the Pride Center. This encouraged positive conversation amongst our CASA volunteers and gave them the knowledge and confidence to empower their youth. We believe that the Pride Center is a vital aspect of the county's mental health community and is greatly needed. In particular, we are so thankful for the availability of the drop-in center and peer support groups. It is our intention to deepen our partnership with the Pride Center and do all we can to let our CASA volunteers and youth know that this tremendous resource is available for them.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

CASA of San Mateo County joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on **trauma informed services** and crisis management to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ child/youth community.

CASA of San Mateo County stand in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration,

Warm Regards,

Patricia Miljanich
Executive Director
CASA of San Mateo County



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES

310 Harbor Boulevard
Building E
Belmont, CA 94002
650-802-6400 T
650-802-6440 F
smchealth.org

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

I am a Co-Chair for the Chinese Health Initiative (CHI) of San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, Office of Diversity and Equity. We strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

There are many layers of stigma our Chinese community faces in San Mateo County. Many in the Chinese community face stigma and discrimination based on our race/ethnicity, our mental health or substance use diagnosis, and gender identity & sexual orientation. The Pride Center offers a space and services that peel back the layers of stigma and encourages LGBTQ+ community of all races/ethnicities to access underutilized mental health services.

Specific ways we partner with the Pride Center include (1) referring clients and family members to the Pride Center clinical services or support groups, (2) consulting with the Pride Center with questions about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and (3) having one of our CHI members has served on the Community Advisory Board for the Pride Center.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

The Chinese Health Initiative joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma and improving outreach to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.





SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
& RECOVERY SERVICES**

The Chinese Health Initiative stand in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center.
Thank you for your consideration,

In Community,

Shiyu Zhang, Steve Sust, Sylvia Tang & Winnie Wu
Co-Chairs, Chinese Health Initiative
Office of Diversity & Equity
San Mateo County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services



September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

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Dear Mr. Ewing:

I am writing to you on behalf of Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse (CORA). For over 40 years, CORA's mission has been to provide safety, support and healing for individuals who experience abuse in an intimate relationship, and educate the community to break the cycle of intimate partner abuse. At CORA, we provide victims and survivors of intimate partner abuse with effective supportive services as they deal with an exceptionally difficult period in their lives. Our free, trauma-informed programming includes: safe houses; supportive housing; 24-hour crisis, legal, and law enforcement referral hotlines; legal services; mental health support; children's programming; community advocacy; and community education. As the only agency of its kind in San Mateo County, we annually respond to over 12,000 requests for these services.

We at CORA strongly support the two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, a MHS Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. CORA has seen first hand the benefits of the Pride Center's approach to mental health and wellness. The Center builds community, reducing isolation, and provides a safe space for connection. It has been a centralized HUB for the LGBTQ+ community, providing avenues to necessary resources, and specifically assisting in decreasing the effects of isolation, so commonly found in intimate partner abuse. The Pride Center is truly community driven by offering support groups, film screenings, workout facilities, and case management support.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages from children to older adults.

As an agency that supports survivors of intimate partner abuse, we often see LGBTQ+ survivors facing exploitation of systemic inequities as a part of the power and control used in their abusive relationship. By combating LGBTQ+ marginalization, the Pride Center helps empower LGBTQ+ survivors. The trauma-informed approach allows LGBTQ+ survivors to access appropriate services in ways that feel safe. By having an LGBTQ+ specific organization that offers crisis management services, survivors know there is somewhere they can turn to in a crisis even if their partner told them otherwise. Through our partnership with the Pride Center, we are able to reach individuals who otherwise might not know there is assistance available.

CORA stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Colsaria Henderson, MSW
Executive Director
Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse (CORA)

2211 Palm Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403
650-652-0800

800-300-1080 (24-hr hotline)

www.corasupport.org



Brett 'Eagle Eye' McDonald
Director, National Parks Service, 2039



September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

My name is Joan Martel and I am the Deputy Director of CuriOdyssey, a serious science playground and zoo for children. We strongly support the two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSIA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.


- The Pride Center's approach to mental health wellness and recovery services is extremely important in our diverse community and we fully support their efforts.
- The Pride Center conducted a special training for our employees and it was not only presented well but sparked great discussion while provoking a deeper understanding of being aware of diversity in our relationships to our visitors and employees.
- We will be honored to host the Queer Prom in February next year in our rental space, too!

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

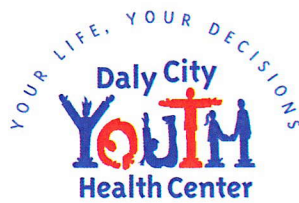
CuriOdyssey joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma, discrimination and inequities to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

CuriOdyssey stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Joan Martel
Deputy Director
CuriOdyssey



A collaborative program of the Jefferson Union High School District and the San Mateo Medical Center

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

For 27 years Daly City Youth Health Center has prepared our communities' teens and young adults for a healthy and productive adulthood through our holistic, comprehensive services. Each year, the Daly City Youth Health Center provides assistance to over 2,500 low-income teens and young adults in northern San Mateo County through our comprehensive services. Our Primary Care Clinic, which serves more than 600 young people a month, offers low-cost or no-cost services, including physicals, immunizations, tuberculosis skin tests and treatment, vision and hearing screenings and reproductive health exams. Our Behavioral Health Counseling program provides individual, family, couples and group counseling to youth and their families to more than 200 youth per year. Project PLAY is a reproductive health and pregnancy prevention education program encouraging more than 1,500 teens annually to make informed, healthy decisions.

The Pride Center and Daly City Youth Health Center (DCY) had been strong collaborators since its inception. There have not been services for LGBTQ+ youth in northern San Mateo County until the Pride Center opened. Our collaboration provides teens and young adults with the information and guidance they need to make healthy choices, to stay safe in school, and achieve a sound career path. Our comprehensive system allows for our clinic's primary health care and mental health providers to easily refer LGBTQ+ patients to various events and services provided by the Pride Center.

From January to end of May 2018, the Pride Center and DCY facilitated the very first weekly LGBTQ+ Youth Group at DCY. In addition, on March 31 and April 7, 2018, DCY hosted and facilitated two (2) 8-hour workshops. The Mural Project, which brought together eight (8) Filipinx LGBTQ youth worked together to create a Mural which explored the intersectionality of Filipinx, LGBTQ and youth cultures. Through dialog, shared stories and narratives, the youth created a common thread tying these disparate but interconnected experiences together. This common thread manifested itself in the Mural which depicts the various subcultures that exist within these larger cultures as banding



A collaborative program of the Jefferson Union High School District and the San Mateo Medical Center

together to stand as one to face and overcome the stigma that exists and which informs their lives.

Addressing the stigma of same sex love, the Mural states “Love Knows No Gender” and portrays the youth reaching out to others as a bridge to breaking through the daily stigma they all face.

Without outreach and collaboration with the Pride Center, these events wouldn’t have been possible.

We strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

Daly City Youth Health Center joins the San Mateo County Pride Center’s quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on culturally appropriate youth services, stigma reduction, and increase access to services to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

Daly City Youth Health Center stand in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Jose Errol Feria, M.A., LMFT
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

Marianne LaRuffa, LMFT
Mental Health Manager/Supervisor



September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

We, Stephanie Balon MA, AMFT and Christi Morales-Kumasawa MA, Co-Chairs of the Filipino Mental Health Initiative of San Mateo County, strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services for the following reasons:

- The Pride Center has offered a safe, welcoming, and nurturing space for the LGBTQ+ community. This is not just demonstrated in the warmth and intentionality of the committed staff delivering services; it is also reflected in the vast and diverse array of services provided to those who access the center.
- Their special events and community gatherings, such as Queer Prom and Intergenerational Dinners, exemplify a creative and culturally responsive approach to cross-generational engagement that has not been offered at any other centers. Additionally, their trainings are crucial to ensuring providers are fostering an inclusive environment and equitable access to services.
- In terms of their targeted outreach, they have developed relationships with us and other partners beyond San Mateo and into North County where most of our Filipinx community resides, which speaks to their efforts to reach underserved and unserved populations who face strong cultural stigma around LGBTQ+ identity.
- Overall, the Pride Center will continue (if given the opportunity) to improve the mental health and wellness of the LGBTQ+ community by delivering the necessary, inclusive, and culturally relevant resources that have historically been lacking throughout San Mateo County.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

The Filipino Mental Health Initiative of San Mateo County joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma, trauma informed services, marginalization, and inequities to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

The Filipino Mental Health Initiative stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Warmest Regards,

Stephanie Balon, MA, AMFT & Christi Morales-Kumasawa, MA
Co-Chairs, Filipino Mental Health Initiative of San Mateo County

September 18, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

My name is Lila Dickson, and I am a member of the Hillsdale High School Genders & Sexualities Alliance in San Mateo, California. On behalf of the GSA, I state that we strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The Pride Center is a major source of support of one of the most renowned minority groups of all time. To not be cisgender or to not be heterosexual is a huge impact on many people's lives, including that of mine, and the effects of that can be daunting. Members of the queer community often feel confused and isolated because they know that they are different. Many of them are bullied by others. Many are not accepted by their families. The Pride Center is a safe space for people, both physically and emotionally, and it provides resources that help create a better understanding of one's own identity and circumstances. It is extremely critical to maintain this, and the Pride Center needs the funding and time in order to do so.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

The Hillsdale High School Genders & Sexualities Alliance and I join the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on trauma informed services, crisis management, and marginalization to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

The Hillsdale High School Genders & Sexualities Alliance and I stand in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Lila Dickson

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing, Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

I am writing in support of a two-year extension of time and funding for the San Mateo County Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

As the Director of Public Affairs for the Kaiser Permanente Redwood City Medical Center (KP-RWC) over the past 11 years, I have seen the incredibly impactful work that StarVista, which operates the Pride Center, has done for many San Mateo County residents.

I serve on KP-RWC's Community Health Advisory Committee, which oversees our grant funding. We have been long-time funders of Star Vista, and more recently of the Pride Center, because of the reach and effectiveness of their programs, which have strong, measurable outcomes. StarVista and the Pride Center's work align with our mission of improving the health of our communities.

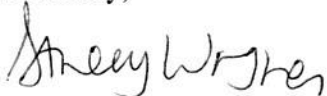
We have had the privilege of partnering with StarVista since 2003 and have observed their ability to consistently execute on their mission to deliver high impact services through counseling, skill development, and crisis prevention to children, youth, adults and families to help all ages and stages through life's challenges.

While San Mateo County has been supportive of the LGBTQ+ community, it remained the only county in the Bay Area without a pride center. Residents of the 771,000+ county who needed to access pride center services would have to go to San Francisco or Santa Clara Counties. The opening of the Pride Center in the city of San Mateo in 2017 made a meaningful impact on the LGBTQ+ community because they can now access needed services in their own community. The Pride Center's innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages from children to older adults.

In 2018, Kaiser Permanente was thrilled to provide funding for the San Mateo County Pride Center's Visibility and Stigma Reduction Campaign to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health within the LGBTQ+ community. This critical project reaches throughout the County and all 20 cities through educational trainings, outreach, peer support and social events.

On behalf of KP-RWC, I am proud to support the San Mateo County Pride Center's request for a two-year extension of the MHSA funds. They have been a proven partner through our long-term working relationship, and I am confident they will continue to be successful in their efforts.

Sincerely,



Stacey Wagner, Director
Redwood City Public Affairs
1100 Veterans Blvd.
Redwood City, CA 94063



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
& RECOVERY SERVICES**

310 Harbor Boulevard
Building E
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650-802-6400 T
650-802-6440 F
smchealth.org

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

My name is Frances Lobos and I am a Co-Chair for the Latino Collaborative, a Health Equity Initiative of San Mateo County. I strongly support the two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The Pride Center's community focused approach is essential in providing mental health and recovery services. Activities such as Intergenerational Dinner and Queer Prom, workshops like Trans Talks, trainings, book clubs, Movie Nights, allow for our community members to feel safe and welcomed. More importantly, provides an opportunity for dialogue and education. The Pride Center has become an important source for information and resources for this County, and through its works advances the health equity of all communities.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults. The Latino Collaborative joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma, marginalization, discrimination, inequities to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

Latino Collaborative stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Frances Lobos
Latino Collaborative Co-Chair



September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

On behalf of the San Mateo County Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Commission, we strongly support the two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, a Mental Health Services Act Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. The Pride Center increases the visibility of LGBTQ adults and young people, and connects them to much-needed LGBTQ-affirming services available at the Center and across the County.

LGBTQ children and youth face health disparities across the board, including disproportionately high rates of isolation and related mental health concerns. The LGBTQ Commission recently conducted a county-wide youth survey which underscores the importance of these critical services for our children and youth. This survey showed that over 65% do not know where to get LGBTQ-friendly healthcare and they feel overwhelmingly isolated and depressed: (1) nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ considered harming themselves; (2) nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ reported that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past year because they felt so sad, hopeless, anxious almost every day for two weeks or more in a row (usual activities defined as not seeing friends, skipping meals, skipping school, after-school activity, not doing homework) and (3) nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ felt stress quite a bit or very much (stress defined as feeling tense, restless, nervous, anxious, unable to sleep at night).

Research has demonstrated that family and community acceptance is critical to promoting positive mental and physical health. The Pride Center provides this safe place for our LGBTQ children and youth. Pride Center staff and volunteers work tirelessly to make our county's services more welcoming, respectful and responsive to their needs. Without this innovation grant extension, our LGBTQ children and youth would have no place to go and the great strides the Pride Center has made through its collaborations to extend those direct services would be jeopardized.



LGBTQ adults and seniors in San Mateo County also face health disparities across the board, including disproportionately high rates of isolation and mental health concerns. The adult survey showed that dealing with stress is common in the LGBTQ community. Close to half identified a time during the past 12 months when they felt that they might need to see a professional because of concerns with their mental health, emotions, nerves, or their use of alcohol or drugs. This was particularly true in respondents who described themselves as gender fluid (84%). Over one third (39%) felt quite a bit or very much stress, ranging from 33% in men to 70% in trans women. The Pride Center provides the full range of trauma-informed care that meets the needs of this community.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

The San Mateo County LGBTQ Commission joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on providing trauma-informed services and addressing inequities to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

The San Mateo County LGBTQ Commission stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Craig Wiesner
Co-Chair
LGBTQ Commission

Kristina Perez
Co-Chair
LGBTQ Commission





September 17, 2018
Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

My name is Adrienne Keel and I am the Director of LGBTQ Programs for Family & Children Services, a division of Caminar. We strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

An easily accessible LGBTQ center is a critical resource for the LGBTQ+ community in San Mateo County. In theory, some county residents may be able to access LGBTQ+ affirming clinical and wellness services out of county, but that is simply not realistic for everyone. The Pride Center provides a wealth of centrally located clinical services, support groups, events, and activities that simply did not exist in the county before the center's inception. Culturally relevant community spaces are essential to the wellness of historically underserved or unserved populations.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

The LGBTQ Youth Space and its parent agencies join the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma, marginalization, and discrimination, to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

The LGBTQ Youth Space, Family & Children Services, and Caminar stand in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Warmest Regards,

Adrienne Keel
Director of LGBTQ Programs
Family & Children Services and Caminar



Many Journeys Metropolitan Community Church
1150 W. Hillsdale Blvd, San Mateo, CA 94403
<http://manyjourneismcc.org> 650-515-0900
Meeting every Sunday at 12:30

September 06, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

I am Rev. Terri Echelbarger, the Pastor of Many Journeys MCC, and a member of the San Mateo County LGBTQ Commission. I am writing this letter as an individual who strongly supports a two-year extension of funding and time to complete the extraordinary collaboration that created the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

As a Pastor who serves primarily LGBTQ people I am in a position to witness first hand the effects of ongoing discrimination against this community, and the benefits of a multiple agency approach to their needs. It is innovative, perhaps the first in the entire country, to coordinate services for this vulnerable population. If allowed to proceed it may well be a model that is copied all over the United States and other countries as well.

However, these innovation funds are much more innovative than might appear at first glance. There are extraordinary challenges not faced in other communities. In my view one primary challenge is that the center, this collaboration, is building on primary foundations still being poured.

The LGBTQ community has been in an era of significant change, same sex marriage was not fully realized until 2012 and youth who identify as LGBTQ are rapidly reshaping entire definitions of gender and sexual orientation. For that reason, the center is tasked with addressing cultural needs that have barely been studied, let alone established. They are innovating not only a collaboration but are also a part of developing a whole new range of best practices on the therapeutic level.

These challenges necessitate more time, and extra steps.

The San Mateo LGBTQ Commission administered a survey that showed LGBTQ people still have a very high-level isolation, a lack of access of safe spaces, and a very real fear of physical and verbal abuse and/or discrimination. The LGBTQ Center is a light on the hill that makes clear there is a safe space. This matters in terms of addressing mental health needs in our community, even if an individual never participates directly in a program or therapy. The Center is lighthouse that assures the community that even in the midst of current storms, there is shore.

I support the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community. There is no replacement for this service, there is no piece-meal approach to address these needs in an effective way, providing the range of services currently being innovated, in rapidly evolving community, and then provided in this collaboration. The provision of a one-stop-shop for people of all ages makes sense and should be allowed more time to prove it's worth to potential funders who could carry it on in the future.

In summary, I strongly support the San Mateo County Pride Center and the work it is doing. I hope you will continue supporting its evolving work for our community.

Thank you for your consideration,

Rev. Terri Echelbarger
Pastor

October 11, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

As the Chief Executive Officer of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) California, I would like to express strong support for the two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSa Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

NAMI California first partnered with the Pride Center in May of 2018 to highlight the Center's programming at NAMI California's Annual Multicultural Symposium on May 31, 2018 in Monterey, CA. Through this event, NAMI California's members and supporters were able to learn more about the wonderful mental health work provided to LGBTQ+ folks that takes place at the San Mateo County Pride Center.

At NAMI California, we recognize that LGBTQ+ folks have an increased risk of mental health challenges, due to discrimination, and often do not receive adequate mental health services and resources. As such, it is integral that the Pride Center remain open to improve the lives of LGBTQ+ folks through crisis intervention, individual counseling, group therapy, family therapy, relationship therapy, case management, and home visits.

Importantly, the mental health clinicians at the Pride Center serve clients in a cultural competent manner by taking into consideration each person's multiple overlapping and intersecting identities (including gender identity, sexual orientation, gender expression, race, socio-economic status, and more). Clinicians at the center also specialize in LGBTQ+ issues including, but not limited to: anxiety, depression, gender identity, anger management, and couples counseling

In addition, providing clinical mental health services through the Pride Center reduces barriers to care from LGBTQ+ folks. Due to the stigma of mental health challenges and the fear of discrimination for being LGBTQ+ by mental health clinicians and other health professionals, offering mental health services in a safe space reduces barriers and increases access to care for LGBTQ+ folks.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple



services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

NAMI California joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma and increasing access to mental health services to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

NAMI California stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you very much for your consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Cruz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jessica" being more prominent than the last name "Cruz".

Jessica Cruz, MPA/HS
Chief Executive Officer
NAMI California
1851 Heritage Lane, Suite #150
Sacramento, CA 95815

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

Good day, Mr. Ewing. My name is Gloria Gutierrez and I'm the current chair of the Native and Indigenous Peoples Initiative in San Mateo County through the Office of Diversity and Equity. We strongly support the two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, a Mental Health Service Act (MHSA) Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

In my role as a clinician in San Mateo County, I have been offered the ability to refer clients and families to the Pride Center to fill the much-needed gap for services to our LGBTQ+ communities. The Pride Center has provided a safe place for the clients and families I have referred and has decreased the barriers for our LGBTQ+ adult/youth communities that are receiving treatment.

The Pride Center offers outreach and education to increase mental health awareness, and more importantly, strengthens our communities. Further, the outreach and education the Pride Center has provided to employees and communities in San Mateo County has been tremendous and has supported our colleagues with the information necessary to successfully serve the LGBTQ+ community.

The first of its kind in all of San Mateo County, the San Mateo Pride Center fills a gap in much-needed services for the LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the center to become a one-stop shop for clients and community members. This has enabled us to reach and support more clients and community members.

The Native and Indigenous Peoples Initiative joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with special emphasis on increasing awareness of the prevalence of those at risk with mental health issues.

Warmest Regards,

Native and Indigenous Peoples Initiative
Chair-Gloria Gutierrez



Bay Area OUTspoken Speech Services

Oneida Chi, MS, CCC-Speech Language Pathologist
1212H El Camino Real #373, San Bruno, CA 94066
(415)375-0279

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

My name is Oneida Chi, and I am a Speech Language Pathologist for Bay Area Outspoken speech services. We strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

At the Pride Center, I currently work with transgender and gender non-conforming folks on vocal health and aligning their voices with their gender identity. The Pride Center has been a haven and safe space for many clients to visit and access the services they need. They can have access to mental health services, recovery, community, and voice training under one roof. So often, members of the LGBTQ community in San Mateo are stigmatized and have difficulty accessing services, and therefore this Pride Center is a necessity for the health and well-being of marginalized folks. I have clients who have accessed and used all the services listed and it greatly improved their mental health and well-being. The drop-in center, therapeutic/clinical services, case management, gender & name change clinics, resource center, peer support groups, AA groups, workshops like Trans Talks, trainings, book clubs, Movie Nights and a number of community events.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

We join the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma and decreasing inequities and discrimination to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

We, at Bay Area Outspoken speech therapy services stand in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration,

Warmest Regards,

**Oneida Chi, MS, CCC-Speech Language Pathologist
Bay Area OUTspoken Speech Services**



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES

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310 Harbor Boulevard
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smchealth.org

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing,

As the Office of Diversity and Equity, we support marginalized populations in our behavioral health system to ensure everyone in San Mateo County has a fair and just opportunity to experience wellness. The Office of Diversity and Equity strongly supports the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHS Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS).

Since the Pride Center first opened its doors, it has offered LGBTQ+ visibility, advocacy and expertise in San Mateo County (SMC). Our staff has had the privilege of collaborating with Pride Center staff on a number of mental health and wellness initiatives. The Pride Center has worked closely with our staff to provide community events for May Mental Health Awareness Month and September Suicide Prevention Month, creating brave spaces for LGBTQ+ community members to share their lived experiences and reduce stigma together. The Pride Center has also provided presentations to community members in our Parent Project (PP) courses. PP facilitators have shared how the Center staff's presentation style and ability to make the information culturally appropriate has impacted the classroom. They have made concepts easier to understand and opened space for dialogue even between people who were previously uncomfortable discussing queerness. For some this is the only opportunity to learn and ask questions openly around LGBTQ+ issues, so having speakers that present the material in a way that is relevant and approachable has improved community knowledge and helped change individual minds about queerness.

The Pride Center has provided enthusiastic support for our Cultural Humility Video series, with staff writing scripts and speaking on camera on the topics of "Gender Inclusive Restrooms" and "Using Gender Pronouns". Hundreds of providers at BHRS and our partner agencies have viewed the videos and use them to help themselves and their staff provide better services to the LGBTQ+ clients that come to their clinics. The Pride Center actively promotes the improvement of services across BHRS and our partner agencies. In the past year, the Center trained over 600 providers on recognizing sexual orientation and gender





SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES

identity (SOGI) as a crucial step towards providing holistic mental health and recovery services. The Pride Center also advocates for LGBTQ+ advances that impact health in ways that our County Health department cannot, including for recognition of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) by local businesses and organizations and for better conditions for incarcerated transgender individuals in our local jails. This is powerful work not being done by other groups in SMC. Ultimately, the Pride Center's community education efforts continue to empower providers and local organizations in our county to provide more effective and appropriate services to LGBTQ+ folks.

Prior to the Pride Center, our county's LGBTQ+ community lacked a physical space in which to gather and connect with each other. Because LGBTQ+ identities have been so stigmatized in San Mateo County, even within the liberal Bay Area, we have heard from plenty of individuals that they are not out in their workplaces, schools or at home, or don't often gather with other queer folks. The Center is a powerful symbol of acceptance and reminder of the importance of having community spaces in which we can experience feelings of visibility and connectedness. The Pride Center has truly become the heart of San Mateo County's LGBTQ+ community. This is evident with each intergenerational dinner, open mic event, and peer support group. Community members have expressed joy at seeing parts of themselves reflected in their home county for the first time. Gatherings are always abuzz with excitement for the next event, where people anticipate further building and deepening connections between queer folks, allies, and everyone else that comes to commune at the Center.

The Office of Diversity and Equity joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma, marginalization, and health inequities to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community. We stand in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Office of Diversity and Equity
Behavioral Health and Recovery Services
San Mateo County Health



September 20, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

My name is Ryan Fouts, and I am the Program Director of Outlet, a program of Adolescent Counseling Services. Outlet serves LGBTQ+ youth ages 10-25 throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara County, and we are one of four collaborative partner agencies providing services at the San Mateo County Pride Center. I am writing to ask for your approval of the two year extension of the Pride Center's MHSA Innovation project funding through San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

Outlet's role at the San Mateo County Pride Center is to implement youth programming and to provide trainings on supporting LGBTQ+ youth. We host multiple drop-in groups for LGBTQ+ youth each week, providing a vital space for young people to find social support in a safe, welcoming environment. We also support youth leadership opportunities, including a Youth Advisory Board, and we use the Pride Center's centralized location to provide outreach and support to GSA's in school districts throughout San Mateo County.

The San Mateo County Pride Center is an essential resource for the LGBTQ+ community. It eliminates barriers to service access by allowing our community to visit one space and receive social support, case management, mental health and substance use services, and referrals to other vital resources. The innovation of having four collaborative partners also serves to bring together LGBTQ+ individuals from across the lifespan. This is very special because certain LGBTQ+ subgroups, such as youth and older adults, have historically been isolated. The Pride Center's community reduces stigma and increases a sense of belonging, both of which have been shown to lead to better physical and mental health outcomes.

Outlet and ACS are proud to continue partnering with the Pride Center and its other partner agencies to serve San Mateo County's LGBTQ+ community. We envision a world where the LGBTQ+ community is safe, healthy, and thriving; please support us in making that vision possible by extending the Pride Center's MHSA funding.

Sincerely,

Ryan Fouts, LCSW
Outlet Program Director



September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

My name is Leah Carig, a Regional Program Manager with Planned Parenthood Mar Monte. We strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

We have had the pleasure of partnering with the San Mateo County Pride Center to provide a much-needed safe space for LGBTQ+ teens to learn and ask questions about sexual health. It is so important for young people to have these spaces and trusted adults in their lives. It is clear they are an essential resource for people living in San Mateo County.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

Planned Parenthood Mar Monte joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma, trauma informed services, and increasing equitable access to health care to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

Planned Parenthood Mar Monte stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Leah Carig
Regional Program Manager

Planned Parenthood Mar Monte
1746 The Alameda
San Jose, CA 95126
408-795-3729





SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
& RECOVERY SERVICES**

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smchealth.org

September 18, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

We are the current Co-Chairs of the PRIDE Initiative in San Mateo County through the Office of Diversity and Equity. We strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, and Mental Health Service Act (MHSA) Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The Pride Initiative has been closely collaborating with the Pride Center since their doors opened in June of 2016. We have witnessed first-hand the positive impact the Pride Center has had in reaching the LGBTQ+ community of San Mateo County. Prior to June of 2016, we did not have services focused exclusively on LGBTQ+ wellness and recovery.

The Pride Center has done an amazing job of networking with the various community based organizations of this county to offer much needed services for LGBTQ+ consumers and families. It is our safe hub and a much needed one-stop-shop for consumers of all ages.

The PRIDE Initiative is in full support of the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with special emphasis on providing trauma informed services, reducing inequities and discrimination for the LGBTQ+ community of San Mateo County.

Sincerely,

Dana Johnson, Co-Chair
Pride Initiative

Regina Moreno, Co-Chair
Pride Initiative





rape trauma services

a center for healing & violence prevention

September 14, 2018

Dear Mr. Ewing:

Rape Trauma Services (RTS) is a nonprofit agency and San Mateo County's only rape crisis center. We strive to eliminate all forms of violence, with a special focus on sexual assault and abuse. We also facilitate healing and the prevention of violence by providing counseling, advocacy, and education. We strongly support the two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

Rape Trauma Services has partnered with the Pride Center in several ways over the past year. An RTS Peer Counselor co-facilitated a Pride Center young adults' support group to offer trauma-informed support to transitional age youth. RTS and Pride Center staff provided cross-trainings on services and resources enabling both organizations to more inclusively support LGBTQ+ survivors.

RTS has referred many clients to the Pride Center. LGBTQ+ survivors and significant others of sexual violence face more barriers when it comes to access to services and resources. The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for the LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

Rape Trauma Services joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on trauma-informed services and crisis management, to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

Rape Trauma Services stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Warmest Regards,

Emily Abrams
Executive Director, Rape Trauma Services

County of Santa Clara

Office of the County Executive

County Government Center,
70 West Hedding Street
Eleventh Floor – East Wing
San Jose, California 95110
(408) 299-5105



September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing

Executive Director

Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission

1325 J Street, Suite 1700

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

I am writing today in support of the critical services provided by the San Mateo County (SMC) Pride Center. This Center provides resources that are of great benefit to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning (LGBTQQ) community in San Mateo County. The LGBTQQ community experiences many health disparities, and local resources are extremely helpful in improving health outcomes.

The SMC Pride Center provides clinical services, as well as serves as a community center for the whole LGBTQQ community. It also provides events that are available for no fee or a donation, including drop-in hours for youth and adults, movie screenings and social events for all, as well as community educational events and forums. The SMC Pride Center also serves as a resource center providing books, magazines and a computer lab to the community to access information in a safe setting. Staff provides training sessions and consult with various community organizations and county departments. The services provided by SMC Pride Center fill a very needed service gap in this community. Funding to support such critical services has a positive impact in the lives of LGBTQ local residents. Thank you for your consideration and time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Maribel Martinez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Maribel Martinez

Director, Office of LGBTQ Affairs

County of Santa Clara

Board of Supervisors: Mike Wasserman, Cindy Chavez, Dave Cortese, Ken Yeager, S. Joseph Simitian
County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith



Anne E. Campbell • County Superintendent of Schools

September 20, 2018

To Members of the Mental Health Service Act Steering Committee:

The San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) wholeheartedly supports the San Mateo County Pride Center and values the services it provides to our county's young people. The Pride Center prioritizes youth engagement and leadership. Our young people need more opportunities to meaningfully engage in their communities and to add their talents and voice to community dialogue. The Pride Center affords them the support, space, and time to do so.

SMCOE has also been fortunate to partner with the Pride Center in working with the Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA) coordinators from various middle and high schools throughout the county. The Pride Center has offered space and technical assistance for these meetings ensuring a well-rounded approach to this work. One specific outcome of our collaboration is the county's first GSA conference, a day of community building and action for high school GSA members and their advisors that will take place in December 2018.

The work the Pride Center is doing is of utmost importance to our county's students, especially those who identify as LGBTQ. The Pride Center provides a safe space for students to be their most authentic selves. The Pride Center staff also works with schools to help make school campuses emotionally safe for all students. When a school supports a positive and safe school climate for its most vulnerable students, it will also be a safe place for every student.

Please consider granting the Pride Center additional funding and time to continue their programs and services. The Pride Center staff has made a huge positive impact on the mental health and well-being of LGBTQ youth in our county in a short amount of time. Imagine how much more they can accomplish!

Sincerely,

Nancy A. Magee
San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools-Elect



September 18, 2018

Toby Ewing, Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

We are the co-chairs of the Spirituality Initiative of the San Mateo County Office of Diversity and Equity. We strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the PRIDE Center, a MHS Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The inclusion of the PRIDE Center in San Mateo County has been an important step in assisting the clients of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. It is apparent that the services they provide reach the LGBTQ+ community, as we see evidence of this in those who attend our ongoing meetings and participate in the life of the Spirituality Initiative. It is clear that the Center has added to the lives of many clients for they provide events and services such as AA groups, a drop-in center, therapeutic/clinical services, and case management, and movie nights among other events and services.

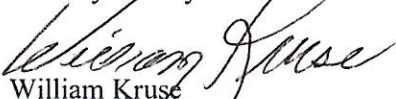
The Interfaith Community in San Mateo County is a part of those we see regularly. They talk about how the PRIDE Center has assisted those who participate in their faith communities and how important it has been for some of their congregants. The different faith communities who are supportive of their LGBTQ+ members understand its importance and its impact.

Members of the Spirituality Initiative attend events that the PRIDE Center authors - in particular the June PRIDE event where the community gathers together to celebrate PRIDE month. It has always been a celebration for all of San Mateo County.

The San Mateo County PRIDE Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for the LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

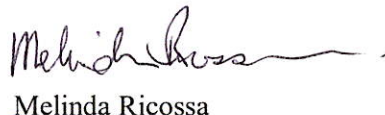
The Spirituality Initiative joins the San Mateo County PRIDE Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma, providing trauma informed services, and working to reduce discrimination and inequities. These services enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community and the health of all of San Mateo County.

The Spirituality Initiative stands in proud support of the San Mateo County PRIDE Center.
Thank you for your consideration,



William Kruse

Co-Chairs of the Spirituality Initiative
Office of Diversity and Equity of the SMCBHS



Melinda Ricossa



September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

I'm the founder and director of TransFamilies of Silicon Valley, a community of 160+ families with young transgender children living throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. We strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHSA Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.

The Pride Center has been invaluable to our community.

Our Children

Our children participate and benefit in all aspects of the Pride Center. They attend the many peer support groups, Queer Prom Night, drop-in center, events and activities such as movie nights, therapeutic services and more. The Pride Center is where they find community, safety, support, and, really, *home*.

Many of our children face immense challenges at school or work, and throughout their day-to-day living. As by and large hetero and cisgender parents--and precisely because we're their parents--there's a limit to how much our children will let us help them, and a limit to how much we're capable of helping. The Pride Center has stepped in to provide this crucial support and community.

Caregivers

Not only does the center offer services to our children but also to us as parents--services that we had beforehand mostly been going without.

Parents and guardians of transgender children have been overlooked by mental health and other service providers. We often need to educate ourselves in a matter of weeks or days, starting from what it even means to be transgender, in order to support our children. We also need to learn how to advocate for our children in school and medical settings, with health insurance, with family and neighbors and more. It's an enormous task, and one many caregivers try to accomplish while also tackling their own feelings of denial, grief, fear and isolation.

The Pride Center is the one place trying to fill this gap by offering services to caregivers.

Through the Pride Center, TFSV families have received one-on-one support, attended much-needed Gender & Name Change clinics and Trans Talks, which enable us to learn from industry experts about topics such as medical intervention and school advocacy for our children. Through these important Trans Talks, we're able to ask our questions in a safe and supportive environment and gain crucial knowledge that helps us to support our children.

The Pride Center also offers in-person support groups for caregivers of transgender children. This is the only support group for caregivers that we know of throughout San Mateo County.

The Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for the LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

TransFamilies of Silicon Valley joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma and marginalization to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

TransFamilies of Silicon Valley stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Warm regards,

Lara

(last name withheld to protect my child's confidentiality)

Founder and Director

TransFamilies of Silicon Valley

www.TransFamiliesSV.org

TransFamiliesSV@gmail.com



Department of Pediatrics
Division of Endocrinology

Stephen E. Gitelman, M.D.
Saleh Adi, M.D.
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Roger K. Long, M.D.
Robert H. Lustig, M.D.
Walter L. Miller, M.D.
Stephen M. Rosenthal, M.D.
Srinath Sanda, M.D.
Shylaja Srinivasan, M.D.
Jenise C. Wong, M.D., Ph.D.

Mission Hall
Global Health & Clinical Sciences
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San Francisco, CA 94143

September 17, 2018

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

I am the Medical Director of the UCSF Child and Adolescent Gender Center. I strongly support the two year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, an MHS Innovation project of the San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. The San Mateo County Pride Center has served as a highly valued partner as we provide multidisciplinary outreach services to gender expansive/ transgender youth and their families in San Mateo County. It is my strong impression that the San Mateo County Pride Center is providing educational and other support services to the families served by our clinic that are not available elsewhere.

The San Mateo County Pride Center, the first such location in all of San Mateo County, fills a gap in much needed services for LGBTQ+ community. The innovative design of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

The UCSF Child and Adolescent Gender Center joins the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout the county, with a special emphasis on reducing stigma, marginalization, and discrimination to enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

The UCSF Child and Adolescent Gender Center stands in proud support of the San Mateo County Pride Center.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen M. Rosenthal".

Stephen M. Rosenthal, MD
Professor of Pediatrics
Medical Director, Child and Adolescent Gender Center.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Palo Alto Health Care System
3801 Miranda Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94304



In reply refer to: 640/11

Toby Ewing
Executive Director
Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
1325 J Street, Suite 1700
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Ewing:

I would like to express my strong support for a two-year extension of time and funding for the Pride Center, a Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Innovation Project of San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. The VA Palo Alto Health Care System (VAPAHCS) has partnered with the San Mateo Pride Center for several events including a VAPAHCS conference on gender identity, a pride observance event for homeless lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Veterans, and the San Mateo Pride Festival. Additionally, VAPAHCS and the San Mateo Pride Center have been working together to facilitate training regarding LGBT Veteran suicide prevention.

The San Mateo Pride Center is a community resource provider distinctive in its support of LGBT Veterans and has consistently participated as speakers at LGBT Veteran events hosted by VAPAHCS. The Center has demonstrated great leadership in hosting the Orlando Memorial for victims of the Pulse Night Club shooting in Orlando, Florida. This event gave special focus to military Service Members and Veterans who were affected by this tragedy. The Center's dedication and ongoing support of LGBT Veterans are truly commendable.

The San Mateo County Pride Center is the first and only center of its kind located in San Mateo County, filling a gap in much needed services for the LGBT community. Its innovative design comprised of four partnering agencies operating together in close collaboration to offer multiple services has allowed the Center to become a one-stop-shop for clients of all ages including children, youth, adults, and older adults.

I join the San Mateo County Pride Center's quest to improve and expand services throughout San Mateo County, with a special emphasis on culturally-specific services for military and Veteran populations to enhance the wellbeing of the entire LGBT community. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Heliana Ramirez, PhD, LISW
Heliana Ramirez, PhD, LISW
LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator, VAPAHCS