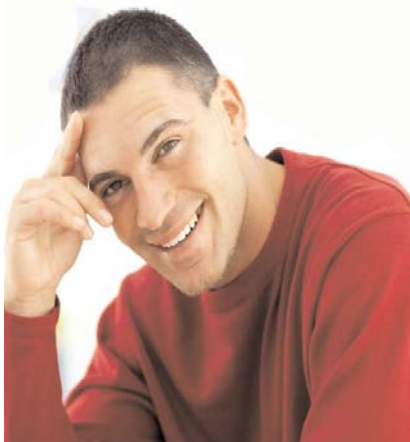




*Inaugural Issue  
Spring, 2008*

# YMCA GLBT

*A YMCA affinity group & leadership network for the YMCA GLBT community*



BY RYAN VANMETER

## Actions Speak Louder Than Words

The Lake View YMCA, an affiliate of the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago, is one of the most diverse community centers in the country. Our more than 8,600 members reflect the diverse community we serve, which includes people of all incomes, races,

**2** Help when you need it. YMCA GLBT Affinity Group/Leadership Network

**3** YMCA GLBT begins to identify affirming and welcoming YMCAs

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**4** Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index

religions, abilities, orientations and ages. The Lakeview community is one of the most vibrant neighborhoods in Chicago. This northside neighborhood includes high-rise apartment buildings, single family homes, churches and synagogues. Lakeview also includes the smaller neighborhoods of Wrigleyville, home of the Chicago Cubs, and Boystown, the landmarked gay entertainment district, which includes a new gay community center, the Center on Halsted. In the midst of all of the other activities in the neighborhood, including 18 other for profit gyms within a mile radius, the Lake View YMCA exists as a special place where everyone is welcome. Even though our 80 year old building isn't as shiny as the surrounding gyms, our 8,600 members still choose to be here.

I've been involved with the Lake View YMCA as a volunteer for more than five years. I've served as a board member, Annual Fund Chairman and currently serve as Board Chairman. As a new board member I was welcomed with open arms. My openness about being gay isn't and has never been an issue. We're all adults with the same goal and objective to improve and expand the reach of the services provided by the Y to our community.

The most refreshing gay-related Lake View YMCA experience

*“As a new board member I was welcomed with open arms.”*

for me was when I hosted a benefit on my birthday for the Y at my favorite gay bar, Roscoe's. I invited all of my friends, colleagues, YMCA staff and fellow board members to join me for food and drink donated by the bar and to make a contribution to the Y's Annual Support Campaign. It was a successful event. For many people it was their first time in a gay bar. The attendees even included clergy and elected officials. It was a great opportunity for a broad cross section of people to come together in the name of charity—in a gay bar! It was important for me to host the party at a gay bar because I wanted this event, which was extremely personal, to reflect the diversity of my life, being gay and being politically and charitably active.

It is sometimes easy for people to say they are ok with gay, but actions speak louder than words. Many people claim to believe in charity and give significant amounts of money to charitable causes, but never visit the beneficiaries of their charity because they like to keep it at arms length. At some level I was forcing people to show me they were ok with me being gay, by attending an event at a gay bar. As I said the event was a success. Actions do speak louder than words and that is the most beautiful part of a YMCA—that people who are all so different can all participate and be part of something that shows one other that we believe and understand that we are all the same.

## 2 Help when you need it—or don't

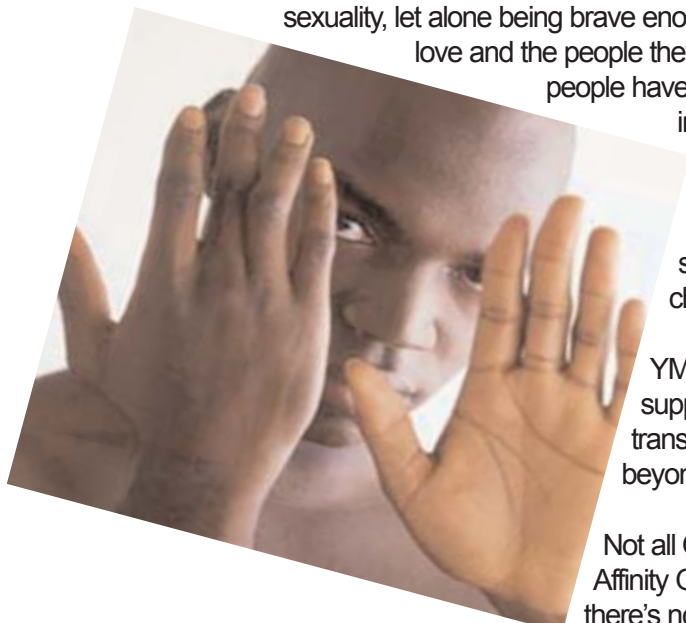
One of the goals of the YMCA GLBT Affinity Group is to provide a network of support for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered YMCA staff and volunteers. Support is often easier to cope with if it comes from people in the same position as yourself or at least by people who have been there and are now comfortable with life as a YMCA staff member who is gay..

Just because an individual has *come out* doesn't mean he or she is not feeling confused and unsure. Often, it takes years for some gay people to come to terms with their own sexuality, let alone being brave enough to expose themselves to people they love and the people they work with. Believe it or not some GLBT people have never knowingly met another GLBT individual in the YMCA movement and just may think they are the only one. It might even be how you probably felt about yourself not knowing anyone gay until you have a conversation with someone at a conference or neighborhood gathering or even a water cooler chat with another co-worker.

*“I remember living in fear that my Y Director might find out I had no place to turn.”*

YMCA GLBT wants to and will play a very important role in educating and supporting YMCA staff and volunteers who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered as well as be a resource to those YMCAs who want to move beyond **tolerance** to **acceptance** based on **respect** and **knowledge**.

Not all GLBT YMCA staff and volunteers wish to be involved in the YMCA GLBT Affinity Group *and that's ok*. The important thing is for YMCA staff and volunteers that there's not a feeling of *I'm the only one*—there is **support whenever one needs it**.



# 3 YMCA GLBT begins to identify welcoming and affirming YMCAs.

There is an aversion for YMCA staff who are GLBT from moving from one association to another. YMCA staff members who are GLBT may be limited to what YMCA member associations they can work for.

*"We use an inclusive definition of diversity that states: 'Diversity is the mosaic of people who bring a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, beliefs and competencies as assets to the YMCA groups and individuals with whom they interact.'"*

*The YMCA of Greater Seattle promotes and supports diversity and inclusion through its policies and benefits, including domestic partner benefits which were offered to full-time and part-time staff in 2001."*

YMCA of Greater Seattle

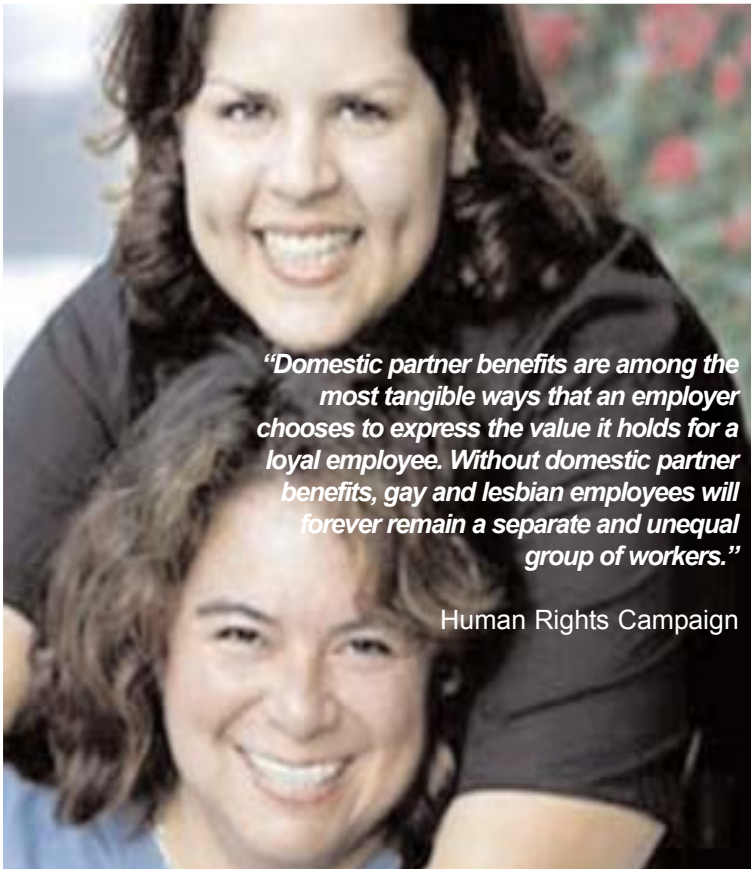
One way to identify an affirming YMCA to the GLBT community is the offering of domestic partner benefits. Below is a list of YMCA Associations that currently offer domestic partnerships. These are the YMCAs

that responded to the Y's Business Cafe Discussion Board question. There are many other YMCAs that offer domestic partner benefits that are not listed here.

We will update the list as we are notified. The following are **YMCAs that currently offer domestic partner benefits:**

*"Domestic partner benefits are among the most tangible ways that an employer chooses to express the value it holds for a loyal employee. Without domestic partner benefits, gay and lesbian employees will forever remain a separate and unequal group of workers."*

Human Rights Campaign



YMCA of Greater Providence (RI)	YMCA of Greater Rochester (NY)
YMCA of the USA (IL)	YMCA of Greater Seattle (WA)
YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago (IL)	McGaw YMCA (Evanston, IL)
YMCA of Central Ohio (Columbus, OH)	YMCA of Greater Boston (MA)
YMCA of the Mid-Peninsula (Palo Alto, CA)	Central Bucks Family YMCA (Doylestown, PA)
YMCA of Capital District (Albany, NY)	Greater St. Louis YMCA (MO)

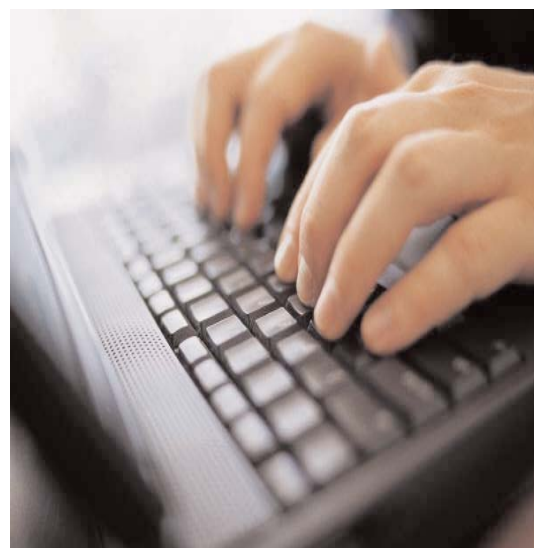


## 3 Just a Click Away

What's new on YMCA GLBT? More than **697 visits** were logged and more than **79 resources** were downloaded in the month of March. Visit us at [www.ymcaglb.org](http://www.ymcaglb.org)!

So what's new?

- ▼ YMCA Sample Policies on Domestic Partnerships ([resources.htm](#))
- ▼ Remembering Larry King ([about.htm](#))
- ▼ Information on other YMCA of the USA Affinity Groups ([home.htm](#))
- ▼ Web site statistics ([home.htm](#))
- ▼ Updated list of YMCAs who offer domestic partner benefits



# 4 Human Rights Campaign



## Corporate Equality Index: 2008 Employers that Rated 100 Percent

*"At Sprint, diversity is an essential part of the way we do business. We're working hard to create an inclusive workplace that ensures all voices and points of view are valued and respected. This, in turn, allows us to reach a broader base of customers with products and services that truly add value to their lives. Recognition like this from the Human Rights Campaign reinforces that this business approach is not just the smart thing to do; it's the right thing to do."*

Sandy Price, senior vice president of Human Resources,  
Sprint Nextel Corp.

- ▼ Aon Corp.
- ▼ Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals
- ▼ Cisco Systems Inc.
- ▼ DuPont
- ▼ Esurance Inc.
- ▼ Foley & Lardner LLP
- ▼ General Motors Corp.
- ▼ Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP
- ▼ McDermott Will & Emery LLP
- ▼ Nixon Peabody LLP
- ▼ Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP
- ▼ Raytheon Co.
- ▼ Sprint Nextel Corp.
- ▼ Starwood Hotels & Resorts
- ▼ Worldwide
- ▼ Sun Microsystems Inc.
- ▼ Supervalu Inc.
- ▼ Wells Fargo & Co.
- ▼ Yahoo! Inc.

### Rating Criteria:

- ▼ Equal Employment Opportunity policy includes sexual orientation
- ▼ Diversity training covers sexual orientation
- ▼ Equal Employment Opportunity policy includes gender identity and/or expression
- ▼ Gender identity diversity training offered or supportive gender transition guidelines in place
- ▼ Insurance includes access for transitioning individuals
- ▼ Domestic partner COBRA, dental, vision and legal dependent coverage
- ▼ GLBT employee resource group]
- ▼ Engages in appropriate and respectful advertising and marketing or sponsors GLBT community events or organizations
- ▼ Employer exhibits responsible behavior toward the GLBT community; does not engage in action that would undermine GLBT equality

*"General Motors is proud to be a part of this ever-growing group of businesses that recognize that non-discrimination policies and practices help attract and retain talented employees. The perfect HRC Corporate Equality Index score is also our way of showing GLBT customers that we support the community and appreciate their business."*

Rod Gillum, vice president for corporate responsibility and diversity,  
General Motors Corp.

**The Corporate Equality Index objectively measures how equitably large private businesses in the United States treat their gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender employees, consumers and investors.**

## Diversity Inc.'s Diversity 2008 top 50 companies

1. Verizon Communications
2. The Coca-Cola Co.
3. Bank of America
4. PricewaterhouseCoopers
5. Procter & Gamble
6. Cox Communications
7. Merrill Lynch & Co.
8. Johnson & Johnson
9. IBM
10. American Express
11. Marriott International
12. Sodexo
13. JPMorgan Chase
14. Wachovia
15. BC/Blue Shield of Florida
16. Deloitte
17. Ernst & Young
18. HSBC Bank USA, NA
19. Starwood Hotels
20. Cummins
21. Merck & Co.
22. AT&T
23. Turner Broadcasting
24. Prudential
25. Monsanto Co.
26. Wells Fargo & Co.
27. Ford Motor Co.
28. PepsiCo
29. Pepsi Bottling Group
30. Xerox Corp.
31. Novartis Pharmaceuticals
32. General Mills
33. KeyBank
34. Health Care Service Corp
35. Sprint
36. The Walt Disney Co.
37. Abbott
38. Accenture
39. Macy's
40. Henry Ford Health
41. Bright Horizons Solutions
42. WellPoint
43. Kaiser Permanente
44. General Motors
45. Citigroup
46. Capital One Financial
47. CSX
48. Toyota North America
49. KPMG
50. Hilton Hotels Corp.