

Perceptions Newsletter

Perceptions Inc. P.O. Box 1525, Midland, MI 48641 (989) 891-1429

Speaker Presentation

October 2003

Internal Homophobia

Signals from our family and from society tell us whether we are acceptable or not. Dr Michael Stemmeler helped the Perceptions members in attendance at the October meeting take a look at some of those signals in media ads and commercials, churches and other institutions, family expectations, etc. He was able to show how the main message is NO HOMOSEXUALITY ACCEPTED through negative portrayal or by omission in these sources. These signals and/or the lack of them feed into our psyche and leave us feeling very negative about ourselves. The result can be an Internal Homophobia that keeps the GLBT individual from realizing his or her full potential.

'Know thy enemy' could be a good summary of Dr Stemmeler's presentation. By paying attention to these cultural, institutional, and spiritual forces that seek to define us, we can minimize our own internal hatred of who we are. His speech included some signs of change in mainstream media, but stressed there is still a long way to go to help curb change the internal portraits we paint.

Thank you, Michael, for being a "pinch-hitter" speaker and shedding some light on such a huge topic with such humor and style.

An interesting article on Internal Homophobia and some of its consequences can be found at:
<http://www.iraniangaydoctors.com/article3.htm>

November's Speaker

Dr Charissa Urbano
Professor of Biology
Delta College

You've heard of all the literature that says there is a gene for homosexuality and that proves you're born that way. Is there really such a gene or is it a learned or chosen behavior? Come on out to our November session and hear Charissa, a genetics professor, talk about this issue in informative and laymen's terms.

Here is a primer article on genetics and human behavior including sexual orientation:
http://www.nuffieldbioethics.org/publications/pp_000000015.asp

Don't forget that November's meeting will be November 20th since Thanksgiving falls on the 27th.



Opening doors for the Mid-Michigan GLBT Community

Calendar Highlights:

Tuesday, Nov. 18th
Indoor Co-Ed Volleyball
YWCA, 3405 Midland
Rd in Bay City. 7-9 pm

Wednesday, Nov. 19th
Meet & Greet at Bay
City Coffee and Tea,
810 Saginaw St, Bay
City, MI 7-9 pm

Thursday, Nov. 20th
Perceptions General
Meeting 7-9 pm, UU,
6220 Jefferson, Midland

Sunday, Nov. 23rd
PFLAG Tri-Cities
Meeting, UU, 6220
Jefferson, Midland, 2-
4:30 pm

Thursday, Dec. 11th
Second Annual Holiday
Party, Montague Inn,
Saginaw, 7-10pm

Sunday, Dec. 14th
Children's Holiday
Party, Jefferson Ave.
United Methodist
Church, Saginaw. 2-4 pm

To receive email alerting
about upcoming events,
send your email address
to [PerceptionsSV-
owner@yahoo.com](mailto:PerceptionsSV-owner@yahoo.com)

From the Desk of the Chair

Mindy Pennington

Change of Season

The Perceptions Board is undergoing some changes in preparation for the New Year. Paul Wright is moving out of state and leaving the Board (see sidebar), and elections are coming in December. The Board will need five new Board members for terms beginning in January 2004.

Being a Board member is very rewarding, because you are providing a service to the GLBT community in Mid-Michigan. We are creating a more cohesive GLBT community in several ways. We invite speakers to enhance our knowledge of our community organizations and to teach us how we can help ourselves. We are reaching out to area businesses and community organizations like the YWCA, Hearth Home, Underground Railroad and BASIS. Furthermore, Board participation also develops leadership, planning, budgeting, and governing skills.

If you are interested in being a board member, please note that nominations are due by [December 9th, 2003](#). You can nominate yourself or someone else for the Board by sending a letter or an email to board@PerceptionsSV.org. We are looking forward to the submissions! Our mailing address is Perceptions, P.O. Box 1525, Midland, MI 48641.

I would also like to report a change in the structure of the Executive Committee. On October 21st, 2003, the Board voted to change the Perceptions Bylaws for two Board positions. The Board will now have a Chair and a Vice-Chair instead of Co-Chairs. I am the current Chair and I am in the process of writing a document that outlines responsibilities of the two positions.

Now, with all of the work that we are doing it's time to have some fun at the **Holiday Party and Silent Auction** on December 11th at The Montague Inn in Saginaw. Many of my straight (but not narrow) friends are coming to this event to have fun with Shelly and me, and I hope you have invited your straight friends as well. This event allows everyone the opportunity to get dressed up and have a night on the town, regardless of sexual orientation. Bring some of your friends to the party so we can change the broader community's perception of GLBT people one person at a time. Isn't that what Perceptions is really about? See you on December 11th!

Mindy Pennington

WANTED: BOARD MEMBERS

Several Board seats will be open for terms beginning January 1st, 2004.

Qualities desired include enthusiasm, hard work, decision-making, having time for meetings, and fun with a great group of people!

Requirements: you must be a donor member to be on the Board. In addition, according to the Bylaws, the Board as a whole has to raise \$2400 collectively each year for Perceptions.

If you are interested, contact a Board Member, send an email to Board@PerceptionsSV.org or call us at 989-891-1429. We would love to give you more information!



Paul Wright to Leave Midland



Perceptions

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Phone:

(989) 891-1429

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Paul Wright, Perceptions Co-Chair, is moving out of state and leaving the Perceptions organization. Wright was one of the founders of Perceptions and has been active in the Michigan GLBT community for over 20 years.

During the October 30th Perceptions meeting, Wright was presented with a thank you gift from the Perceptions Board. Mindy Pennington, Chair, commented, "Paul was the one willing to be out, to be the face for GLBT people in Mid-Michigan even though anti-gay activists were unjustifiably harsh to him in the media."

Wright was surprised during the presentation and added that although we have come so far this year, many anti-gay initiatives are still a concern. "Michigan Senator Alan Cropsey has introduced a constitutional amendment to define marriage in Michigan solely for a man and a woman [Senate Joint Resolution E]. Yes, there is talk about a Federal Marriage amendment as well, but do not be as concerned about the federal amendment. The Michigan amendment is of great concern to GLBT people, and we should contact our local representatives to make sure they know we do not want the Michigan Constitution amended for this issue."

Many Perceptions members thanked him for the work he has done and wished him well for his future endeavors. Good luck Paul!

Welcome P-Kids!

Children's Holiday Party December 14th

Wouldn't you like your kids to hang out with some other children who have gay and lesbian parents? This activity will give our "P-Kids" a chance to do just that! Bring your friends and their kids for a fun, free play date!

What: Perceptions Children's Holiday Party. Free admission for cookie decorating, art projects and story time!

Children and extended family of Perceptions members, prospective members and allies are welcome. The event is geared for those 12 and younger, but older youth can certainly attend (and help out if interested)!

Date: Sunday, December 14, 2003

Time: 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. (For volunteers, set up is at 1 pm, tear down until about 5)

Place: Jefferson Avenue United Methodist Church, 310 S. Jefferson Ave. in Downtown Saginaw.

Planned activities: Meet-and-Munch (finger foods and punch), decorate-your-own cookies, an art project, and perhaps story time or a kids game in the parlor.

Please contact Vanessa at vmarr@netzero.com to volunteer, or if you would like more information about the P-Kids party. You can also leave a message on the Perceptions line at 989-891-1429. We will get back to you with more information!

ONE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: We need someone to help bake the cookies in advance of the event. Perceptions will provide the pre-shaped cookie dough. They just need to be baked one day in advance.

WWW.PERCEPTIONSSV.ORG

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DO YOU HAVE AN EVENT YOU'D LIKE ADDED TO PERCEPTIONS CALENDAR OF EVENTS?

Submit your event to board@perceptionssv.org

Calendar of Events & Activities

Tuesday, November 11th, Indoor Co-ed Volleyball, YWCA, 3405 Midland Rd in Bay City. 7-9 pm. We'll accept donations for the \$10 cost of the gym. Open to all.

Saturday, November 15th, Affirming Women Festival, 12:00 pm, Centennial Hall, 306 W. Michigan, Mount Pleasant, Michigan. This fun, all-day event features a business expo, 10 workshops and a silent auction in the afternoon (light lunch provided for full festival ticket holders). A buffet style meal along with a live auction and a dance highlight the evening events. For information, go to the website at <http://www.affirmingwomen.org/> or call Lori at 989-773-8477. An all-day ticket is \$25. **Stop by the Perceptions booth during the Festival!**

Tuesday, November 18th, Indoor Co-ed Volleyball, YWCA, 3405 Midland Rd in Bay City. 7-9 pm. We'll accept donations for the \$10 cost of the gym. Open to all.

Wednesday, November 19th, Meet & Greet at Bay City Coffee and Tea, 810 Saginaw St, Bay City, MI 7-9 pm. This is an Informal get-together in a non-smoking coffeehouse with hot and cold drinks, sandwiches and desserts. Come from all around the Tri-Cities and enjoy a hot cup of coffee with friends.

Thursday, November 20th, Perceptions General Meeting 7-9 pm Located at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6220 Jefferson, Midland. Dr. Charissa Urbano will be speaking on the topic of nature vs. nurture: which influences homosexuality. *Please note that due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, our monthly meeting has been moved up one week.*

Thursday, November 20th, National Transgender Day of Remembrance, Unitarian Universalist Church of Greater Lansing, 855 Grove St, East Lansing, MI at 7 pm. Speakers include representatives from the office of Governor Jennifer Granholm; Rachel Crandall, ACSW, Executive Director of Transgender Michigan; Jay Kaplan, Staff Attorney for the GLBT Law Project of the ACLU; Berl Schwartz, editor and publisher of the City Pulse; and representative from the office of Senator Virgil Bernero. For more information: Rachel Crandall at 517-347-3681, or visit the TransGender Michigan at www.transgendermichigan.org

Sunday, November 23rd, PFLAG Tri-Cities Meeting, UU, 6220 Jefferson, Midland, 2-4:30 pm.

Tuesday, November 25th, Indoor Co-ed Volleyball, YWCA, 3405 Midland Rd in Bay City. 7-9 pm. We'll accept donations for the \$10 cost of the gym. Open to all

November 30th and December 1st, Names Project: Memorial AIDS Quilt Exhibit Delta College, Bay City, MI Sunday, Nov 30th, 1 to 6 p.m. and Dec 1st, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Saginaw-Bay HIV/AIDS Task Force is looking for volunteers for this exhibit. Volunteer duties will include distributing programs and greeting guests, serving as monitors of the quilt, serving refreshments, and setting up and dismantling the exhibit. To volunteer, contact Tom Brubaker, HIV/AIDS Care Program Outreach Coordinator at BASIS, at (989) 894-2991 or TB941963@yahoo.com

Thursday, December 11th Second Annual Holiday Party Montague Inn, 1581 South Washington Avenue, Saginaw, Michigan 7-10 PM with a silent auction from 7 until 9. Ticket and general information can be found at <http://www.perceptionssv.org/mont.html>

Saturday, April 17th, 2004 Perceptions Health Fair YWCA of Bay County, 3405 Midland Rd., Bay City. This event co-sponsored by Perceptions, the YWCA and Hearth Home will provide access to healthcare experts in the areas of Fitness & Wellness, HIV Testing, Healthcare for Low Income Individuals, and much more. Mark your calendar now for this important event.

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