



2021 Update



THE SPARTANBURG COUNTY FOUNDATION
Your Community Foundation

*The LGBT Fund is a component fund of
The Spartanburg County Foundation; a charitable
organization under Internal Revenue Code 501(c)3.

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- Milliken & Co.
- Nancy Milliken
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- Out in the South Initiative
- Kathie and Peter Weisman

Dear LGBT Fund supporters:

All of us involved with the Fund hope you are doing well in a time of continued uncertainty. While the past two years have brought unprecedented challenges, one thing remains crystal clear—the importance of community and partnerships. The LGBT Fund Grants Advisory Committee thanks you for your support in the past. We hope that you will continue your support this year so we can sustain our grantees that serve vulnerable populations.

While we were unable to hold an in-person fundraiser last year due to COVID-19, many of you still generously gave to support the LGBT Fund and our grantees, whose services were even more vital in the midst of the pandemic. Thanks to you, we were able to meet a generous \$25,000 matching grant from the Freeman Foundation as well as a separate \$25,000 match from the Out in the South Initiative of Funders for LGBTQ Issues. With your generous donations and the two matches, we raised enough resources to sustain our grantmaking. As a result, in early 2021, we awarded \$85,000 in grants to 10 organizations—bringing our total grants awarded to **more than \$365,000** since our founding.

This past year and a half, our grantee partners have continued to provide vital services and programming for LGBT communities, many of whom faced even greater need and isolation due to the economic and health challenges related to the COVID pandemic. Our Grants Advisory Committee felt deeply inspired by the many creative ways our LGBT nonprofits are serving our communities in the most challenging of circumstances. Some examples: *Uplift Outreach Center* provided curbside pick-up for care packages for youth and families, and *Piedmont Care* offered at-home HIV testing. *Proud Mary Theatre* initially shifted to virtual performances, and this past summer performed outdoor productions for the first time. *Pride Link* has developed Spartanburg’s first LGBTQ community wellness center, which will launch later this year. *Upstate Pride* has grown the diversity of its programming, launching new events and programs celebrating trans communities, Black LGBTQ communities, and Latinx LGBTQ communities. Find more information about this organizations on the reverse.

This year, we were hoping we could reunite for our annual fall fundraiser. Milliken & Company had generously agreed to host the event, and we were looking forward to celebrating the work of the Fund and of Spartanburg’s growing and vibrant LGBT community. Alas, the resurgence of the Delta variant intervened, and we had to cancel the event yet again.

But, like our grantee partners, we have sought creative ways to continue our work. Early this year, we launched a website for the LGBT Fund at spartanburg-lgbt-fund.com. The new site gives us visibility, tells both our story and those of our grantees, and provides an easy way for benefactors to donate. This fall, our partners at Milliken & Company have generously helped our grantee partners produce short videos describing their valuable work, providing them with a new tool for communications and fundraising. Milliken & Co. also helped the LGBT Fund develop our own video to tell the story of our work and of Spartanburg’s growing LGBT community. Look for the videos on our website soon.

While our in-person fundraiser is canceled, the need to support our wonderful LGBT organizations is greater than ever. You can donate directly to the Fund on the “donate” button on our webpage or by scanning the QR code below. Alternatively, you can use the enclosed envelope to send in your contribution. Checks should be made out to The Spartanburg County Foundation with “LGBT Fund” on the memo line. For those of you with Donor Advised Funds at The Spartanburg County Foundation, you can request a donation via the usual process.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the LGBT Fund. As you can see from the grantees on the next page, it has improved the lives of LGBT people in Spartanburg.

Donate now!

Use the QR code here to link directly to the LGBT Fund donation page at The Spartanburg County Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization.



2021 Grantees

GENDER BENDERS

Gender Benders is a grassroots organization for transgender and gender diverse folks in the Southeast. Funding supported their Trans Health Resource Project, which helps connect transgender people with vital health resources and provides cultural competency training to help healthcare providers be more effective in supporting trans patients.

PFLAG SPARTANBURG

PFLAG Spartanburg seeks to unite LGBTQ people with families, friends, and allies and to advance equality through support, education, and advocacy. PFLAG has continued to provide peer support spaces for parents of LGBTQ young people through Zoom and other virtual formats. This year's funding supported their Spartanburg Equality Scholarships Program, which provides financial assistance for local LGBTQ youth pursuing a college education.

PIEDMONT CARE

Piedmont Care serves people living with HIV/AIDS through care, prevention, and advocacy. Funding has supported HIV testing and counseling, condom distribution & education, and HIV education initiatives. Piedmont Care continued to provide its essential services during COVID, including implementing at-home HIV testing, making testing accessible while allowing for social distancing.

PRIDE LINK

Pride Link strives to improve the quality of life for all LGBTQ+ people in the upstate of South Carolina by making resources available to members of the LGBTQ+ community via a Mobile Community Center. Funding this year helped the organization continue to offer services with appropriate COVID protocols and to develop Spartanburg's first LGBTQ community wellness center, launching in late 2021.

PROUD MARY THEATRE

Proud Mary Theatre Company represents LGBTQ voices and stories in Spartanburg and the entire Upstate region through theatrical plays, compelling dramas, rib-tickling comedies, campy musicals, and local original works and avant-garde pieces that celebrate diversity and tolerance. Funding this year helped Proud Mary produce COVID-safe outdoor productions.

SPEAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Speaking Down Barriers uses spoken word poetry, transformative dialogue, workshops, and deep listening as tools to build an equitable world through healing and justice. Funding supported monthly community dialogues regarding the intersections of oppression between Black and LGBTQ communities.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SPARTANBURG

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Spartanburg is working with a consortium of cooperating congregations to build a network of congregants and congregations supporting LGBTQ communities in Spartanburg. Funding this year supported the launch of an online resource hub for "LGBTQ Theologies," which features LGBTQ theologians and spiritual leaders confronting homophobic uses of the Bible and sharing perspectives on the liberating power of spiritual traditions.

UPLIFT OUTREACH CENTER

Uplift Outreach Center was founded in 2019 to provide a safe space and programming for LGBT youth and their allies. Our funding helped launch this new organization, which now serves more than 120 youth. Uplift adapted creatively to the challenges of COVID, shifting peer support groups to virtual formats and offering monthly care packages for youth and their families.

UPSTATE PRIDE SC

Upstate Pride SC seeks to empower people of all gender expressions and sexual identities in the Upstate of South Carolina by promoting acceptance through education, advocacy, and networking. In recent years, funding has supported Upstate Pride in growing the diversity of its programming, including the first Black Pride Unity Festival and programming lifting up trans communities and Latinx communities.

UPSTATE LGBT+ CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce empowers local queer business entrepreneurs, individuals and allied partners to generate creative and economic value for our local communities. Funding helped this new organization launch its first programming in 2021.