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## local news

### New faces

Three local nonprofit agencies change leadership in the past three months

by Martha Allen

Three of the Portland gay and lesbian community's nonprofit agencies have new directors, people who are hoping to lead their groups to increased visibility in the state. The board of directors at the Cascade AIDS Project, the Phoenix Rising Foundation and the Right to Privacy Political Action Committee have all selected new directors since April.

The Cascade AIDS Project has offered support services and educational programs to people affected by HIV disease and the general public since 1983. Recently, the nonprofit agency has been in the news because of financial problems.

New executive director Susan I. Stoltenberg says that a Justice Department review due out this month will clear the agency of any hint of wrongdoing. Stoltenberg was hired April 20, but started her full-time duties at CAP June 1.

Formerly the executive director of an adoption agency, Stoltenberg said that the auditors praised her selection as the new CAP director. "I think the board recognized the need for someone with development skills, and with experience in management of community resources for a nonprofit organization," she said. "They didn't just limit their search to gay white men with AIDS."

Stoltenberg says that pulling CAP out of the backlash of its financial problems will be the biggest challenge she has ever had.

"I believe that HIV and AIDS is a community issue," Stoltenberg said. "It's not just a gay issue. In many ways, AIDS has deprived the community of its very fabric, of the threads that created strength in that fabric in the community."

"Of course, gay men are the most affected," she said. "But the piece nobody talks about is the way the rest of the community suffers. The loss to AIDS of employees, actors and others whose work affects the entire community will forever change who we are," Stoltenberg said. "And we can't afford that loss."

As the CAP director, Stoltenberg plans to extend fund-raising efforts beyond the gay and lesbian community. She also plans once-a-month brown bag sessions, set for the first Tuesday of each month at noon in the CAP offices. Through the sessions—which start July 5—Stoltenberg hopes to get community feedback on how CAP is doing. A newsletter also is available.

For more information, contact CAP at 620 SW Fifth Ave., Suite 300, Portland, 97204.

At Phoenix Rising, new director Allanya Guenther will start work July 5. A Portland resident who most recently worked at a family shelter for adolescent girls, Guenther says she is looking forward to

a job where she can be out, professionally.

Phoenix Rising has been providing mental health services and counseling for sexual minorities since 1977.

Before moving to Portland, Guenther was executive director at the Pacific Center for Human Growth in Berkeley, Calif. The mental health agency served gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, Guenther said, and was of comparable size with Phoenix Rising.

"For me, one of the most exciting jobs I had was at Pacific Center," Guenther said. "It was the first opportunity I had to come out professionally, and be validated for that. It's a very liberating and empowering thing."

The explosion of AIDS in the Bay Area led to an increasing need for the center's services, she said. "I developed a support service program for people with AIDS, and expanded cultural awareness, and developed programs in response to ethnic sexual minorities, as well."

"I'm looking forward to re-engaging professionally with the community, and bringing the same opportunity for improvement, expansion and enhancement of services to Oregon as I did to the Pacific Center."

"I really feel like Portland is my home, and I hope people will feel free to introduce themselves and help Phoenix Rising set an agenda to respond to the community's needs," Guenther said.



Susan I. Stoltenberg

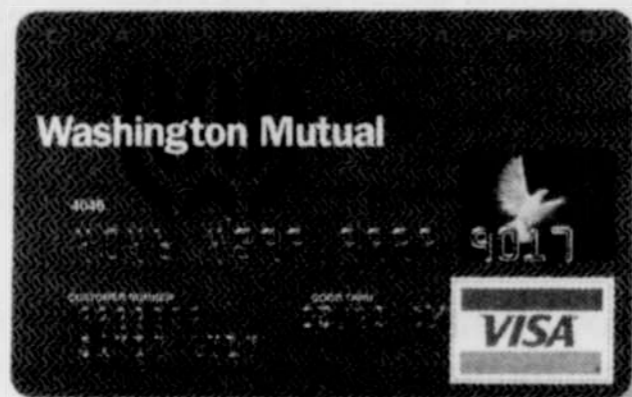
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Allanya Guenther

PHOTO BY LINDA KLEWER

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