

NORTHWEST news**CHANGES AT EQUITY****Foundation hires new employees**

by Jaymee R. Cuti

It wasn't a massive walkout that caused Equity Foundation to lose two-thirds of its staff in recent months. In fact, this organization, known for keeping a lean administration, only lost two employees to create the turnover.

"We are fortunate to have two people coming in who are highly skilled to keep us moving in a positive direction," said Linda Traeger, executive director at Equity Foundation.

The philanthropic giving organization serving the sexual minorities community lost its

Annette Hogue, the new marketing and development coordinator, came to Equity from the corporate world. She has 15 years of experience in business, most recently in information technology at Weyerhaeuser, which was acquired by a Fortune 500 company. She also has Web experience and will manage Equity's site.

"I left the corporate world because I wanted to enter the nonprofit world to make a difference, especially with this uncertain political climate," said Hogue, who is a lesbian.



From left, Equity Foundation's staff is Annette Hogue, Linda Traeger and Amy Williams.

marketing and development coordinator, Jedidiah Chavez, early in the summer and Christa Orth, a three-year Equity veteran, last month.

"They were career-growth opportunities for both people," said Traeger about what she describes as amicable departures.

Chavez returned to the education sector, which has been a primary interest in his career, as the director of communications for Western States Chiropractic College.

Orth joined the team at Reach Community Development as the resource development coordinator.

The replacements are already on post, to the relief of a flustered Traeger.

"It's made me have to be a little more focused in understanding how things are done," she said. "I've had to step in and learn the nitty-gritty."

Amy Williams joins Equity as the new grants and development coordinator. She is a lesbian, a mom, a native Oregonian and a former coordinator at the LGBT Community Center in Seattle.

"I have a passion for working in the LGBT community and somewhere that values diversity and gives back to the community," said Williams.

Williams is the human face interacting with grantee organizations. She leads the grants committee; is the point person for the Investments in Dignity benefit auction Feb. 16, 2006, at the Governor Hotel; and leads workplace giving campaigns.

The organization is using this time of transition to launch some new campaigns and is conducting a "perception survey" about the agency's visibility. The survey results, which are being collected now, will help Equity refresh its image, a duty Hogue will steer.

Hogue is also leading the launch of Growing Our Community, an annual campaign drive that aims to raise \$250,000 by the end of the year. Equity bolstered the campaign by handing out seed packets and donation information at Pride events in Portland, Salem, Coos Bay, Eugene, Ashland and Vancouver, Wash.

Equity has more than doubled the number of education scholarship funds it facilitates, with the addition of two new scholarship programs through the Portland Area Business Association and Kaiser Permanente and the reactivation of the *Just Out* Scholarship Fund.

"We really are continuing to expand the number of people who are marking their dollars by giving through Equity," Traeger said.

Donors who give through Equity Foundation may earmark their funds to categories including arts/culture, human dignity, health/social services and youth/families. All organizations that receive gifts from Equity have aligned themselves with the agency's values of promoting diversity and inclusiveness.

"There's a lot of activity going on, and I think Equity's credibility and integrity in running lean, tight systems will make sure we continue to meet community need," Traeger said. **JO**

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