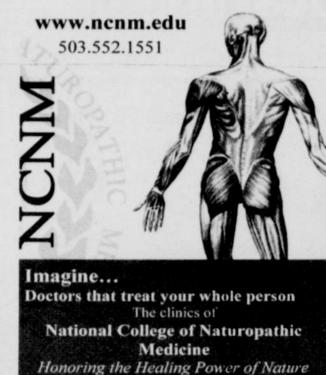


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MORTHWIST newsbriefs

VOLUNTEER AT SMYRC!

A volunteer training will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 17 for adults interested in giving some time at the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center.

eral interactive workshops, hear youth stories and learn conflict resolution skills. After the training, volunteers are expected to commit to about four hours every other week, either working during drop-in times or facilitating an activ-



SMYRC kids march proudly during Portland Pride 2005.

SMYRC is open from 4 to 9 p.m. Wednesdays and from 4 to 11 p.m. Fridays.

Volunteers are needed to facilitate support and recreation groups for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, pansexual and allied kids 23 and younger.

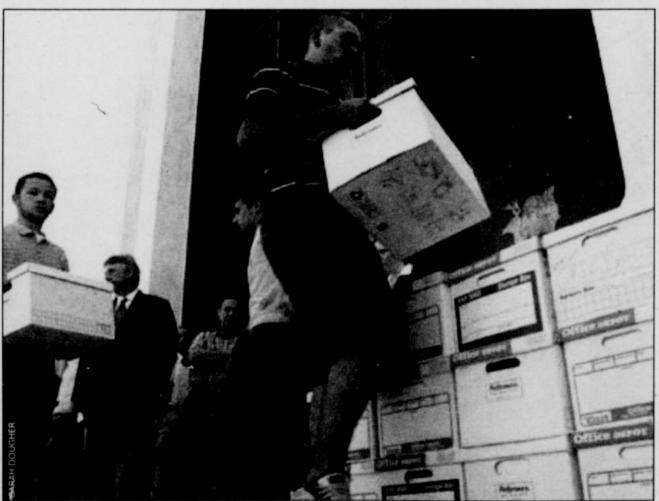
Volunteers need not have any special skills beyond a confident approach to younger people. SMYRC provides a variety of services such as counseling, writing groups, art therapy, life skills, educational assistance, drama workshops and more.

Volunteers are asked to submit an application, be contacted by phone and agree to fill out a criminal background check form at the training. They are required to attend an extensive daylong training and orientation to prepare them for the variety of situations that may be encountered at SMYRC. Lunch will be provided, and attendees will get to participate in sevity or support group for youth. Some people prefer coming every week, and others once a month.

Supervisor Zan Gibbs notes that as part of SMYRC's youth-run system, there are no adults in leadership roles, which can make some adults uncomfortable. The youth make the rules, cofacilitate groups and plan major events, such as participation in Portland Pride or the AIDSWalk. But this system empowers youth with skills of decision making, community building and cooperation.

"You can't be shy around here," says Gibbs. "It's sometimes very loud and intimidating." SMYRC hosts between 60 and 70 youth each night at its headquarters on Southeast Belmont Street.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a volunteer, contact Gibbs at 503-872-9664, ext. 27, or zan@cascadiabhc.org.



Members of the Defense of Marriage Coalition stack 27 boxes outside the Capitol in Salem last year, containing signatures in support of what eventually became Measure 36.