



MARTY DAVIS

includes providing services to lesbians and transgender people of color in addition to same-gender-loving African-American men.

Unity Project of Oregon will have a broader social justice agenda while aiming to meet health and social service needs.

Visit www.unityprojectoregon.org later this month to view the agency's new logo.

Meaningful Care Conference Educates Medical Practitioners

Research data indicate the queer community faces a number of barriers to health services: Sexual minority youth are more likely to commit suicide than their straight counterparts; gay men and lesbians are at an increased risk for lung, cervical, breast and anal cancers; and the AIDS crisis still disproportionately affects queer populations. To combat these disparities, the

second week of April is National LGBT Health Awareness Week. The week is aimed at educating medical practitioners and students on the best practices to effectively relate, treat and diagnose the unique health care needs of the queer community.

In response to the national effort, the office of Multnomah County Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey is sponsoring the Meaningful Care Conference at the Oregon Convention Center. Now in its third year, the conference is aimed at improving the quality of health care for the queer community. Focusing on information for medical practitioners and medical students, the conference seeks to improve the level of health care for queers.

"The philosophy behind this project is deeply rooted in respect, compassion and social justice," said Lillian Shirley, Multnomah County Health Department director. "To provide the best care possible, clinicians must create a safe environment

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Alisa Simmons is here to stay, after accepting the permanent executive director position at Unity Project of Oregon, formerly Brother to Brother.

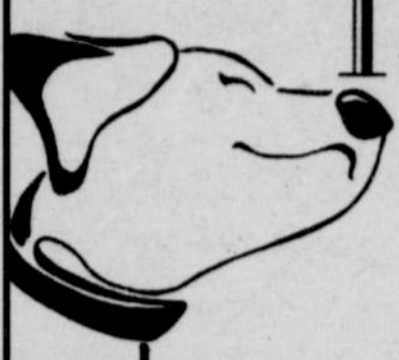
Alisa Simmons, the group's permanent executive director, created buzz for the organization by promising a name change to match the organization's new, expanded mission at a renaming ceremony and logo launch Feb. 29 at Chesterfield Lounge.

Dignitaries, candidates for public office and supporters showed up for the news and nosh, including former Multnomah County Chair Diane Linn; U.S. Senate candidate Steve Novick; longtime lesbian activist Kathleen Saadat; the Rev. Tara Wilkins of Community of Welcoming Congregations; Jeana Frazzini, executive director of Basic Rights Oregon, with other BRO staff; philanthropists Alex and Kevin Bailey-Gilliam; and Patricia Keeney, former state coordinator for Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays' Oregon State Council.

Brother to Brother, Simmons explained, no longer fit the organization's focus, which now



The 2008 Meaningful Care Conference committee brings attention to health care disparities for sexual minorities.



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