

Regarding the new post with CAP, Kaplan said in a written statement: "It's been over 10 years since I left my role as executive director for a community-based organization. During the last decade, I've worked with literally hundreds of organizations in the U.S. and abroad on HIV and have been blessed with opportunities to see and learn so much. More than anything, I've learned my passion is at the community level, and I can't imagine a better place to focus that than in Portland with CAP."

Volleyball Association Hosts Grass Tournament

Not even ground saturation from an evening of rainstorms nor a day of dark skies could stop the Portland Gay Volleyball Association from hosting a grass volleyball tournament Aug. 9. More than 50 players and fans filled up Brentwood Park in Southeast Portland for a full day of play.

"In comparison to sand volleyball, grass is a much easier surface to move on," said Tomas Tellez regarding the choice of the courts. "Plus, we have more abundance of parks to play on than beaches."

Teams of four were picked to compete against each other, each using a campy name inspired by one of this summer's popular movies ("Sperma Mia," "Triple X Files").

Action on the courts, however, was no laughing matter. Using constant directional shouts like, "I go, I go" or "Out," teams played their best, working on athletic ability as well as communication.

"I have not played in about five years, but being out here it is amazing how the feel of the game just comes back to me," said Rob McElroy about the day's game play. "I love it."

The grass tournament was also a chance for players to get ready for the Portland Gay Volleyball Association's open invitational Oct. 11 and 12 at Tualatin Hills Recreation Center. In preparation for the tournament, gym sessions are open to all interested athletes on a weekly basis at Hillside Community Center.

For more information about practice times and other social events, check out www.portlandgay-volleyball.org.

P:ear Reopens with Benefit

P:ear, a homeless and transitional youth organization, is reopening in a new location at 338 N. W. Sixth Ave. with a "pre-p:ear" preview and benefit from 6 to 9 p.m. Sept. 3. The event will help raise money for the purchase of the building while previewing artwork in the on-site gallery.

When p:ear lost its lease earlier this year, the community rallied in support of the programs

providing arts and education mentoring for homeless youth, helping raise enough money to remodel the building.

"Pre-p:ear" will feature fine Italian wines, food prepared by chef Robert Reynolds, music by Tim DuRoche, a raffle at 7:15 p.m. and art by Hayley Barker, Irana Douer, Maureen Gubia, Nicole Erika Smith and p:ear youth. The exhibition is curated by Kelly Rauer.

Tickets are \$50 from www.pearmentor.org.

Reitan Helps Ratchet Up Queer Support for Obama

Jacob Reitan knows the struggle for equality for gays and lesbians is his generation's civil rights movement. That's why the 26-year-old activist is calling the queer community to arms with LGBTForObama.com.

Reitan has relocated to Portland to assist Terry Bean, Portland real estate broker, gay rights activist and philanthropist, who also serves as a national finance committee member for the presidential campaign of U.S. Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill. Together, Reitan and Bean are working to elect Obama by raising money for and awareness of the candidate.

The Web site offers links comparing Obama's queer rights track record to that of U.S. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. It also has a donation option and suggestions for raising money.

Raising money is a large part of Reitan's modus operandi because of Obama's decision to decline public financing, forgoing about \$84 million in federal funds. This leaves Obama and his supporters—like Bean and Reitan—responsible for raising the entirety of his nine-figure campaign budget.

Reitan has previously raised money for queer programs, and has a history of achievements stretching back to when he created his Mankato, Minn., high school's first Gay Straight Alliance.

At 23, Reitan conceived Soulforce Equality Ride, a traveling group of advocates bringing awareness of gay issues to faith-based universities, making him the poster boy for reconciling religion and politics. His appearance in the 2007 documentary *For the Bible Tells Me So* added to his growing recognition in promoting queer rights.



High-profile queer activist Jacob Reitan has turned his focus to the presidential campaign for U.S. Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill.

"Everything is on the line," Reitan said. "It is clear as day that Barack Obama is the most LGBT-friendly major party nominee for this election. He is for the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act and the military's 'don't ask, don't tell' policy."

In a letter to *Windy City Times* in February 2004, Obama said, "[I] have taken on the issue of civil rights for the LGBT community as if they were my own struggle because I believe strongly that the infringement of rights for any one group eventually endangers the rights enjoyed under law by the entire population."

If McCain is elected president, Reitan predicts at least a decade of setbacks to queer rights.

"There are so many reasons outside of gay and lesbian issues why not to elect McCain," he said. "His stance on the war, health care and tax cuts, for example. In addition, he has no willingness to help the lesbian and gay person or family. He supports the right for employers to fire someone because he or she is gay and is against same-sex couples adopting children."

However, if Obama wins the presidency, Reitan says queer equality is ensured. "We need to put our sweat, money and time into the effort to have a president that recognizes our humanity, dignity and worth."

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SARAH DOUGHER



The Fortis Construction crew is hard at work remodeling the p:ear building in time for its Sept. 3 reopening art show and benefit.

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