

NEWS



(left to right) Rebecca Hetrick, David Martin, Meg Jeske, Allene Gould, Trisha Balicanta, and Dr. Adrienne Wolmark of the YWCA counseling center. "At the time that I started, counseling services in general were dwindling, but especially for LGBT folks and especially for those without a lot of resources," says Wolmark.

the coalition idea.

Wolmark needs between \$50-60,000 to continue offering existing services in the current location, independent of YWCA. The center is staffed primarily by interns and volunteers, so it functions without much overhead.

Wolmark came onboard a decade ago and has been instrumental in forming partnerships within the sexual and gender minority communities. She also puts staff, interns and volunteers through gay, lesbian, bi and trans-specific training. "At the time that I started, counseling services in general were dwindling, but especially for LGBT folks and especially for those without a lot of resources," says Wolmark.

Dr. Suzanne Scopes, director of the Outside In-Trans/Identity Resource Center clinic, calls the cut "a huge loss for us." The YWCA counseling center has worked with Outside In's clinic since the latter's inception in September 2005. "In terms of patients that are low-income, it's a huge gap that we don't know how we will make up," Scopes adds.

YWCA's counseling center is one of the primary places to which the Outside In

clinic refers people in the process of transitioning. For example, Outside In requires that individuals pursuing hormone therapy get a mental health evaluation, to determine whether they have additional mental health issues that need addressing during transition.

"The YWCA has a strong commitment to trans-friendly and trans-aware counseling. It's been a really safe and affordable place to send people," says Scopes.

Cyleste Farmsworth came to YWCA because she was having severe, seemingly unsolvable health problems. After some searching, she realized that her physical issues were closely tied to unresolved mental ones. YWCA was an option she could afford.

"There are lots of great people there," Farmsworth says of the counseling center. "Having the option of therapy at YWCA gave me access to a lot better choices. I was able to really start making a difference in improving my life." 

To get involved with the YWCA counseling center, call 503-294-7440 or email Wolmark at drwolmark@aol.com.

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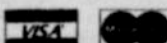
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