

NW NEWS

IN BRIEF BY RYAN J. PRADO

insight into issues facing members of Oregon's transgender community, with presenters like attorneys Beth Allen and Tiffany Harris, and Sasha Buchert, a legal expert and member of BRO's Trans Policy Working Group.

Questions like, "How do I change my name and gender on my driver's license?" or "Can my landlord kick me out for being trans?" and many more will be addressed.

"This event provides a great opportunity for trans, genderqueer and gender non-conforming Oregonians to get an in-person overview of Oregon law and get questions answered by some top-notch attorneys," said Aubrey Harrison, a field manager for Basic Rights Oregon. "And we believe this event will help clarify the complex laws that transgender Oregonians deal with every day."

Last year, BRO and a team of pro-bono attorneys—including Allen and Harris—released the guide "Know Your Rights: Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Trans Oregonians." Free copies of the guide will be available at the presentation.

Admission to the event runs on a sliding scale donation.

For questions and to RSVP, contact Tash Shatz, BRO's Trans Justice organizer, at tash@basicrights.org or by calling 503-222-6151, ext. 110. Q Center is located at 4115 N. Mississippi Ave.

Equity Head Clears the Air on Spending Report

The December 22 issue of *Willamette Week* featured a news article ("Flabby Charities") naming 10 Portland nonprofits that were purportedly spending more than average on overhead rather than on actual charity work. Using a standard posited by New Jersey-based nonprofit evaluation group Charity Navigator, Portland's Equity Foundation fell into the list for being right on the cusp of the 65 percent bare minimum for spending toward the organization's mission of grant and scholarship disbursement for LGBTQ students.

Peter Cunningham, Equity's executive director, told *Just Out* that the figures, while accurate, are hardly a barometer for under-spending considering the size of his organization compared to other, larger nonprofits across the country. Cunningham cited the format instituted for filing a nonprofit's tax forms—a 990—in which expenses are dropped into three categories: Program Expenses, Management and General Expenses, and Fundraising Expenses. Due to economies of scale, said Cunningham, Equity's perceived lack of spending on its mission is like "comparing apples to oranges."

"We're a very small nonprofit," said Cunningham. "We fill out the same forms as an



PHOTO BY TASH SHATZ

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-PETER CUNNINGHAM,
EQUITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Further, Cunningham noted the varying interpretations involved when nonprofits file their tax forms and claim their expenses into the three categories.

"Some organizations add fundraising and management together," explained Cunningham. "If you look at how we interpret it with our accountant versus how United Way might do it, there's a lot of interpretation."

Event planning and fundraising are both

substantial tributaries to Equity's success, and events such as Equity's Bent Halloween benefit necessitated considerable time and money. The results, however, were an increased public awareness of the nonprofit, as well as some \$15,000 in revenue.

Last year, Equity distributed \$54,000 in grants to LGBTQ scholars from Oregon who are studying around the country.

"We don't want to send a message that we're spending too much money on management and oversight and not enough on granting," said Cunningham. "That's not what we're doing."

For more info., visit equityfoundation.org.

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