Lost in Gay Acronyms

New to the world of Portland LGBTQ nonprofits? Here's a breakdown:

Nonprofit or program	What it does
Cascade AIDS Project (CAP)	Helps prevent HIV infections, supports and empowers people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS, and eliminates HIV/AIDS-related stigma
Q Center	Builds public support of Portland's LGBTQ community and provides the community opportunities to connect at its North Portland location
Equity Foundation	Grants funds to groups and scholarships to students in an effort to promote equality for all people, not exclusively the LGBTQ community
Our House	Provides health care, housing and other vital services to low-income people living with HIV/AIDS
Sexual & Gender Minority Youth Resource Center (SMYRC)	Creates safety and support for LGBTQ youth through youth empowerment, community building, education and direct services (a program of Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare)
Gay & Grey	Works to enhance the lives of older LGBTQ community members through education, advocacy, outreach and resource development (a program of Friendly House)
Community of Welcoming Congregations	Advocates for full inclusion and equality for LGBTQ people in faith-based and spiritual organizations like churches and synagogues

sometimes does similar work as BRO. This group, and others like it in cities all over the country, is called a "steering committee." None of the members of the steering committee are paid HRC salaries, but their activities are funded by HRC. The steering committee does a lot of fundraising for the nonprofit, but it also mobilizes volunteers for other efforts, like campaigning for pro-equality politicians.

Since both are working toward many of the same goals, you'd think they work together. Sometimes they do.

"Basic Rights Oregon has a strong relationship with both the volunteer leaders of the local HRC steering committee in the Portland area and with HRC staff and leadership in D.C.," BRO organizing director Thomas Wheatley said via email. "While no two organizations see their priorities line up 100 percent of the time, we collaborate locally on events and activities on a regular basis."

This relationship is particularly beneficial for BRO, which has far fewer resources than does HRC.

Recently, HRC partnered with BRO to get HRC members in Oregon involved in BRO's marriage campaign through a series of emails. The emails generated a very strong response, Wheatley said.

Of course, the Portland gay community is small. Some of the same people who volunteer for BRO will inevitably volunteer for HRC and vice versa, regardless of whether the organizations declare a formal cooperation.

HRC has even given BRO grant money before. Most recently, HRC made major investments in the 2004 marriage ballot measure campaign, Wheatley said, and also in 2006 and 2007 for the legislative campaign to pass domestic partnerships and anti-discrimination legislation.

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>
> **—THOMAS WHEATLEY,**
> BRO ORGANIZING DIRECTOR

However, regarding BRO's same-sex marriage push, HRC hasn't decided if it will assist BRO financially. BRO asked HRC to make a significant contribution to the marriage campaign earlier this year, Wheatley said, but so far, HRC has not made a commitment to support the effort financially.

"Whether or not [HRC] will contribute or do more with the BRO marriage campaign, [HRC] will have to assess internally," said Tom Wagner, regional field director for HRC based in Washington, D.C. "HRC will have to assess the 2012 landscape to see what it looks like and try to prioritize."

For more information on Basic Rights Oregon, visit basicrights.org. For more information on the Portland Steering Committee of the Human Rights Campaign, visit portland.hrc.org.

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