

PBC and the work we do," Edwards says.

This year, PFLAG PBC is taking that exposure to a new level by sponsoring Portland Black Pride, five days of events themed "Say it Loud: Gay and Black is Beautiful." Edwards is working in collaboration with Maurice Evans at Cascade AIDS Project, Maria Council at *Just Out*, Shaundell Newsome at PFLAG PBC and various members of the community to stage the event.

"This year's Portland Black Pride really came about in a collaborative effort. People in the community wanted to make sure that this tradition continued," Edwards says. "Black Pride is important because there are Black LGBTQ folks in all our communities, all across the country. We are proud of that, and we need to provide a space to celebrate that."

In past years, it has been a struggle to get Black Pride up and running with a strong community turnout. In 2011, Edwards hopes the hard work pays off but says that, ultimately, success is measured by effort—and they've put in plenty.

"I am excited and enthusiastic about Black Pride this year. But, I will say I am hesitant at the same time. Portland has many obstacles in reaching out to black LGBTQ folks, and as much as you work to overcome the obstacles you can and work around the ones you can't, it is still difficult," Edwards says. "I do believe that 'If you build it, they will come.' We have worked hard to build it. I think true success



Above: Hot Chocolate

Right: The faces of Black Pride 2011

comes from knowing you did your best."

What they've built is 11 events spanning five days with a special emphasis on youth-friendly activities, including karaoke, roller skating and dancing.

Black Pride 2011 kicks off Wednesday, June 15 with *Speak On It!*, a poetry slam and open mic at Local Lounge. The MLK melting pot of queer and African-American communities will also host *You Better Sang!*, a karaoke party followed by a hip-hop and R&B dance night on Thursday, June 16. While the above-21s are belting it out at the Local, the youngsters will be singing their own tune at *INSYNQ*, a karaoke night at SMYRC for black LGBTQ youth.



On Friday, June 17, young and old alike will strap on a pair of skates for a Roll Bounce party at Skate World. The less-than-coordinated need not fear bruised knees—they can sit back, relax and enjoy a movie screening at Pivot, while enjoying a game of spades or dominoes.

On Saturday and Sunday, Black Pride will have a booth at the waterfront festival including information, T-shirts, games, music and prizes. On Saturday evening, Black Pride co-sponsors the Chocolate City Pajama Jam at Crush (see the profile on Marcy Dupree, p. 26, for more) as well as a youth party at Portland State University.

After marching in the Pride Parade with PFLAG PBC, PFLAG Portland and PFLAG East County, Black Pride heads over to Kenton Park for the Families of Color Day Out and finally wraps up a filled-to-the-brim weekend with Hot Chocolate at Darcelle's.

Of all the events, Edwards says he is most excited about the Families of Color Day Out, organized in partnership with Adelante Mujeres, the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon and other organizations serving local communities of color.

"It is not often we can come together as straight folks and LGBTQ folks and just enjoy each other's company," Edwards says. "It's not about an agenda, it's not about any politics or issues. It is about enjoying some music—a wide array of artists from folk to rap—enjoying good food, games, fun with friends and family, and just having a good time. For the community to come together like that truly excites me." JO

For more information on Portland Black Pride, visit facebook.com/portlandblackpride or email portlandblackpride@gmail.com.

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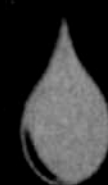
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