



# COMMUNITY WORK

*There are many ways to become involved with our community. Whether you have money or time, or both, the bottom line is — pitch in.*

I'm overcome with a newfound hope from the monumental strides we experienced as a people during 2012. With marriage equality passing in four states by popular vote, our sitting President and First Lady offering public support for our community during a critical election cycle (and then winning the election), and the surge of positive gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender main characters in movies and on TV, it seems to me that we have, in fact, arrived. The past year has left me with a bright, shiny feeling about the future of this community what I care so deeply about, and I'm guessing since the world didn't end in December as predicted, we might actually get there.

In addition to the national and international strides made in our favor, there have been countless local and regional pieces to the ongoing equality puzzle, which were filled in during 2012. I believe activism comes in many forms, and that to truly be effective in our efforts, we must come at these issues from a variety of angles. There is still much work to be done before freedom is ours, and the more people we have involved in making change, the faster change will come. I hope you will all throw yourselves into some brand of community work this coming year, and that you might use some of the highlights below as your inspiration. There is a queer activist living inside each and every one of you, just waiting to be released into the world!

## Local LGBTQ Nonprofit Fundraisers

Between Q Center's Winter Gala, Basic Rights Oregon's Dinner, Cascade AIDS Project's AIDS Walk, Our House's Auction, Quest Center for Integrative Health's WonderQuest, Portland's Red Dress Party, TransActive's Superheroes for Superkids, Equity Foundation's Bent and a handful of other major fundraising events which support LGBTQ programs and services in the area, we had plenty of chances over the course of the year to bust out our fancy gowns and tuxedos and raise money for a good cause. These big events help make the work of the organizations you support possible, so buy your tickets and tables and write a check while you're there! There is no such thing as money better spent. Additionally, if fancy parties aren't your thing but you are still able to give financially, please do. In these difficult economic times, nonprofits of all sizes are struggling, and every little bit counts.

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## Queer Volunteerism

Not everyone can afford to attend an expensive party or write a check, but that doesn't mean you aren't able to make just as much of a difference in the community as those who can. For folks interested in changing the lives of LGBTQ youth and young adults, programs like Q Center's Sex-