

# Making Black Lives Matter

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

force, which makes it harder for them to change or grow.”

Hofstein came to a place where she felt like white supremacy was a common enemy for all people.

“If white people don’t know their own history, if they don’t understand oppression and what they are doing wrong or what their ancestors did or how this country was made, they won’t be able to correct their own mistakes or establish connections with other cultures either,” she says.

Providing education and information to minority groups through PFLAG is a form of activism she wanted to get behind. She joined the budding black chapter in 2013 and has since become the group’s co-director.

She has worked with Portland Parks & Recreation to bring programs for queer youth to the city, providing safe spaces to gather and a social network that will advocate for them on a range of issues from bullying to higher education.



PHOTO BY OLIVIA OLIVIA/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER  
Leila Hofstein, who moved to Portland in 2006, has a passion for queer youth and helping them get the resources they need as they grow into the next generation of leaders.

Working with Black Lives Matter allows her to advocate for some of the problems facing African Americans in Portland and internationally.

Together with other volunteers, the group has started a women and trans feminine self-care program that happens on a reoccurring basis, called “Self Care Saturdays,” and has become a staple of the general community-building and “black joy” that Black Lives Matter activists envision for their members and supporters. Participants meet at In Other Words bookstore on Northeast Killingsworth Street.

“There is a lot of work Black Lives Matter does in the community, but this simple act of holding space for black women to see themselves as valuable was a really important step for all of us to see the kind of strength and joy we have when we come together,” says Hofstein. “I have so much more work to do but this is one of my accomplishments I am proud of that makes me feel like I am walking in the steps of the activists that came before me and building on it.”

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