

**L2013.32
The Center
Papers, 1993-1997**

FINDING AID AUTHOR

Ethan Lopez

ACQUISITION INFORMATION

The provenance of this collection is unknown.

PROCESSING INFORMATION

This collection was processed by Ethan Lopez as part of the 2020 CSL Project.

EXTENT

Number of containers: 1

Linear feet of shelf space: 0.5

ABSTRACT

BIOGRAPHY OR HISTORY

The Gay Center for Social Services (GCSS), a.k.a. The Center, is a non-profit organization created with the intent to meet the needs of the LGBT community in San Diego. The Center's earliest origins can be traced to the Gay Information Center hotline at San Diego State university. Run by Jessop, the hotline was transferred from San Diego State to the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), and finally to The Center. The Center was founded in 1972 by Bernard Michaels, Thom Carey, Jess Jessop, Patricia Byers, Patricia Clutchy, Peggy Heathers, Clint Johnson, George Murphy, Jerry Peterson, Gary Rees, John Senter, Jerry White, John Eberly, Gary Gulley, and Cynthia Lawrence. Michaels, a student of the School of Social Work at San Diego State University, centered his dissertation on the development and establishment of The Center and its services.

The original Center was opened in 1973 and was located at 2250 B Street in Golden Hill before moving to 1447 N 30th Street—also in Golden Hill—in 1980. The Center would not stay on 30th Street for long, moving later in 1980 to 3780 Fifth Av., where they would remain for the next twelve years until their move to 3916 Normal Street building in October 1992. The Center moved to its current location in Hillcrest—as of March 2019—at 3909 Center Street in 1999.

The Center was intended to provide much needed health, counseling, and educational services to their community. Because The Center was founded by members of the gay community, for the community, it could provide these services without discrimination, judgement, or shame for those seeking their assistance. The founders recognized that the LGBT community needed a place where the community could go for help without fear of exposure, arrest, or hostility towards their lifestyle at a time in which discovery of their identity could lead to severe consequences in their personal lives, particularly with employers.

The Center's initial programs included a hotline for information on their services and crisis intervention, counseling in "Rap groups" or one-on-one sessions, educational programs including a speaker's bureau and a lending library, and a prisoner parole and probation program for LGBT prisoners. The Center would later expand their services to include a Military Counseling program, the Lesbian Health Project, the Holistic AIDS Response Program (HARP), and a variety of other programs and workshops. To raise funds for these services and their establishment, The Center and the LGBT community put together a variety of events including original theater shows, such as "On the Road", block parties, auctions, and film festivals, hosted primarily in LGBT operated businesses. Over time, The Center would develop many taskforces to combat issues faced by the LGBT community, including HIV/AIDS, domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships, violent crime, and human rights. In 1992, The Center would partner with law enforcement in San Diego to provide Gay and Lesbian Cultural Awareness training as well as a Sexual Orientation training course. The Center for Social Services has since opened multiple affiliated Centers including the North County Center in 1996 and the Hillcrest Youth Center in 2000.

COLLECTION SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection contains photographs from the San Diego LGBT Center. These photographs are of various events such as the Challenge Ride, Nightmare on Normal, Pride (1995-2008). They also include images of Carter Board Staff, Volunteers, and Visitors, the North County Center - San Marcos, the opening of the Center after the remodel, a Gala, various Center events and youth. It also included two official scrapbooks from the Center in 1998.

ARRANGEMENT

This collection consists of 1 box divided into 2 series:

- Series I: Documents
- Series II: Recognitions

SEPARATED MATERIAL

None.

SUBJECTS

San Diego LGBT Center, The Center, Gay Center for Social Services, Gay and Lesbian Center, Mayor's Gay and Lesbian Advisory Board, Sexual orientation lawsuits, Creating Change Conference

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS

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PREFERRED CITATION

The suggested citation for the collection is:

[Item Description]
The Center, 1993-1997
Lambda Archives of San Diego
San Diego, California

RELATED MATERIAL

L2012.32, L1989.01

LOCATION NOTE

C.3.2.3

LANGUAGES

English

CONTAINER LIST

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)	
1	1	Sexual Orientation Lawsuits	1993-1994	
1	2	Gay & Lesbian Advisory Board	1993-1995	
1	3	Gay & Lesbian Mayor Advisory Board	1995	
1	4	Calvary Temple Assembly of God	1996-1997	
1	5	Creating Change Conference	1997	
1	6	Miscellany		
1	7	Five Years of Outstanding Service to The Center awarded to Jess Jessop		
1	8	Foam Core Board for the Shared Heart Youth Center Project		
1	9	One Framed Picture of Three People		