#### Letter from Director of Programs Michelle Alcedo

#### My Openhouse Family,

I have some sad and exciting news to share. After much soul-searching and reflection, I have decided to leave Openhouse. I leave knowing that we are as strong as we have ever been and I believe this transitional moment will open up unique opportunities for new Openhouse leadership and their new vision.

As I reflect on my 13 years of service, I am overwhelmed with gratitude for having had the opportunity to be in community with you, our beloved LGBTQ+ senior community. I am proud to have been a leader of color in white-dominated spaces, representing an organization that was one of the first in the country to advocate with, and not just for, LGBTQ+ seniors. The last 13 years have been a time of growth and expansion for Openhouse. We developed a model of age-affirming programs and services not just within the walls of our LGBTQ+ welcoming housing at 55 and 95 Laguna, but for LGBTQ+ seniors across our community. Our bright leaders will build on this legacy and continue to listen to you, our community members. They will work alongside you to create a vision of aging that celebrates and affirms your individuality and fierce spirit that shaped the character of the city we love.

Working with LGBTQ+ seniors has been the honor of my lifetime. Many of you have challenged me, supported me, and encouraged me--particularly in those early years when LGBTQ+ aging issues were just emerging within social services. Together, we co-created community programs that centered LGBTQ+ senior histories, experiences, and most of all, stories of resilience. (cont. pg. 3)



### **APRIL 2021**

In this month's issue				
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4	COVID-19 Vaccine Update			
5	Aging and the Body			
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11	Newsletter Readership Survey			



Above: Michelle smiles with community member Alba Barreto during the Pride Parade.

Working with LGBTQ+ seniors has been the honor of my lifetime. -Michelle Alcdedo

#### Letter from Executive Director, Karyn Skultety

Dear Community,

In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, I sat with a staff member from the Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) community while they explained to me that they no longer felt safe coming into our Openhouse offices. They were concerned about the risks related to COVID-19 but more so, they had begun to experience harassment while riding public transportation to work. They had experienced discrimination and bias throughout their life but the hateful rhetoric around the origins of the virus had escalated and enabled behaviors that threatened their safety on an almost daily basis.



I have thought back to this moment countless times- especially in the past few months when we have seen continued increase in hate and racist sentiment against APIA members of our community. You have undoubtedly seen that there have been violent attacks and ongoing hateful speech directed at the APIA community. Many of these attacks have been perpetrated on older adults. These incidents are horrifying, disgraceful, and unacceptable. We will continue to empower, defend and support our seniors and staff as we stand against racism in our community.

We are striving to step up and support the APIA community against these attacks at this difficult time.

To report a hate incident against an APIA person, go to StopAAPIHate.org To report a hate crime, call the SF District Attorney Hate Crimes Hotline: (415) 551-9595 To report elder abuse, contact the DAS Benefits and Resource Hub: (415) 355-6700

We know that speaking up, especially when you are being targeted, can feel overwhelming and that the impact of these incidents doesn't end after they are reported. We are here for you. **Any APIA senior is welcome to call Openhouse and receive support calls from our staff.** We will help you report an incident, engage in figuring out what can help you to feel more safe or just listen and be here, in community, with you. Call our main line at (415) 296-8995 and we will make sure a staff member is there for you.

We will continue to stand in solidarity with our Asian and Pacific Islander American community and do everything we can to support you.

In Community,

Range Alan

Karyn Skultety Executive Director

# Announcements

#### **NEW! Virtual Yoga Class**

New Instructor! New Time! New Type of Class! Wednesdays, April 14 to June 16, 2-3PM

We are excited to offer a new session of yoga with new instructor Jared while Jay takes a takes a break. This practice will be adjusted for the potential limitations of practicing yoga from home. No prior experience with yoga is required and no yoga props needed!

Jared Braiterman (all pronouns), identifies as queer, over 55, and an Openhouse neighbor! While Jared's training comes out of the yoga studio world, his goal is to offer yoga to all types of people and bodies so they can gain and maintain physical and emotional wellness. Jared hopes to teach yoga full-time in social services or health settings and is looking forward to beginning his journey with Openhouse.

Register with Faire at faire@openhouse-sf.org or (415) 503-4180.

#### Letter from Michelle (cont. front page)

When I first started at Openhouse, I was a trainer working alongside you, your courageous stories lifting me up everyday. Often, we were the first to claim our LGBTQ+ identities LOUDLY and PROUDLY in senior spaces in service of supporting the dignity of our community within mainstream aging services.

Your vulnerability was powerful and transgressive. Your advocacy changed the aging landscape for LGBTQ+ seniors in San Francisco, for the better. I am profoundly grateful for your trust in me, your spiritual guidance, and your wicked humor! As my mentors, you have given me the most amazing gifts of all- understanding the power of just showing up, and the legacy created from many silent moments of being present. The luminosity of your stories, histories, and voices will continue to inspire and light my way wherever I go.

I am honored to have been part of Openhouse for so long and will always be a part of the extended Openhouse family who believes in and supports this work. From our Board to our staff, we are more diverse, affirming, and stronger than ever before through our community partnerships and through the tireless leadership of our LGBTQ+ senior community. I am grateful to my incredible colleagues, and most of all to you, our beautiful community, for the growth, deep connections, insights, and joy!

In Community,

Michelle Alcedo





# Resources

### COVID-19 Vaccine Update

People under 65 are now eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination if they have one or more of the following conditions:

#### **Health Condition**

- Cancer, active
- Chronic kidney disease
- Severe chronic pulmonary disease, including COPD or those who are oxygen dependent
- Down syndrome
- Immune compromise from blood, bone marrow, or solid organ transplant; immune deficiencies; HIV; use of corticosteroids; or use of other immune weakening medicines
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease
- Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies (excludes hypertension)
- Obesity (BMI greater than 30)
- Diabetes

#### **Disabilities** Types

- Developmental
- Medical
- Physical
- Sensory
- Behavioral health, including severe mental health or substance abuse disorders

#### Living situation

- People experiencing homelessness
- People living or working in congregate living settings

For more info or for assistance in accessing a vaccination, contact Joe at

(415) 694-9411or jsupan@openhousesf.org

### Staff Highlight: Joe Supan (he/him)

As a Care Navigator, Joe can connect you with both



Openhouse and external resources to address your various care needs. This includes any concerns you have regarding COVID-19 vaccinations, food, housing, healthcare, at home support, and so much more. He will be your bridge to these services by linking you with whomever can assist you best (while supporting you along the way). Joe also plays the role as an advocate for our community members and believes everyone deserves to have their essential needs met and be treated with respect.

Contact Joe at (415) 694-9411or jsupan@openhousesf.org

#### Need Help with Food Support, Grocery Shopping, or Other Errands?



During these difficult times, our caring, compassionate volunteers are standing by to help you get what you need:

- Weekly Home Delivered Grocery program for those who cook
- Guidance to other food assistance programs in San Francisco
- Help buying groceries, pet food, medications, and other supplies

If you or someone you know could benefit from these services, contact Kevin at koneal@openhousesf.org or (628) 263-3262

# Mind and Body Wellness

**Dr. Louise Aronson Talks Aging and the Body** Tuesday, April 27, 2-3:30PM

Register for virtual program. Co-sponsored with Shanti Project.

Dr. Louise Aronson, leading geriatrician, professor of medicine at UCSF, and author of the Pulitzer Prize Finalist Elderhood, is bringing her expertise to the Openhouse community through a series of talks!

This month's topic: What effect does aging have on our bodies? What about the impact of COVID and staying at home? Do you wonder what it (you) could do if only...? What's the best exercise as we grow older -- whether you're fairly fit and/or have pain or limitations? We will answer these questions and more, and we will discuss how to prevent falls, which cause injuries and are on the top 10 list of killers for older adults. This talk is for all body types and exercise inclinations--including the inclination to not!

Register with Ariel at ariel@openhouse-sf.org or (415) 503-4180.

### Virtual Meditation

Thursdays, 11-11:45 AM

Mindfulness meditation is an easily learned practice that can help us cope and be more physically and mentally resilient in a time when we are living with increased uncertainty and uneasiness. With this practice, we invite you to give your mind a break and create more space.

Register with Faire at (415) 699-2244 or faire@openhousesf.org



#### Virtual Tai Chi for Balance and Arthritis

#### Fridays, 11AM-12PM

Learn this simplified form of Tai Chi specifically designed for older adults with Openhouse instructor, Patty Woods. This 8-week course is aimed at alleviating arthritic joint stiffness and improving balance. The course will take place on Zoom and is open to all levels of Tai Chi experience.

Register with Faire at (415) 699-2244, faire@openhousesf.org

All Openhouse programs are held virtually via Zoom, which can be accessed via telephone or computer. For more info on how to virtually connect, call (415) 296-8995.



	SUN	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>RIL 2021</b>					1 Food Matters, 11AM – 12:30PM, Session Full. Reg req'd: X305 Drop-In Meditation, 11 – 11:45AM Reg req'd: X322 Openhouse/On Lok PACE Workshop 3:30 – 5PM, Reg req'd: (415) 535-0927	2 Tai Chi, 11AM – 12PM Reg req'd: X322 Living with Loss: Drop-in Grief Support, 1 – 2:30PM Reg req'd: X322 Yiddish, 3 – 4:30PM	<ul> <li>3 Queer Elder Writing Workshop</li> <li>12:30 – 2:30PM</li> <li>Closed group</li> <li>Art for Elders</li> <li>1 – 3PM, Reg req'd:</li> <li>(415) 535-2765</li> </ul>
AP	4	<ul> <li>5 Places Please! LGBTQ+ Plays &amp; Playwrights</li> <li>12 – 1:30PM, Reg req'd: X305</li> <li>Men's Drop-In Support Group, 2 – 3:30PM</li> <li>RSVP req'd: X322</li> <li>Beginning Japanese, 3:30 – 5PM</li> <li>RSVP req'd: X305</li> <li>"Trans Resilience" TGNC Support Group</li> </ul>	<b>6</b> Dance Aerobics, 1 –1:30PM RSVP req'd: X322 Zoom Help Hour, 2 – 3:30PM RSVP req'd: X322	<ul> <li>7 "In the Life": Supporting LGBTQ POC</li> <li>11AM – 12:30PM RSVP req'd: X322</li> <li>Clearing House: Cluttering Support, 12:30 – 2PM</li> <li>RSVP req'd: X315</li> <li>Self Compassion &amp; Belonging, 1 – 2:30PM</li> <li>RSVP req'd: X322</li> <li>Intermediate Spanish, 3 – 4:30PM, Reg req'd: X305</li> </ul>	8 Food Matters, 11AM – 12:30PM, Session Full. Reg req'd: X305 Drop-In Meditation, 11 – 11:45AM Reg req'd: X322 Housing Workshop, 2 – 3:30PM RSVP req'd: X310	9 Tai Chi, 11AM – 12PM Reg req'd: X322 Yiddish, 3 – 4:30PM Reg req'd: X305	10 Queer Elder Writing Workshop 12:30 – 2:30PM Closed group Art for Elders 1 – 3PM, Reg req'd: (415) 535-2765
	11	12 Places Please! LGBTQ+ Plays & Playwrights 12 – 1:30PM, Reg req'd: X305 Men's Drop-In Support Group, 2 – 3:30PM RSVP req'd: X322 Beginning Japanese, 3:30 – 5PM RSVP req'd: X305 "Trans Resilience" TGNC Support Group 5:30 – 7:30PM, (415) 535-0927 for info	13 Gay Gray Writers, 4 – 6PM, Group Now Open, Reg req'd: X322	14 "In the Life": Supporting LGBTQ POC 11AM – 12:30PM, RSVP req'd: X322 Yoga with Jared, 2 – 3PM, RSVP req'd: X322 Intermediate Spanish, 3 – 4:30PM, Reg req'd: X305	15 Drop-In Meditation, 11 – 11:45AM Reg req'd: X322 American Sign Language, 12 – 1:30PM Reg req'd: X305 Openhouse/On Lok PACE Workshop 3:30 – 5PM, Reg req'd: (415) 535-0927	16 Tai Chi, 11AM – 12PM Reg req'd: X322 Living with Loss: Drop-in Grief Support, 1 – 2:30PM Reg req'd: X322 Yiddish, 3 – 4:30PM Reg req'd: X305	17 Queer Elder Writing Workshop 12:30 – 2:30PM Closed group Art for Elders 1 – 3PM, Reg req'd: (415) 535-2765
	18	19 Places Please! LGBTQ+ Plays & Playwrights 12 – 1:30PM, Reg req'd: X305 Men's Drop-In Support Group, 2 – 3:30PM RSVP req'd: X322 Beginning Japanese, 3:30 – 5PM RSVP req'd: X305 "Trans Resilience" TGNC Support Group 5:30 – 7:30PM, (415) 535-0927 for info	20 Zoom Help Hour, 2 –3:30PM RSVP req'd: X322	21 "In the Life": Supporting LGBTQ POC, 11AM – 12:30PM RSVP req'd: X322 Clearing House: Cluttering Support, 12:30 – 2PM RSVP req'd: X315 Yoga with Jared, 2 – 3PM, RSVP req'd: X322 Virtual Visit to Muttville, 2:30 – 3:30PM RSVP req'd: X315 Intermediate Spanish, 3 – 4:30PM, Reg req'd: X305	22 Earth Day Food Matters, 11AM – 12:30PM, Reg req'd: X305 Drop-In Meditation, 11 – 11:45AM Reg req'd: X322 American Sign Language, 12 – 1:30PM Reg req'd: X305	23 Tai Chi, 11AM – 12PM Reg req'd: X322 Yiddish, 3 – 4:30PM Reg req'd: X305	24 Queer Elder Writing Workshop 12:30 – 2:30PM Closed group Art for Elders 1 – 3PM, Reg req'd: (415) 535-2765
	25	26 Places Please! LGBTQ+ Plays & Playwrights 12 – 1:30PM, Reg req'd: X305 Men's Drop-In Support Group, 2 – 3:30PM RSVP req'd: X322 Beginning Japanese, 3:30 – 5PM RSVP req'd: X305 "Trans Resilience" TGNC Support Group 5:30 – 7:30PM, (415) 535-0927 for info	27 Health Talk with Dr Louise Aronson, 2 – 3:30PM, Reg req'd: X315 Housing Workshop 2 – 3:30PM, RSVP req'd: X310 Gay Gray Writers, 4 – 6PM, Group Now Open, Reg req'd: X322	28 "In the Life": Supporting LGBTQ POC, 11AM – 12:30PM RSVP req'd: X322 Yoga with Jared, 2 – 3PM, RSVP req'd: X322 Intermediate Spanish, 3 – 4:30PM, Reg req'd: X305 LGBTQ Caregivers of those w/ Dementia Support Group, 6 – 7:30PM, Reg req'd: X315	29 Food Matters, 11AM – 12:30PM, Reg req'd: X305 Drop-In Meditation, 11 – 11:45AM Reg req'd: X322 American Sign Language, 12 – 1:30PM Reg req'd: X305	30 Tai Chi, 11AM – 12PM Reg req'd: X322 Yiddish, 3 – 4:30PM Reg req'd: X305	May 1 Queer Elder Writing Workshop 12:30 – 2:30PM Closed group Art for Elders 1 – 3PM, Reg req'd: (415) 535-2765

All programs are held virtually via Zoom, which can be accessed via telephone or computer. For more info on how to virtually connect, call (415) 296-8995.

# Looking for support?

#### In the Life: Supporting LGBTQ POC

#### Wednesdays, 11AM-12:30PM

Join us for a support group for LGBTQ Elders of color. Prejudice, bias, and bureaucracy makes navigating government systems, health care, and life in general challenging for LGBTQ people of color, especially as elders and during a pandemic. This group is a space where it is safe to be your authentic self as we explore our experiences, share our stories, and connect with each other. Myles Dixon, who is gay-identified and African American has been facilitating this group for almost two years. He has a Masters in Health Service, Administration, and Community Health Planning and has both personal and professional experience working with elders and LGBTQ folks. Myles and the group welcome new members--the doors are always open.

**Register** with Faire at (415) 699-2244 or faire@openhousesf.org

#### alzheimer's LGBTQ Caregivers of Those with Dementia Support Group

#### Wednesday, April 28, 6-7:30PM

We welcome diverse LGBTQ caregivers to this monthly free drop-in support group. Caring for someone with dementia, whether mild or severe, is important and challenging work and inspires many questions about how to deal with what is. Join us as we continue to connect virtually through Zoom.

Register with Ariel at ariel@openhouse-sf.org or (415) 503-4180

#### Living with Loss: Virtual Drop-In Grief Support Group

#### Fridays, April 2 and 16, 1-2:30PM

Are you feeling sad? There are a variety of losses that we experience and many of us are feeling new and more acute forms of loss during COVID-19. Some of these experiences include loss that relates to isolation and loneliness, losing those we love, or maybe even the loss of the life we had before the pandemic. Loss and grief come in many forms. Join Openhouse and VITAS Healthcare for a drop-in grief support group where we can find community and support each other through these experiences in a safe and welcoming environment. This group is co-facilitated by Dale Poland and Jane Litman.

**Register** with Faire at, faire@openhousesf.org or (415) 699-2244.

All Openhouse programs are still held virtually via Zoom, which can be accessed via telephone or computer. For more info on how to virtually connect, call (415) 296-8995.



association

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Healthcare

# Virtual Programs

#### Virtual Visit to Muttville!

#### Wednesday, April 21 2:30-3:30PM

Love dogs and want to feel some pure doggie-related joy? Join us for a monthly virtual visit to Muttville where we will watch the senior dogs gallivant around the headquarters, learn the stories of the dogs who are there, and spend some time enjoying the company of our community and some doggie companions.

**Register** with Ariel at ariel@openhouse-sf.org or (415) 503-4180.



#### Art at Openhouse In partnership with Art With Elders

#### Saturdays, 1-3:15PM

Join to explore new ideas, and build positive relationships with your peers. These are not craft activities, but instead focus on skill-building — ranging from color and composition to perspective and background. This class will explore a variety of mediums and is open to all skill levels. Supplies are provided, and there will be a waiting list. Instructed by Hugh Leeman, an artist whose work acts as a form of social commentary. To find out more go to hughleeman.com

**Register** with Penn at (415) 535-2769 or pweldon@openhousesf.org



#### Clearing House: Drop-In Clutter Support Group



# Wednesdays, April 7 and 21 12:30-2PM

Openhouse and the Mental Health Association of San Francisco welcome you to a support group for all LGBTQ community members age 55+ who "struggle with stuff." The group is a non-judgmental, confidential, and supportive space where you can share your struggles and strategies with other LGBTQ folks.

**Register** with Ariel at (415) 503-4180 or ariel@openhouse-sf.org

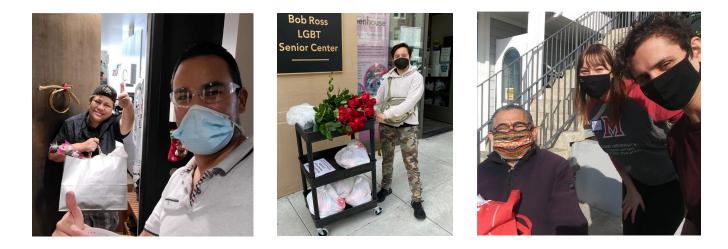


#### **Openhouse Volunteers are Superheroes!**

National Volunteer Appreciation Week is April 18-24 and a perfect opportunity to give a huge SHOUT OUT to our outstanding team of volunteers. Their incredible generosity has kept our amazing community members safe, healthy, and connected to community during a very tumultuous year. They've provided:

- Weekly home-delivered groceries
- Errand runs, dog-walking, and other support
- Regular check-in calls and tech support

Their infinite warmth and generosity are what makes our work possible. Thanks to each and every one of you for all that you do!!!



# What is your favorite memory of volunteering with Openhouse's Home Delivered Groceries program?

Getting to know the staff and the people on the delivery routes. It's nice to see the same faces every week! -Charlotte M.

One of my favorite OH memories is of delivering groceries to someone named Jasmine, and she performed a song from the Spirited Away soundtrack on her clarinet. It was beautiful! -Logan K.

Openhouse staff usually play music on a big speaker to lend us some energy and fun when we fill bags. I love it when my volunteer buddies dance around the community room as they recognize a favorite song. - Carol B.

#### Why do LGBTQ+ seniors matter to you?

I believe our world is a better place because of the bravery of LGBTQ+ seniors who stood up and fought for our rights. I feel honored to help them in a small way, especially if it helps keep them living comfortably and safely in our community. -Kelly M.

Because one day very soon, I will be an LGBTQ+ senior and I have many friends who are already in this demographic. It's important to me to give back to a community that represents so much of myself and the people I love. -Ben S.

I see myself in the seniors. They are a part of me. It's a very personal connection that I treasure and learn a great deal from. -Austin C.

### Newsletter Readership Survey

Thank you for your feedback as we strive to make this newsletter more accessible and engaging!

#### Cut this page out and mail back to:

Openhouse, Bob Ross LGBT Senior Center Attn: Ray

65 Laguna Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

#### Demographic Information

What is your gender?

Do you identify as transgender or gender non-conforming?

 Yes No

Do you identify as (check one)?

- Lesbian
- 🗆 Gay
- □ Bisexual
- Queer
- Heterosexual / Straight
- □ Questioning/Unsure
- □ Other

What is your racial/ethnic background?

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian, Pacific Islander
- African American
- Hispanic / Latino(a)(x)
- White / Caucasian
- Multiracial
- Other

Want to contribute your writing, poetry, or art to the newsletter? If so, provide a brief description of your work and your contact information

- 1. How do you access the newsletter?
  - Mailed hardcopy
  - 🗆 Email
  - Openhouse Website

In the last year, how many issues have you read or looked through?

- 0 to 3 issues
- 4 to 7 issues
- 8 to 11 issues
- Every issue

3. Do any of the following make the newsletter more difficult to read? (Check all that apply)

- Text size
- Color of paper (yellow)
- Format / Layout
- Order of sections
- 4. Which sections interest you the most?
  - New programs
  - Announcements
  - Calendar
  - Community submitted writing
- 5. Why do you read the newsletter?
  - To get the dates for groups I currently attend
  - To learn about new programs
  - To stay updated on Openhouse stories
  - Other
- 6. Which topics would you like us to cover more? Events – info about virtual events hosted outside of Openhouse
  - Interviews with Openhouse community members and staff

  - Writing submitted by community members
  - Informational resources from experts
  - Games crosswords, sudoku, word search
  - Other

housing, services, and community for LGBT seniors



Bob Ross LGBTQ Senior Center 65 Laguna St. San Francisco, CA 94102 (415) 296-8995

**APRIL 2021** 

NONPROFIT ORG. U.S. POSTAGE PAID San Francisco, CA Permit No. 925

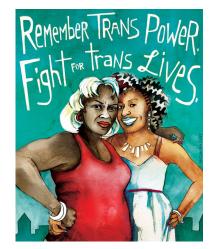
#### **Pride Poster Contest**

This year our theme is "Pride Inside" recognizing not only that most of us will be celebrating Pride safely in the comfort of our homes, but also the pride we carry inside ourselves every day.

The 3 winning posters will be printed into special-edition postcards and shared during Pride month. Winners will receive a monetary prize and will be featured on the Openhouse website.

#### Submissions due by April 23.

Submit a 8.5 x 11" piece of original artwork inspired by the theme "Pride Inside". All mediums are accepted– drawing, collage, digital, etc. No existing clip art, graphics or characters permitted. If using photographs depicting any person, please obtain permission to use their image. We encourage you to use bright colors and bold text. Include a 1-5 sentence artist statement about your design.



Artwork by Micah Bazant micahbazant.com

#### Submit your artwork to:

ray@openhousesf.org OR Openhouse, Attn: Ray Bob Ross LGBT Senior Center 65 Laguna St, San Francisco, CA 94102

Questions? Leave a message for Ray at (415) 259-4140, and they will return your call.