ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

THE CENTER
SAN DIEGO LGBT COMMUNITY

THE SAN DIEGO LGBT COMMUNITY CENTER

JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025













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MISSION STATEMENT

The San Diego LGBT Community Center enhances and sustains the health & well-being of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, nonbinary, immigrant, and HIV communities to the betterment of our entire San Diego region.

VISION STATEMENT

At The San Diego LGBT Community Center every person feels and knows that they are welcomed, valued, and supported. As the beacon for our regional LGBTQ community, each day we actively recommit to be a more vibrant, bold, innovative, safe, and modern Center than the day before.

VALUES

Dignity – Building pride, self-respect, and mutual-respect in everyone.
Inclusion – Welcoming and serving all members of our community.
Compassion – Caring about the needs of others and supporting them from a place of kindness and willingness to help.
Respect – Meeting, listening to, and acknowledging our community on its own terms; honoring each as a whole person.
Equity & Equality – Advocating for and intentionally reducing barriers to fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all our community members, inside and outside our Center.

STRATEGIES

Diversity – Embrace, promote, and support our community's rich diversity in our leadership, programs, and membership.
Services – Provide critical life and health services.
Support – Support our community members through all stages of life, including coming out, transitioning, and supporting their family and friends.
Wellness – Enhance the quality of life and wellness of our community at all stages of life with programs and events.
Community – Empower community, develop leaders, advocate for social justice, and celebrate community.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO & THE BOARD CO-CHAIRS

DEAR CENTER FAMILY,



For 53 years, The San Diego LGBT Community Center has been an integral part of San Diego, proudly leading with heart and vision to build a region rooted in equity, inclusion, and community power. Over the past year, we have witnessed the slow erosion of our democracy and faced the harshest attacks on LGBTQ+ rights in recent history, as the Trump administration rolled back protections, dismantled safety nets, and cut funding for organizations like The Center. Yet, in times of challenge, our community knows it can count on The Center to fight for our rights and dignity. As I reflect on this past year, I am proud of how we met each moment boldly, holding the line for our community with hope and determination.

This year, The Center's Advocacy and Civic Engagement team achieved major victories. Through hard-fought city and county budget campaigns, The Center preserved funding for our housing and wellness services. Our Get Out The Vote efforts mobilized our community to vote, we launched a Know Your Rights training series to protect LGBTQ+ immigrants, and we deepened collaboration with the Mexican Consulate.

The Center sustained and expanded critical services. Our Safe STAY Wellness Center doubled capacity, a historic milestone for transitional-age unhoused LGBTQ+ youth. We expanded our Senior Services, while Project TRANS remained on the frontlines to support the community. We proudly celebrated the 20th anniversary of Latin@x Services and continued to cultivate diverse spaces of connection.

The Center harnessed community power to protect lifesaving programs and services. This year, crisis was met with resolve, as The Center led with a vision for action and our community responded by hosting events, rallying their networks, and giving generously. In response to federal funding threats, we created our Stronger in Community Fund, with generous donors helping us multiply the impact.

I am deeply grateful for the staff, donors, volunteers, and local elected leaders who are all holding the line for our community. Your generosity and engagement have helped us sustain lifesaving services. As new challenges emerge, your support will be vital. Together, we will fight for the dignity and rights of LGBTQ+ people and ensure The Center remains a place of hope, strength, and unity.

With appreciation,

Cara

Caroline (Cara) Dessert, Esq.
(*She/Her/Hers)*
Chief Executive Officer

DEAR CENTER SUPPORTERS,

This past year brought extraordinary trials to our LGBTQ+ communities in San Diego. A hostile political environment threatened the hard-earned rights we have gained in recent years, while federal funding cuts and state and local budget deficits put essential services at risk. Despite these challenges, The Center has continued to lead with boldness, resilience, and innovative responses to our community's needs.

As your Board of Directors, we are steadfast in our commitment to this community and to the mission that has guided The Center for over 50 years. We are deeply proud to stand with Cara and support her vision for a Center that not only gets through adversity but thrives because of it. Her leadership and the dedication of Center staff have ensured that The Center continues to be a lifeline, expanding services, advocating for our rights, and creating spaces where every LGBTQ+ person feels seen, safe, and valued.

This is a pivotal moment in history, and moving forward, supporting The Center's mission will require both strategic decisions to safeguard programs and collective action to fight for the rights, safety, and dignity of our LGBTQ+ communities. Together, with donors, volunteers, partners, elected leaders, and staff, we will continue to ensure The Center remains a place of hope, resilience, and equity for all.

With gratitude,



Ben Mendoza
(They/Them/Theirs)
Co-Chair
The Center's Board of Directors



Dr. Shaun Randall Travers
(He/Him/His)
Co-Chair
The Center's Board of Directors

THE SAN DIEGO LGBT COMMUNITY CENTER



Total Service Visits
109,770

The San Diego LGBT Community Center is dedicated to enhancing and sustaining the health and well-being of the LGBTQ+ community in San Diego. This year, as LGBTQ+ people—especially trans, nonbinary, and immigrant community members—faced escalating attacks on their rights from the Trump administration and critical funding came under threat, The Center remained a strong home base for community, care, and action. Leading up to and following the 2024 U.S. General Election, our leadership team prepared for what was to come. When challenges arose, we met each moment, defending hard-won gains, protecting our community, and continuing to build LGBTQ+ power.

At the heart of our mission are three interconnected primary functions: creating LGBTQ-affirming spaces, advocating for LGBTQ+ rights, and providing direct services. Together, these pillars have ensured that, through any crisis, The Center can continue to support, empower, and connect our diverse community.

Watch how we make an impact

Protecting and Creating LGBTQ+ Spaces

In a year marked by fear, uncertainty, and crisis, protecting and expanding LGBTQ+ spaces was critical. The Center's programs and events offered spaces for healing, joy, and unity—reminders that community is our strongest form of resistance. Our Welcome Desk staff connected with community members more than 10,000 times, ensuring that everyone who walked through our doors found affirmation and support.

Building Power Through Digital Organizing and Community Engagement

Our advocacy and public affairs work became the cornerstone of our response this year. Through coalition-building, local campaigns, strategic communications, and civic engagement, we mobilized our community to defend our services, safeguard our spaces, and advance equity for LGBTQ+ people. While LGBTQ+ rights came under direct attack across the nation, our advocacy ensured that the voices of San Diego's LGBTQ+ community were represented at every level of government and that our community's needs remained at the forefront of public policy.

Trusted Community Messenger

E-News subscribers:
29,947

Website:
337,736
page views

Social Media:
137,329
engagements

2,612,055
impressions

Welcome Desk
10,666
Contacts with our Welcome Desk staff



Calls
5,375

Walk-Ins
5,291

ADVOCACY & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

This year, The Center's dedicated Advocacy and Civic Engagement team played a vital role in tracking and decoding legislative changes, engaging with local elected leaders, and fighting for LGBTQ+ rights to safeguard our community members and the programs that help them thrive.

Voter Engagement

Our team rolled out a comprehensive Get Out The Vote campaign to activate our San Diego County community members to vote in the 2024 U.S. General Election, directing additional efforts towards regions with historically low voter turnout. This included mobilizing our volunteer Fierce Advocacy and Civic Engagement (FACE) team to phonebank and canvass local neighborhoods. These efforts resulted in over 5,000 people proudly casting their votes or dropping off their ballots at The Center—the only LGBTQ-affirming Vote Center in the county and one of six super centers equipped with additional check-in stations, voting booths, and poll workers.

5000+ **people casting their votes or dropping off their ballots at The Center**

Our FACE team also mobilized our community to vote in the County Supervisorial District 1 Special Election to fill the vacant seat on the County Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors plays a crucial role in funding and overseeing health and human services, public safety, housing programs, and much more in our binational region. Our team's efforts were critical in activating voters to participate in shaping the future of our San Diego region and protecting our local LGBTQ+ community.

Civic Engagement Conversations **8,766**





Post-Election Policy Tracking

Amid an influx of executive orders from the Trump administration and the rapidly shifting, often-confusing information following the General Election, our Advocacy and Civic Engagement team diligently tracked legislative changes and policy discourse to keep our community informed with the most accurate, up-to-date information. By staying on top of political developments, the team drove The Center to adapt our priorities and strategies in real time, helping us combat anti-LGBTQ misinformation, protect services for LGBTQ+ people, and fight for LGBTQ+ rights.

ADVOCACY & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

San Diego LGBTQIA+ Regional Table

The Center's Advocacy and Civic Engagement team played an integral role in helping establish the San Diego LGBTQIA+ Regional Table, a table of local organizations united in protecting and advancing LGBTQ+ rights in our region, which includes The San Diego LGBT Community Center, San Diego Pride, TransFamily Support Services, and North County LGBTQ Resource Center. By uniting these groups under a shared vision, we are forging strong partnerships that strengthen our community's influence and amplify our collective voice. This table is critical in creating a united front against political attacks targeting LGBTQ+ people, defending our rights and dignity across the region, expanding our influence, and building LGBTQ+ power in San Diego.

SAN DIEGO LGBTQIA+ REGIONAL TABLE



City and County Budget Campaigns: Together We Fight, Together We Rise

Our Advocacy and Civic Engagement team led successful city and county budget campaigns that secured vital funding to protect and expand services for our LGBTQ+ community. Working in collaboration with the San Diego LGBTQIA+ Regional Table and other coalitions, we won critical county investments for our Adult Housing Services at The Center, and city funding for both our Safe STAY Wellness Center and Substance Use Disorder program.

These victories were achieved through months of strategic advocacy, from expertly analyzing budgets and meeting with local officials to mobilizing community members to petition, email, and make public comments at city and county meetings in support of our priorities. At a time when federal funding remains under threat, these wins not only safeguard The Center's vital services but also ensure San Diego continues to lead in protecting resources that serve as lifelines for LGBTQ+ people.

800 **petition signatures collected to fund Adult Housing Services**



Learn more about Advocacy and Civic Engagement

Our county budget campaign also achieved victory in protecting funding allocations for the county's Immigrant Legal Defense Program, an important resource for LGBTQ+ immigrants in our region.

THE CENTER'S SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Amid the challenges of this year, our commitment to meeting our community's most immediate needs never wavered. The Center's whole-person model of direct services addresses several critical needs, including housing, mental health support, HIV navigation, and youth and senior care. This past year, we provided over 109,000 service visits, a 21% increase from the previous year—reflecting both the urgency and impact of our work.

21% **increase in service visits from previous year**



Food Resources Services Provided

27,586

Includes our twice-a-month food bank, grocery gift cards, non-perishable food deliveries, and meals provided to Sunburst clients

THE CENTER'S DIRECT SERVICES

Behavioral Health Services—Providing our community with mental health resources including a team of dedicated, LGBTQ-affirming therapists.

Sexual Health and Wellness—This program provides free HIV testing and prevention and STI screening to our community members Monday through Saturday by appointment.

Housing Services—The Center provides a housing continuum of eight programs from emergency housing and support services to permanant and supportive housing.

Crisis Support Services—A team dedicated to supporting our community members in crisis and offering referrals, assistance, and compassion.

Food Resources—We host two monthly food banks, regular events featuring free meals at The Center, as well as Project Compassion offering direct supportive resources to our unhoused community members.

Training Institute—The Center's Training Institute is a leading provider of high-quality professional trainings on LGBTQ+ topics like pronouns and gender identities, LGBTQ-affirming de-escalation techniques for front line responders, LGBTQ+ sexual health, and more.

THE CENTER'S COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Project TRANS—Transgender and Nonbinary Services

50+ and Better Together—Senior Services

Youth Services

Family Services

Black Services

Latin@x Services

Men's Services

Women's Services

Learn more about The Center's Programs and Services



2,252

Opportunities for community members to gather, connect, celebrate, and find support through groups and events at The Center

21,990

Attendees at groups and events

50+ AND BETTER TOGETHER: EXPANDING OFFERINGS AND BUILDING CONNECTION

Over the past year, The Center's Senior Services team has proudly expanded our offerings to meet the growing and diverse needs of our LGBTQ+ older adult community. We increased our total Senior Service visits by 70% from the previous year! From support services and case management to new opportunities to learn, connect, and stay active, each program reflects our mission to ensure that all seniors feel seen, supported, and celebrated.



Congregate Meal Program

In partnership with the County of San Diego and Jewish Family Service, The Center launched the Congregate Meal Program, offering free lunches to adults 60 and older every weekday. The program not only addresses food insecurity but also combats social isolation, helping community members connect in a welcoming environment.

Digital Bridge Program

In 2024, we introduced the Digital Bridge Program, tech education sessions that have evolved into a recurring monthly series. Topics to strengthen digital literacy include secure home networking, email management, and smartphone skills. Participants receive personalized tech support, and some sessions even include drawings for free laptops! The program empowers seniors to navigate the digital world safely while building meaningful connections.

Tech Classes for Older Adults

Expanding on our technology offerings, we introduced Tech Classes for Older Adults by Senior Planet from AARP in collaboration with Jewish Family Service. These engaging, twice-monthly sessions empowered older adults to navigate technology with confidence.

13,904
Senior Visits
to support groups and programs

1,032
Unique senior clients



70% **increase in Senior Service visits from previous year**

Medicare Enrollment Assistance and Educational Seminar

To help our community make informed healthcare choices, Senior Services launched free Medicare Enrollment Assistance sessions in partnership with insurance specialists. Seniors received one-on-one guidance during the annual enrollment period. We also hosted a Medicare Educational Seminar led by a licensed agent, offering clarity on plan updates, prescription drug coverage, and tips for avoiding scams.

Learn more about Senior Services

Transgender Elder Network

In partnership with Project TRANS at The Center, the Transgender Elder Network was created as a welcoming space for transgender and nonbinary seniors to connect, share experiences, and find community. This intergenerational network fosters understanding between transgender and cisgender older adults while celebrating authenticity, resilience, and shared strength within the LGBTQ+ community.



Trivia with Friends

Starting in 2025, Senior Services began hosting Trivia with Friends every Monday before the Congregate Meal Program. Trivia promotes memory and critical thinking while offering joyful social interaction that combines laughter and learning.

Continuing Favorites with New Additions

We hosted the annual Ageless Artists Art Show & Fair, a celebration of creativity and resilience among LGBTQ+ artists aged 50 and older. The event showcased original works that tell stories of identity, community, and legacy. We also continued beloved programs like Game Day, Senior Drop-Ins, and Feeling Fit.

Our Senior Lunch & Learn included a special session on Healthcare Resources and Advanced Care Planning, providing seniors with vital information to make informed decisions about their health and future.

Together, these offerings reflect The Center's vision for affirming, enriching spaces where LGBTQ+ older adults can learn, connect, and thrive, helping them age with joy and dignity.



PROJECT TRANS: CARING FOR COMMUNITY IN CRISIS

Project TRANS served as a lifeline for our community as the federal administration escalated attacks on transgender rights by restricting access to healthcare, military service, and legal recognition. These actions created widespread fear and uncertainty among transgender and nonbinary community members. Our team stepped up to offer critical support, assisting with name and gender marker changes and connecting clients to trusted providers for gender-affirming healthcare and mental health services.

Making History: The First Nonbinary Flag Raising

On July 12, 2024, The Center led the first-ever Nonbinary Pride Flag Raising at the Hillcrest Flagpole during Nonbinary Awareness Week. Nonbinary people, whose identities exist outside the traditional categories of “man” and “woman,” often struggle for recognition both within and beyond the LGBTQ+ community. This powerful and joyful event brought together community members, allies, and advocates to celebrate nonbinary identities and visibility.



Transgender Day of Visibility Week of Action

During our Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV) Week of Action in March 2025, The Center celebrated our transgender and nonbinary community while mobilizing for collective advocacy. The week featured the Transgender & Nonbinary Visibility Summit, a Trans(Gender) 101 Training, and a Transgender Pride Flag Raising, drawing hundreds of attendees in person and online. Together, we deepened community connections, educated allies, and confronted the federal administration’s anti-trans policies with truth and unity. This series underscored that visibility is more than recognition but active resistance.



Standing with Transgender Service Members and Veterans

When the U.S. Supreme Court allowed the reinstatement of the transgender military ban, The Center stood firmly in support of our transgender service members and veterans. Project TRANS, in collaboration with other services across our organization, provided specialized support for veterans facing uncertainty, discrimination, and displacement. Our Advocacy and Civic Engagement team also worked with local trans military members and organizations to increase partnership across our region and enhance support systems for trans service members and veterans.

We honor the bravery of all who serve and reaffirm our commitment to the right of every transgender person to serve their country authentically and with dignity.

Learn more about Transgender and Nonbinary Services

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Center's Behavioral Health Services (BHS) continues to be a lifeline for our LGBTQ+ community. We provide individual, couples/family, and group counseling tailored to the diverse needs of our community members, including support for survivors of relationship violence, youth and adults who are victims of crime or hate incidents, transgender and nonbinary individuals seeking gender-affirming care, and those living with HIV/AIDS.



Behavioral Health Services

5,888
Counseling sessions

$300,000 Secured for Substance Use Disorder Program

We are proud that our Advocacy team successfully secured $300,000 in the City of San Diego budget to strengthen our Substance Use Disorder program. This investment will ensure that LGBTQ+ community members have access to affirming recovery resources.

We also proudly launched our first-ever annual Rise Above the Stigma event in recognition of National Suicide Prevention Month. This powerful gathering offered participants coping skills, community connection, and education around reducing suicide risk. Attendees selected from three pathways focused on honoring lost loved ones, supporting family and allies, and exploring challenges facing BIPOC trans and nonbinary individuals. The event included a Mental Health Fair featuring community partners and resources, reinforcing our commitment to destigmatizing conversations around mental health and suicide.

Learn more about Behavioral Health Services

SEXUAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

Our #BeTheGeneration program empowers individuals to take charge of their sexual health through free HIV and STI testing, prevention services, education, and support. In a year when federal threats to HIV prevention funding have created uncertainty nationwide, The Center remains committed to ensuring that our community has access to lifesaving sexual health resources.

Thanks to our incredible staff and partners, this year we saw significant growth in engagement:

- HIV testing increased by 20%.
- STI screenings increased by 24%.
- PrEP connections rose by an astounding 49%.

838
Clients tested for HIV

812
STI screenings provided

137
Clients tested for Hep C

13,500
Condoms distributed



Through partnerships with Family Health Centers of San Diego, Vista Community Clinics, San Ysidro Health, Planned Parenthood, and UC San Diego, our clients have seamless access to ongoing treatment, prevention tools, and education.

At The Center, sexual health is community health, and through #BeTheGeneration, we are ensuring that everyone has the knowledge, resources, and support to live healthy, empowered, and stigma-free lives.

Our annual Dining Out For Life® San Diego fundraising event is one way our community can support The Center's HIV prevention services and join us in our efforts to Get to Zero new HIV transmisions.

Learn more about Sexual Health & Wellness

HOUSING SERVICES: PROVIDING STABILITY AND DIGNITY



Housing Service Visits

Youth Housing

9,510

Includes Housing Our Youth, Sunburst Youth Housing Project, and all other housing services for youth

Adult Housing

550 Clients

1,890 Services

The Center's housing continuum provides whole-person care and comprehensive housing support to LGBTQ+ community members across every stage of need, from preventing homelessness to offering emergency, short-term, and long-term housing options. These services are critical for LGBTQ+ people, who experience disproportionate barriers due to stigma, discrimination, and marginalization that impact one's ability to remain housed. As San Diego continued to face a housing crisis and key support systems were eliminated over the past year, The Center's housing continuum was a lifeline.

Through an integrated network of housing services across five locations, The Center helps youth, adults, and seniors access safe, stable housing.

As housing insecurity deepens, demand for our Adult Housing Services and other programs continues to rise. The Center remains a trusted anchor in this crisis, helping community members reclaim safety, dignity, and belonging.

EMERGENCY HOUSING & SUPPORT SERVICES

Homelessness Prevention & Diversion—Designed to assist individuals and families in the County who are facing housing instability or are unhoused.

Family Reunification—Reconnects LGBTQ+ youth with their families, while all receive counseling and supportive services.

Project Compassion—A tangible, action-based program that offers direct supportive resources for those experiencing homelessness.

Safe STAY Wellness Center—An LGBTQ-affirming emergency shelter for transitional age youth ages 18-24.

Adult Housing Services—Empowering adults and seniors through a range of housing and well-being services.



PERMANENT & SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Karibu—Scattered-site permanent housing for those 18 and older.

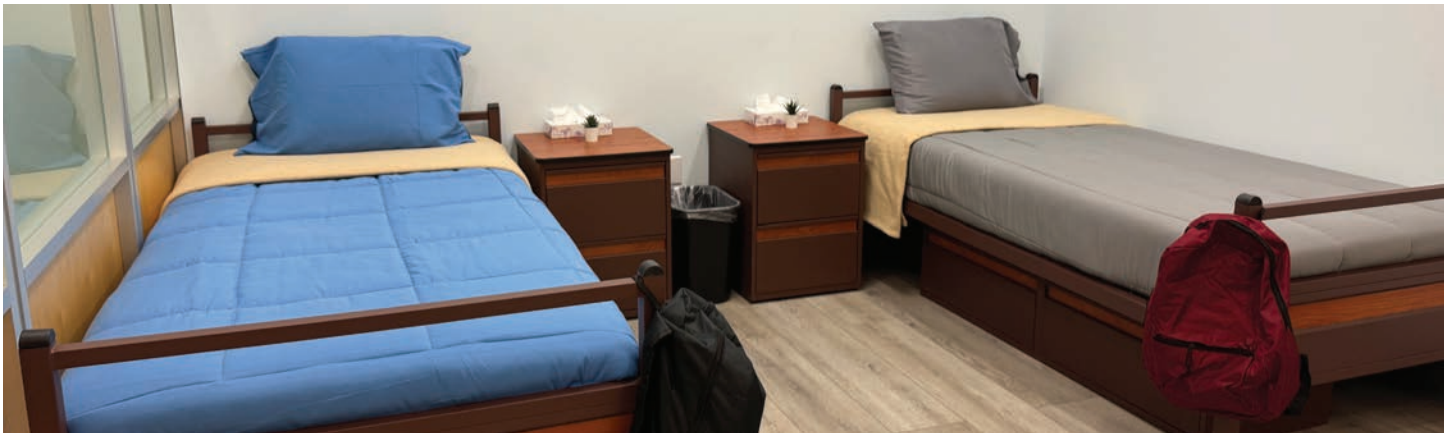
Sunburst Youth Housing Project—Safe and supportive housing for homeless youth between 18-24, with a special focus on LGBTQ+ and youth living with HIV.

North Park Senior Apartments—In partnership with Community HousingWorks, we opened San Diego's first LGBTQ-affirming affordable senior complex where The Center provides on-site case management and support services to the residents.

Learn more about Housing Services

SAFE STAY OPENING: EXPANDING SAFETY AND POSSIBILITY FOR LGBTQ+ YOUTH

At a time when so many doors to services are closing, The Center made the bold and brave decision to open a new one. This year, we proudly celebrated the grand opening of our expanded Safe STAY Wellness Center, now offering 43 emergency beds for LGBTQ+ transitional-age youth (18–24) experiencing homelessness—doubling our previous capacity.



What began in 2019 as a four-bed program has grown into one of the largest LGBTQ-affirming youth emergency housing programs in the country, providing:

- 24-hour access to safety, meals, showers, and laundry, so youth have a safe place to stay during the day.
- On-site wraparound services including mental health care, education, employment assistance, and housing navigation.
- An affirming community where youth can heal, stabilize, and thrive.
- Both congregate and non-congregate spaces to accomodate the individual needs of every youth.

This milestone was made possible through community collaboration with YMCA Youth and Family Services, San Diego Youth Services, and the San Diego Housing Commission, along with the vision of our housing team and the generosity of our donors.

At a moment when LGBTQ+ youth, especially transgender and nonbinary young people, face mounting political attacks and erasure, Safe STAY is a powerful act of love and resistance.



Advocacy Wins to Fund LGBTQ+ Housing

Through our hard-fought city and county budget campaign with the San Diego LGBTQIA+ Regional Table and other coalitions, The Center's Advocacy team successfully secured **$2 million** in the city budget to preserve the Safe STAY Wellness Center and **$800,000** in the county budget to support Adult Housing Services.

YOUTH SERVICES:
A SAFE HAVEN FOR LGBTQ+ YOUTH

At Hillcrest Youth Center (HYC) and South Bay Youth Center (SBYC), we are dedicated to the needs of LGBTQ+ and nonbinary youth, as well as youth living with HIV, helping them navigate life's challenges and grow into thriving adults. Both HYC and SBYC offer free programs including HIV testing, counseling, support groups, family advocacy, social activities, and safe, affirming spaces to relax, connect, and create.

Over the past year, LGBTQ+ youth across the country have faced rising isolation, fear, and anxiety in a political climate filled with anti-trans and anti-LGBTQ rhetoric and acts of violence. In response, more youth have turned to The Center for support, resulting in a 28% increase in Youth Service visits from the previous year.



Youth Service Visits (Drop-In)

3,572

Includes South Bay Youth Center and Hillcrest Youth Center

Resources & Support

The launch of our Crisis Services Drop-In at SBYC created a new lifeline for youth experiencing homelessness, domestic violence, discrimination, or other crises. Our bilingual, trained staff was available on site to offer case management, mental health support, and housing resources. In addition, HYC and SBYC continued to provide everyday essentials like snacks, hygiene items, a gender-affirming clothing closet, and access to computers and study spaces. Our school supply drive invited the community to help us ensure that LGBTQ+ youth entered the school year with backpacks full of classroom essentials.

Community Spaces & Events

Through events like movie nights, game nights, Friendsgiving, and Valentine's Day crafting, youth had many opportunities to have fun and express themselves in community. The Coding Workshop with Code for Them introduced youth to programming, and science-focused sessions with the National Marine Mammal Foundation gave youth hands-on experiences in tech, marine biology, and conservation. We also hosted creative and mindful activities that simultaneously provided practical tools for emotional regulation, personal growth, and confidence. By blending fun, learning, and personal development, these community spaces and events empowered LGBTQ+ youth to thrive in safe, supportive environments.

Learn more about Youth Services



COMMUNITY SPACE FOR CONNECTION AND EVENTS

In a year that challenged us in so many ways, The Center remained a space for gathering, healing, and celebration. Our diverse community came together through events that reminded us of our resilience, affirmed our identities, and built bridges of connection across cultures and generations.

Family Services: PACT & Plus Families

In 2024, Family Services at The Center launched PACT (for parents and caregivers of trans and nonbinary youth) and Plus Families for LGBTQ+ families. These programs create safe spaces for families to share, learn, and celebrate together, helping youth and families feel supported and connected.





Post-Election Gathering

Following the 2024 Presidential Election and amid escalating anti-LGBTQ rhetoric, many community members experienced uncertainty and heightened emotions. The Center, in partnership with community allies, hosted our Post-Election Gathering to offer a space for conversation and community. Together, we found comfort, inspiration, and the strength to move forward.

Come Home for the Holidays

Our annual Come Home for the Holidays brought warmth and belonging during a difficult season. Guests received a free meal, enjoyed family-friendly activities, and connected with partners and resources.

Community Celebrations

We hosted events that uplifted and honored the diversity of our community, creating spaces where everyone could feel seen and valued. The Fabulous Friends Function kicked off 2024 San Diego Pride with food, performances, and dancing for BIPOC, transgender, and nonbinary community members.

Our Lunar New Year Celebration welcomed more than 200 attendees to honor San Diego's AAPI LGBTQ+ community through food, art, and a lively Mini Night Market. During API Heritage Month, we screened There Are Things To Do in tribute to activist Urvashi Vaid, sparking community dialogue and inspiring attendees to continue building a more just and inclusive future.



LATIN@X SERVICES AND IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

Amid escalating political attacks against LGBTQ+ people and immigrants, Latin@x Services at The Center played a pivotal role in protecting and uplifting our community in our binational region. Last year, our work included strengthening support services for the Latin@x LGBTQ+ community, as well as deepening our cross-border partnerships and fighting for immigrant rights.

Welcoming Our New Director

In May 2025, we welcomed Dr. Psyche Calderon Vargas (she/her) as the new Director of Latin@x Services. Psyche has brought passion, vision, and lived experience to this role, with goals to continue to expand outreach efforts across the San Diego–Tijuana region, build stronger ties with immigrant-serving organizations, and host new healing and empowerment spaces for LGBTQ+ Latin@x individuals. Under her leadership, Latin@x Services is furthering its impact while remaining rooted in community care and justice.



Psyche Calderon Vargas
(She/Her/Hers)
Director of Latin@x Services

Know Your Rights Workshops and Resources

As harmful executive actions increased immigration enforcement and heightened fear across our region, The Center responded by creating Know Your Rights guides for LGBTQ+ immigrants—available in English and Spanish—and by hosting a Know Your Rights workshop and resource fair. These resources empower community members to understand their constitutional rights when interacting with law enforcement, while also connecting them with immigration attorneys and supportive organizations.

A Historic Milestone

In June 2025, The Center signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mexican Consulate in San Diego. Championed by Alicia Kerber-Palma (she/her), Consul General of Mexico in San Diego, this partnership with The Center ensures that LGBTQ+ Mexican nationals can access culturally competent, LGBTQ-affirming services, including legal assistance, mental health care, HIV prevention, and consular staff trained in LGBTQ+ cultural competency. This milestone not only expands our reach but also represents an act of binational collaboration and resistance during a time of heightened anti-immigrant and anti-LGBTQ policies in the U.S.



LATIN@X SERVICES
20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On October 12, 2024, we paid tribute to two decades of centering our LGBTQ+ Latin@x community at our Latin@x Services 20th Anniversary Celebration!

This momentous occasion included music by Mariachi Dinastia and Banda Paso de Tecuala, and a performance by Ballet Folkorico en Aztlan. We also established awards named after late community leaders Larry Baza and Aida Mancillas, who were foundational figures in the 20-year history of Latin@x Services.











Founded in 2004, Latin@x Services at The Center was the first program of its kind in the country, offering culturally and linguistically welcoming services for the Latin@x LGBTQ+ community. Generations of Latin@x community members have helped to nurture a safe and affirming environment where LGBTQ+ Latin@x individuals can embrace their identities, find support, and thrive. Through groups like Rainbow Latinas and Accion Positiva, we have created programs and spaces where community members can bring every part of themselves—from their language, culture, and spirituality to their sexual orientation and gender identity.

The Center now has bilingual staff throughout the organization; every department providing direct services to our community has Spanish-speaking staff members.

Learn more about Latin@x Services



Today, Latin@x Services is one of The Center's longest-running programs and has its own dedicated space at The Center. We are thankful to our generous supporters for helping us grow this program to meet the needs of our Latin@x community.

LGBTQ+ LUMINARIES LUNCH



Our 2025 LGBTQ+ Luminaries Lunch, hosted for the second time as one of The Center's Signature Events, was an extraordinary opportunity to join hundreds of LGBTQ+ community members and allies during National Pride Month in celebration of our collective power.

2025 LUMINARIES



Hero Award: SPARTA Pride

We honored SPARTA Pride for boldly defending the rights and dignity of transgender military service members and veterans. In the face of a renewed trans military ban, SPARTA provided vital peer support, educated leaders, and embodied courageous visibility.

Meet the Hero Award honorees



Leadership Award: Congresswoman Sara Jacobs

We honored Congresswoman Sara Jacobs (she/her) for her unwavering leadership in Congress, where she has championed LGBTQ+ rights, supported transgender service members, and inspired hope as a national voice for equality.

Meet the Leadership Award honoree



Catalyst Award: SDG&E

We honored SDG&E for exemplifying allyship in action by investing in LGBTQ+ initiatives, fostering an affirming workplace, and demonstrating visible, ongoing support that sets a standard for creating an atmosphere of belonging.

Meet the Catalyst Award honorees



Icon Award: Sandra Ramirez & Lizbeth Pineda

We honored Sandra Ramirez (she/her) and Lizbeth Pineda (she/her) for 25 years of trailblazing leadership through Transgénero 2000, where they have empowered San Diego's immigrant transgender community with advocacy, resources, and safe, welcoming spaces.

Meet the Icon Award honorees

DONOR IMPACT AT THE EVENT

The 2025 LGBTQ+ Luminaries Lunch was an inspiring event filled with stories of triumph, performances, and celebrations of leadership and community power—including moving remarks from U.S. Congresswoman Sara Jacobs. It was also a powerful occasion to raise critical funds for The Center's programs and services. Attendees from across San Diego came together to meet the moment with full generosity, showing the impact of our collective power to sustain lifesaving services for our LGBTQ+ community in San Diego.









"This is our chapter in history right now. This is not a moment to watch history unfold. It's a moment to write it ourselves—so when future generations ask what we did during the greatest attack on our community since the AIDS crisis, our answer will be clear: We refused to back down. We rose up. We fought back. And we won."

— Cara Dessert, CEO at The Center





THANK YOU



LGBTQ+
LUMINARIES
LUNCH


LUMINARIES
LUNCH

















SAVE THE DATE

THE CENTER

LGBTQ+

LUMINARIES

LUNCH

JUNE 18, 2026

HILTON SAN DIEGO BAYFRONT

THECENTERSD.ORG/LGBTQ

2025 DINING OUT FOR LIFE® SAN DIEGO

2025 Dining Out For Life® San Diego once again showed us the incredible power of community coming together for a cause. More than 65 restaurants, cafes, and bars across San Diego County participated in this beloved annual fundraiser, helping sustain The Center's health and wellness programs, including our vital HIV/AIDS services.

We were especially moved by the generosity of our partners: two locations donated 100% of their proceeds, while 10 others contributed 50% of sales to directly support The Center.







At a time when HIV support systems and public health services are facing devastating cuts, this event carried even deeper significance, reminding us that our community can and will step up to ensure lifesaving care continues. It is the collective fundraising efforts we saw during DOFLSD that model how we come together as a community to protect essential services and organizations like The Center.

Learn more about Dining Out For Life



COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING: STRONGER TOGETHER

During a year of federal funding threats and political attacks on immigrants, transgender service members, and transgender youth, vital services like housing, mental health, sexual wellness, and crisis response for our LGBTQ+ community were at risk. In these moments of uncertainty, The Center relied on the strength, courage, and generosity of our community.

Through dedicated services, bold advocacy, and steadfast leadership, The Center galvanized San Diego to take action. When our government and leaders fail us, it is community that will save our community. Together, we've demonstrated that when our community comes together, we are stronger, more resilient, and unstoppable.

The Stronger in Community Fund

At the heart of our response to funding threats was the creation of the Stronger in Community Fund, a bold initiative to ensure continuity of care no matter what comes from the federal administration. A few generous donors stepped up in extraordinary ways, offering matching gifts that doubled the impact of every contribution. Their generosity not only fueled urgent fundraising efforts but also inspired others to join in.

Fundraising Teams

Dozens of community members took action by forming fundraising teams, rallying their friends, family, and coworkers to give. These grassroots efforts became small but mighty coalitions of resistance and determination to protect our services.

Want to be part of this movement?

You can become a fundraiser and create your own team to bring your circle together and protect services for our community.



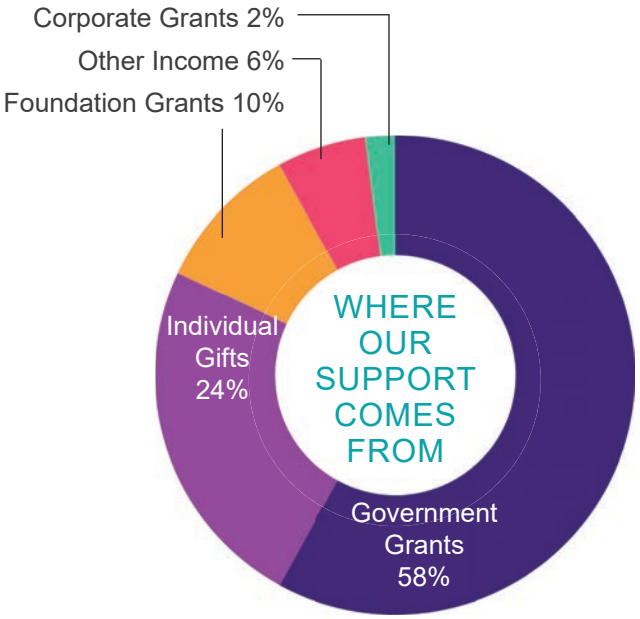
Turning Events into Action

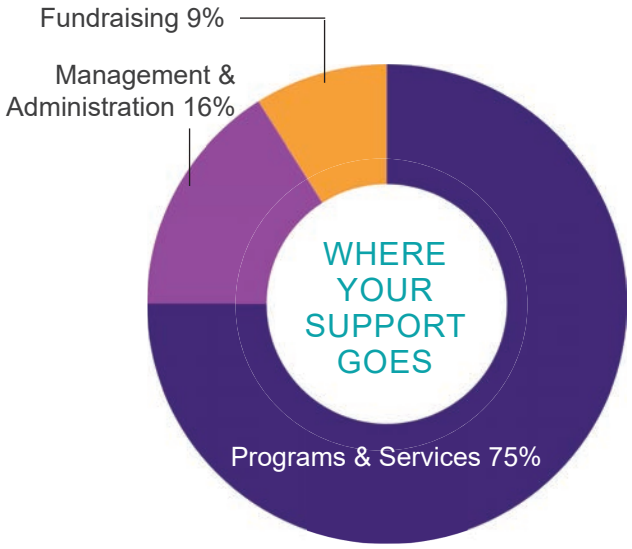
Our community also found creative ways to transform ordinary gatherings into moments of community activation. House parties, art shows, social gatherings, fitness classes, and neighborhood potlucks became platforms to raise money and rally support for The Center

Together, we demonstrated that our strength is rooted in our community. By stepping up, banding together, and giving generously, San Diego showed us that The Center is not alone in this fight. Thanks to your commitment, we are not only weathering threats to our services, but we are building the foundation for a stronger, more resilient future.

FISCAL YEAR 2025
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	JUNE 30, 2025 *(unaudited*)*	JUNE 30, 2024 *(audited)*
ASSETS		
Cash	22,068,776	13,478,978
Accounts receivable	448,099	153,755
Government grant receivable	1,180,021	1,345,612
Promises to give	221,665	9,031,466
Prepaid expenses	217,482	220,278
Fixed assets, net	6,178,416	6,485,393
Operating Lease	1,004,021	1,004,021
Endowment funds	1,028,708	940,036
Deposits	42,200	42,200
Total Assets	**$32,389,388**	**$32,701,739**
LIABILITIES		
Accounts and accrued expenses	1,492,768	793,577
Deferred revenue	446,908	935,758
Accrued interest	236,000	224,000
Operating Lease	637,575	1,016,453
Notes payable	3,878,746	3,878,746
Total Liabilities	**$6,691,997**	**$6,848,534**
NET ASSETS		
Total Net Assets	**$25,697,391**	**$25,853,205**
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	**$32,389,388**	**$32,701,739**



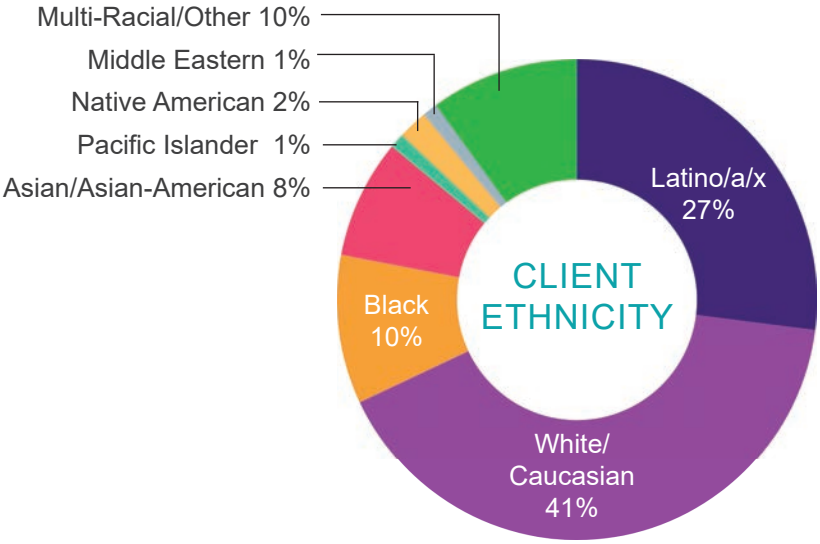


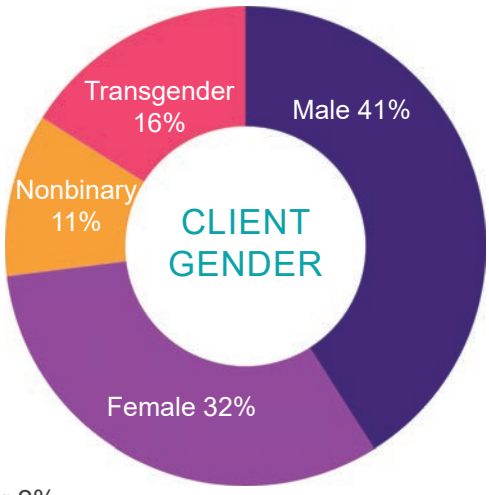
75 cents of every dollar
donated to The Center provides
funding for vital programs and services.

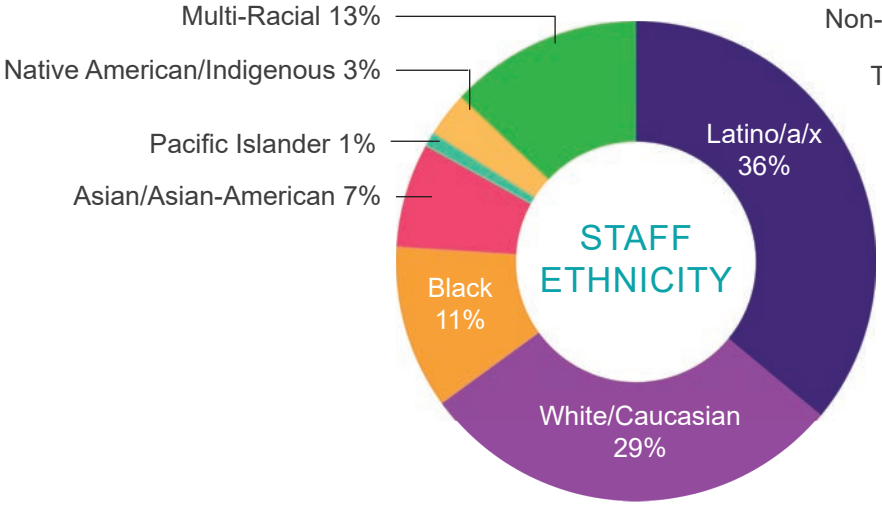
*These figures are based on unaudited numbers; audited financials will be availble on The Center's website.

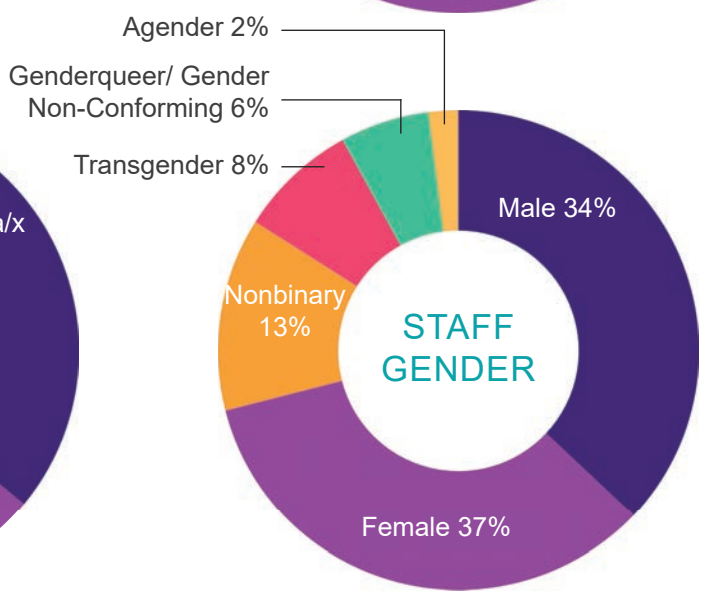
FISCAL YEAR 2025 DEMOGRAPHICS

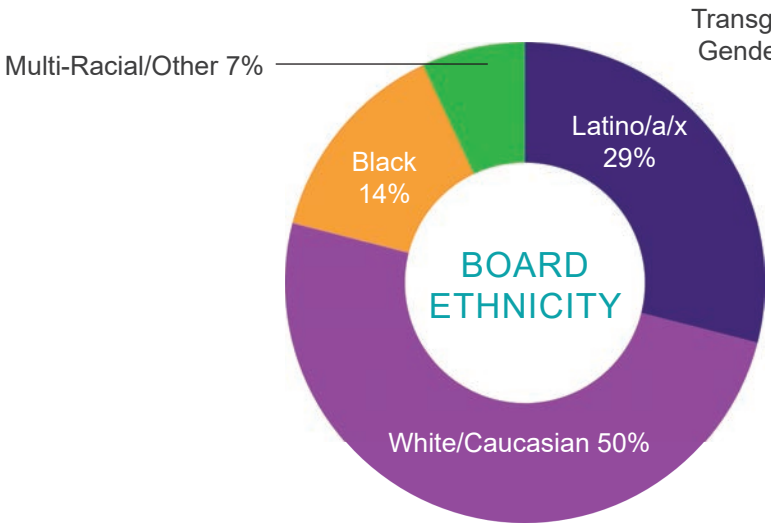
It is an explicit goal of all Center programs to be inclusive and representative of the diversity found in the San Diego community. Honoring, promoting, and celebrating our community's amazing diversity are central organizing principles for The Center, as well as part of our Vision Statement.

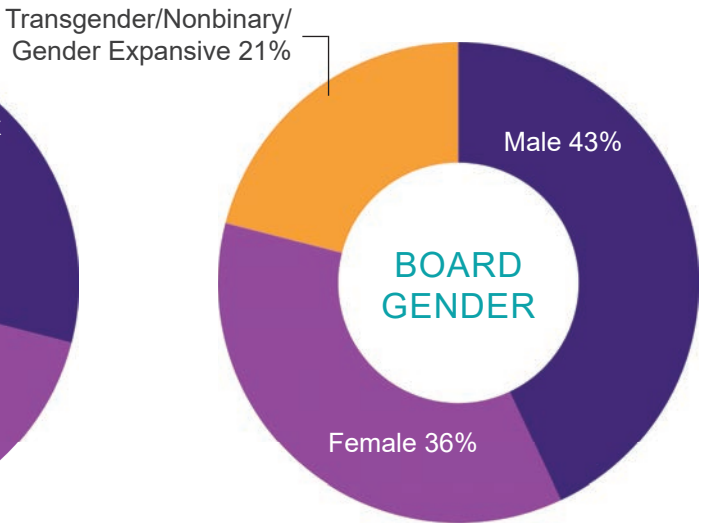












YOUR GIFT MATTERS

MAKE A BIG IMPACT WITH A FUTURE GIFT

When you include The Center in your estate plan, your generosity helps ensure that every person in our community feels welcomed, valued, and supported. As we face escalating political threats to our LGBTQ+ community and hard-won gains, your planned gift will help The Center fight for LGBTQ+ rights and dignity for decades to come.

Start your legacy now by visiting our Planned Giving website, which provides comprehensive downloadable estate planning kits and walks you through each step to ensure that your legacy reflects your dreams and has greater impact in our community.

Use our planning tools







JOIN THE STONEWALL SOCIETY

By making a gift through a trust, bequest, or other planned gift to The Center, you will become an esteemed member of The Stonewall Society, a planned giving group that uplifts your values and legacy. Through The Stonewall Society, we honor donors like you who share in our commitment to providing the best services for our LGBTQ+ community in San Diego while also protecting and advancing our rights.

The Center gratefully acknowledges all the extraordinary members of The Stonewall Society. Just as the brave LGBTQ+ community members in New York at Stonewall provided the foundation for the LGBTQ+ civil rights movement, these benefactors have made provisions to ensure that The Center can support the next LGBTQ+ generation.

To become a member or let us know that you have already planned for a gift,
please contact Ian Johnson, Senior Director of Development,
at ijohnson@thecentersd.org or 619-692-2077 x247.

THE CENTER'S STONEWALL SOCIETY

Estate/planned giving gifts honor the past and shape our future. The Stonewall Society recognizes donors that have guaranteed The Center's future with a gift through a trust, bequest, or other planned gift. This list represents donors who have coordinated with us to leave a lasting legacy for The Center.

STONEWALL SOCIETY MEMBERS

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EVERY DOLLAR MATTERS

Thank you to our Center Donors

The San Diego LGBT Community Center gratefully acknowledges those who gave between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025.

Every Dollar Matters

$100,000+

Amy Corton and Carl Eibl
David Mizener and Arturo Carrillo
Dr. Roger C. Cornell Trust
Rainbow Trust
Maureen Steiner
The Wietersen Foundation

$50,000-$99,999

Frank N. Denison Revocable Trust
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Christopher Ward and Thomas W. Harpole
Ann Warren
Tanya Weimer
James O. Westfall and Vergil H. Christenson
Paul R. Wilkins
Julie Williams
Bryan Winke
Marge Wurgel
Mary Ann Yaghdjian
Brian K. Yaw and Eric McDonald
Jason Yoe
William York
Carl Zeiger and Vicki Zeiger
Alan J. Zieg MD

DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Ian Johnson (he/him)
Senior Director of Development
ijohnson@thecentersd.org

Leo Cartier Jr. (he/him)
Individual Giving Officer
lcartier@thecentersd.org

Jen Haase (she/her)
Events Coordinator
events@thecentersd.org

Brendan Hernandez (they/he)
Database Manager

Brad Justice (he/him)
Donor Stewardship & Operations Coordinator
bjustice@thecentersd.org

Vaughn Rainwater (he/him)
Major Gifts Officer
vrainwater@thecentersd.org

THANK YOU CENTER DONORS

The Board of Directors and staff of The Center sincerely thank all of our donors. Every donor and every dollar matters. Space restrictions prohibit us from recognizing every donor; this list includes all donors who contributed at least $500 during the 2025 fiscal year (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025). We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this information and sincerely apologize for any misspelling or incorrect information found on this list. For corrections or updates, please contact development@thecentersd.org or call 619.692.2077 x247.

Donate to The Center

IMPACT IN ACTION:
VALERIA'S STORY

Valeria (she/her), a 24-year-old trans woman and transitional-age youth, reached out to The Center in urgent need of housing assistance. At this stage of life, many young people ages 18-24 need additional support to build long-term stability, and Valeria was no exception. She had lost her job after her employer refused to accommodate her disability, causing her to fall behind on rent. Prior to this, Valeria had been living with family in Mexico until they stopped accepting her gender identity and forced her to leave. With no remaining support system, she faced housing instability alone.

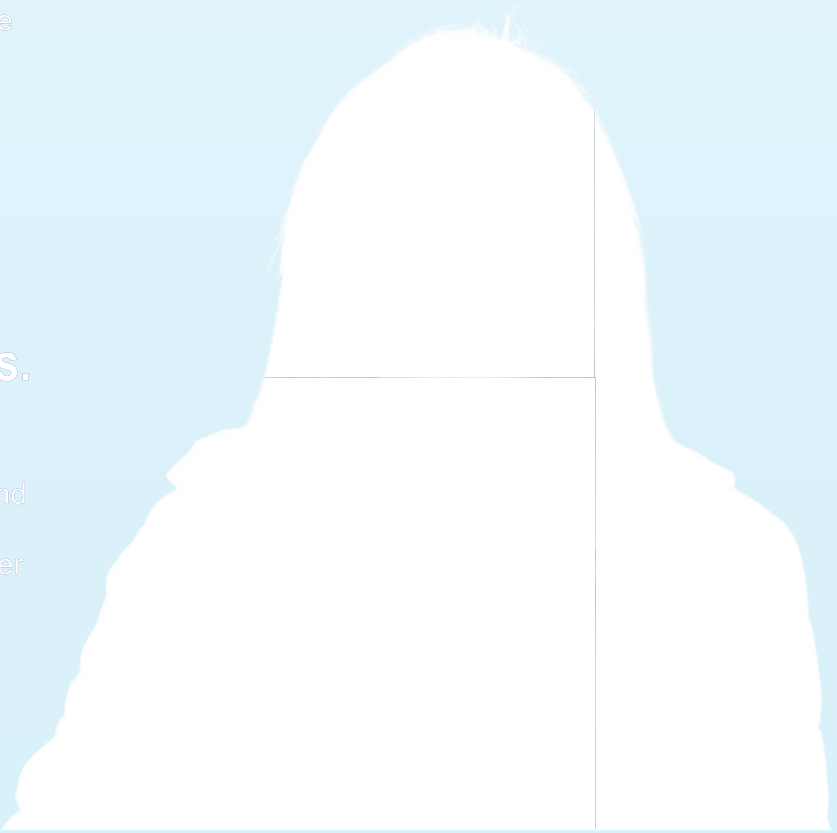
Valeria's landlord was becoming increasingly hostile, and the experience was retraumatizing, mirroring the rejection she faced from her family, so The Center's housing team focused on helping her leave as quickly and safely as possible.

We helped Valeria access a local shelter while our new Safe STAY Wellness Center location was being prepared for move-in. During this time, we helped her enroll in Medi-Cal, CalFresh, and Cash Aid and connected her to a primary care provider and mental health support. This allowed her to pursue an official autism diagnosis to access future workplace accommodations.

Just three weeks later, we welcomed Valeria into our newly opened Safe STAY—a secure place where she could live for as long as she needed to. When she stepped into Safe STAY, her face lit up.

"Wow, this place is amazing," **she said, and cried tears of joy at finally being in a space that welcomed her fully for who she is.**

Valeria has since continued to grow her support networks as she works towards long-term housing and employment. Valeria's resilience, combined with the support of our dedicated staff at her side, provided her with the stability and dignity she deserves.



9,510

Youth Housing Service Visits

Includes Housing Our Youth, Sunburst Youth Housing Project, and all other housing services for youth

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers for your hard work and dedication!

The Center is fortunate to have an amazing team of dedicated volunteers who help us bring our community spaces to life and make our events a success. We gratefully acknowledge each volunteer who joined us last year. Visit us at www.thecentersd.org/volunteer for more information on our volunteer program.

Chris Abeyta
Maya Abo Dominguez
Olivia Aguilar
Ashley Ajero
Monica Alexander
Genevra Allen
Christopher Allison
Alisson Almeida
Isabella Alvarez DeLa Campa
Tonja Alvis
Josephine Amos
Nico Andrews
Alex Anduze
Bailey Anne
Kenny Ard
Javier Armenta
Alexandra Arnold
Olivia Arnold
Ron Auerbacher
Erik Austin
Robyn Austin
Ava Avnisan
Yolanda Bagtas
Cory Barclay
Kelly Barrett
Anthony Barron
Alejandro Bastien-Olvera
Abe Beg
Nikki Bell
Christopher Benavides
Dru Blossom
Cathy Boe
Liz Bogart
Kristen Bonser
Aaron Brost
Ashley Broussard
Rachael Brown
Anna Brubaker
Danielle Bruce
Earl Brumfield
Keegan Buch
Bennett Bugelli
Ian Bui
Shawn Burgh
Alexander Burke
David Busacca
Mariah Butera
Jacinta C.
Azza Caballero Marquez
Bruce Calkins
Michael Callahan
Ted Callam
Alonso Camarillo Avilez
JC Canales
Tré Carden
shaw carey
Alison Carroll
Brendan Carruthers
Mike Carter
Ava Casados
Mike Casey
Arturo Castaneda
Pablo Castolo
Kate Causey
Maria Cristina Cavalcante Lima
Erikrene Chagoyan
Leiana Clare
Sean Coakley
Linda Coffman
Adi Cohen
Chanté Coleman
Michael Coleman
Juliana Collins
Charlie Conselman
Yuri Cooley
Nadia Copeland
Alex Corcuera
Tracie Covey Borchard
Janie Cowart
Pele Crone
Madelyn Cross
Maddie Crowe
Kimberly Cruz
Ash Cruz Crawford
Elias Cuevas
Brandon Dam
Jamie Daniels
Martha Davis
Eva De Leon
Jeff Dean
Carrie Deeb
Jim Deichmeister
George Del Valle
William Delano
Shayne Deleon
Frank DeLouise
Alan Des Roches
Lucy DeSmet
Jennifer Devaney
Richard Dixon
Cleide Dos Santos Souza
Xander Doyle
Randi Dropkin
Michael Dudley
Craig Duford
Kevin Duncan
Shannon Dykes
Rae Matthew Epstein
Chris Ewert
Brooke Farnum
Lindsay Fernandez
Daniel Filippi de Souza
David Flietner
Melissa Flores Cabrera
Crystal Flynn
Stephani Fonseca
Kayla Ford
Michelle Fraser
Lance Freiman
Aron Frenz
David Friedman
Liahna Fuller
Eric Geiger
Emmeryn Gelblicht
Lindsey Giordano
Jill Goguen
Marty Gohlke
Eleanor Gold
John Goodrich
Christie Grimm
Sheay Grissom
John Guess
Alyssa Gunn
Juan Gutierrez
Derryl Hadley
Shawnee Hansen
Keelan Harmer
Omkar Suresh Hatti
Kerry Hayden
Horacio Hernandez
Mayra Hernandez
Kathi Herter
Douglas Higgins
Lindsay Hinshaw
Carrie Holmes
Kenneth Hooks
Diego Huerta
Andi Hunt
David Huttlin
Shannon Johnson
William Johnson
R.Karina Jones
Monica Jorgensen
Jinho Kang
Michael Kay
John Keasler
Asha Khanna
Sherin Khoygani
Christopher King
Joseph Knell
Kevin Kuzniczci
Milena LaBarbiera
Aaron Lacy
Mercedes Langdon
Sarah Large
James Le
Kelly Le Roux
Lena Lee
Charles Leib
Elaine Lewis
Tina Liebig
William Lin
Brandon Linn
Oscar Linn
Shawn Lo
Mary Beth Lochnicht
Christopher Lopez
Will Lopez
Shelly Lorenze
Kai Love
Stevon Love
Joe Lucchesi
L. Lucifer

Total number of active volunteers: 369

Total number of volunteer hours: 7,653

Monetary value of volunteer hours:

$307,191

Averie Lynch
Maya Ma
Trey Mabile
Connor Maddocks
Jet Malana
Meghan Mallory
Ethan Man
Bennett Mancini
Phuoc Mangione-Tran
Erik Mantsch
Debbie Mappes
Jenna Marsh
Joshua Martin
Alli Martinez
Emi Martinez
Michalene Martucci
Sam Massey
Daniel Masterson
DeAndre Matthews
Edward Matthews
Tori Maxwell
Siri Maxwell Sommer
Lynn McAlister
Patrick McComas
Mary McCullough
Erin McDougall
Lauren McGowan
Alexander O'Farrell Medina Ochoa
Mariana Meirelles
Rene Mendivil-Briseno
Tiago Mergulhao Santos Castro
Christina Meyer
Leah Mislove
Melody Mobius
Stacey Moffitt
Montesano Montesano
Avery Montoya
Damien Montoya
Alyk Moomaw
Tony Moore
Gray Morgan
Molly Rose Morgen
Kel Moriarty
Drew Morley
Trey Mosteller
Sabrina Moxcey
Carolina Mozee
Mike Munson
Honora Nartatez
Gabriela Navas
Rodney Newnam
Mark Newsome
Julia Nguyen
Mathew Nguyen
Minh Kim Long Nguyen
Willem Nguyen
Susan Niemi
Jordan Noble
Bob Nowlan
Bryan Nunez
Jamie O'Keefe
Reed Oberlander
Patrick O'Connor
TJ O'Donnell
Todd Olson
Craig Orefice
Maria Ortiz
Brayden Pape
Creg Parks
Lee Parnell
Ilene Peiser
Karla Penaloza-Valdez
Pauline Peplow
Luka Petricic
Wynn Pettit
Ian Pham
Dia Philbrick
Lillian Piel
Sarah Piel
Lizbeth Pineda
Brian Polejes
Christine Porter
Emily Prezzato
Holly Puccino
Nancy Qasem
Michelle Quaranta
Mohammed Rahman
Jeanne Rawdin
Sean Reid
Stephanie Reinard-Heather
Ramkesh Renganathan
Frederick Renz
Jennifer Restle
Joann Rezzo
Alex Richardson
Tim Riedel
Al Rios
Sally Ritter
Jasmine Rivera
Marshall Robinson
Neal Robinson
Rachelle Robinson
Jacob Rodriguez
Luis Rodriguez
Tami Rogers
Rebecca Rolle
Neil Rothschild
Gabby Ryan
John Sabio
Skander Sadat
Lem Salao
Bernadette Salazar
Andre Salehian
Carrie Sanabria
A Sanchez
Thomas Santangelo
Mika Santer
Gray Schick
Phil Schlaadt
Adrienne Schlang
Megan Schroeder
Chase Schwarzwalter
Michael Searfoss
Jess Sexton
Carly Shaul
Denali Joel Shaw
Toney Shea
Tasia Sheffield
Veronica Sheridan
Clark Shetter
Timi Shields
Izzy Silva
Yogi Slivers
Alexis Smith
Dana Smith
Devon Smith
Stephen Smyth
Jiaheng Song
Mary Steinam
Leslie Stepanek
Peter Suhai
Elizabeth Swain
Andy Swanson
Maggie Sweeney
Maleah Tallo
Rhyse Tamez
Arthur Tillbrook
Lynn Timerman
Louie Titcomb
Maiia Tolia-Shah
Kira Torre
Vincent Travaglione
Stella Trojanowski
Madigan Turnquist
Jason Umbreit
Enrique Unzueta-Miranda
Brian Urban
Maya Usher
Harls Vally
Logan Van Meter
Vadim Vasilev
Simona Vasiljeva
Jenn Victor
Mica Vieux
Adam Villa
Bizzy Vinton
Camille Voorhees
Marc Webb
Karey Webber
Paul Wesner
Derek Whitbread
Eleanor White
Brad Whitehead
Steve Wichmann
Jon Wiemhoff
Beth Williams
Lorenz Williams
Tatiana Willis
Dawn Wilson
Craig Wimberly
Adriana Wolf
Chris Wooden
Jae Zhu

This list includes all volunteers during the 2025 fiscal year (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025). We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this information and sincerely apologize for any misspelling or incorrect information found on this list. For corrections or updates, please contact volunteer@thecentersd.org.

Volunteer with The Center



THE CENTER'S HISTORY

1971-1972
The initial 1971-1972 Planning Committee for what would become The Center included Patricia Byers, Thom Carey, Patricia Cluchey, Peggy Heathers, Jess Jessop, Clint Johnson, Bernie Michels, George Murphy, Jerry Peterson, Gary Rees, John Senter, Jerry White, John Eberly, Gary Gulley and Cynthia Lawrence. The Chair of the Planning Committee was Bernie Michels.

1973
The Center for Social Services was incorporated as a 501c3.

1980
The Center for Social Services became the Lesbian and Gay Men's Community Center.

1981
Diagnosis of the first case of HIV disease in San Diego County.

1986
Behavioral Health Services at The Center established.

1998
The Behavioral Health Services RVTIP program received credentialing, and became one of the first same-sex domestic violence programs in the nation.

1999
The Lesbian and Gay Men's Community Center moved from Normal Street to Centre Street and began plans for renovations.



2000
The Hillcrest Youth Center opened its doors and became a critical resource for LGBTQ+ youth in San Diego.

2001
Dr. Delores A. Jacobs named interim Executive Director June 2001 and is selected as Executive Director in January 2002. Jacobs serves a historic, 17-year tenure as the longest serving chief executive, and retired on June 30, 2018.



2001
The Public Policy department was established after the No on Prop. 22 campaign.

2002
The Lesbian and Gay Men's Center was renamed The San Diego Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Center.

2003
The Women's Resource Center was established, providing LBT women and their allies access to important health and social resources and referrals.

2003
Senior Services and 50 and Better Together were established, providing important health, financial and social resources for LGBTQ seniors.

2003
Under the leadership of Dr. Delores Jacobs and Robert Gleason, The Community Leadership Council was established, bringing together more than 40 LGBTQ+ and allied community organizations each month to address the needs of the community.

2004
Latin@x Services was established, providing a culturally-affirming drop-in space, support groups, and social programs for our LGBTQ+ Latin@x community.

2004
The Wall of Honor was established, honoring community members and allies who have had a significant positive impact on the San Diego LGBTQ+ community.

2006
Sunburst Youth Housing Project opened, providing supportive housing for 23 unhoused LGBTQ+ and HIV+ youth, ages 18-24.



2007
The Center Advocacy Project was established as a 501c4 organization, whose mission is to secure equal civil and human rights for the LGBTQ+ and allied communities through public education and issue advocacy.

2007
Family programming was re-established at The Center, providing programs and services for LGBTQ-headed families and those considering parenthood.

2008
The Equality Voters program was established to encourage community-wide voter registration and full, non-partisan, participation in elections.

2010
The Center became a monthly distribution site for the San Diego Food Bank.

2011
Senior Housing Needs Assessment completed.

2012
The Young Professionals Council (YPC) program was founded under CEO Dr. Delores Jacobs to foster a culture of diversity, service, leadership, advocacy and camaraderie among emerging LGBTQ+ leaders in the San Diego region, typically between 21-40 years of age. Through a service learning model that expands on people's leadership and network, members have the opportunity to get plugged into and grow within The Center and the LGBTQ+ justice movement at large.



2012
The Center began working with Community Housing Works to establish an LGBTQ-welcoming affordable senior housing project in San Diego.

2012
The Benjamin F. Dillingham, III and Bridget Wilson LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor, first envisioned by Nicole Murray-Ramirez, and co-created by CEO Dr. Delores Jacobs, was established in 2012 to honor and celebrate LGBTQ+ veterans who have served our country.

2013
Project TRANS was established to provide services designed specifically for San Diego's transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming community.

2014
The #BeTheGeneration campaign launched, with the goal of ending new cases of HIV within a decade.

2016
The #BeTheGeneration TRANS campaign launched to address disparities in HIV services for our trans community.

2016
Construction began on The North Park Senior Apartments, an affordable LGBTQ-welcoming housing project.

2017
The Center's Youth Services opened the South Bay Clubhouse, a weekly drop-in space for LGBTQ+ youth in Chula Vista, which in 2019 became South Bay Youth Center.

2017
At The Center's 45th Anniversary Gala, a $2 million dollar matching campaign opportunity was announced.

2018
North Park Senior Apartments, the LGBTQ-welcoming affordable senior housing project, opened.



2018
The Center reached $2 million fundraising goal. Matching donors Ron Bowman, with his husband Stan Zukowfsky, announced a second gift of $1.65 million to pay off the mortgage for the Centre Street building in spring of 2018.



2018
After a nationwide search for a new Center Chief Executive Officer and more than 200 interviews and focus groups following Dr. Delores Jacobs' retirement, The Center announced Caroline (Cara) dessert, Esq. as the new CEO, effective July 1, 2018.

2018-19
The Center embarked on the first border campaign to ensure that legal services, case management, and humanitarian relief were provided to LGBTQ+ and HIV-positive asylum seekers who arrived at the Mexican/U.S. border.

2019
The South Bay Youth Center (SBYC) opened in Chula Vista to support LGBTQ+ youth 10-24 and their families in need of resources in South County.

2019
The Center embarked on a Strategic Planning process, engaging a wide variety of community stakeholders to strive to serve our growing and diverse community and ensure that we maximize our organization's resources to best fulfill our mission in the years ahead. 2000 community members gave feedback via surveys, focus groups, interviews, and town halls.

2019

The Center expanded its housing program to an entire housing continuum, including the new Safe STAY program for LGBTQ+ youth.

2019

The Center held a Town Hall for the Black LGBTQ+ community, which led to new anti-racism policies and initiatives at The Center and the formation of the Black LGBTQ+ Community Advisory Committee. The Center now provides anti-Black racism trainings for staff, board members, donors, and volunteers.

2020

The Center's Advocacy and Civic Engagement work included the 2020 Elections and 2020 U.S. Census campaigns with outreach and dedicated, targeted campaigns to our community.

2020

COVID-19 hit San Diego on March 20, 2020. The Center responded to unprecedented community need for housing, food, and mental health support. The Center continued to provide emergency and critical services throughout the pandemic by expanding Crisis Services, Behavioral Health Services, and Housing Services.

2021

The Center launched the Training Institute providing high-quality, professional trainings to assist organizations to strengthen their knowledge and skills in working with the LGBTQ+ community, as well as how to best serve and respect LGBTQ+ people.

2021

The Center's Youth Services staff created and launched The Youth Queer Leadership Council, a leadership development program for youth, centering youth of color.

2021

Black Services at The Center was established to provide dynamic programming and direct services for San Diego's Black LGBTQ+ community.

2021

During The Center's closure due to the pandemic, the main facility at 3909 Centre Street received upgrades including new floors, new lighting, a new welcome desk and lobby area, renovated restrooms, a new Sexual Health & Wellness Lounge, new community meeting rooms, and improvements to the sound system in the historic auditorium, as well as a new HVAC system to provide the cleanest air possible to our community.



2022

The Center expanded its Sexual Health and Wellness Program to include STI screening services. The Center now offers chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis screenings as well as HIV and hepatitis C testing.

2022

The Center was notified that Maurice Thimot and Rust Rawnsley had left a sizeable gift to The Center through The Center's planned giving program, The Stonewall Society. Their $18.9M gift is the largest gift The Center has ever received.



2022

The Center purchased its first building in 16 years to become the new home of the Hillcrest Youth Center.

2022

The Center hosted an Open House in May to welcome the community back to The Center's main building once renovations were completed. The Open House brought over 400 community members to learn about The Center's programs and services.



2022

In response to the MPOX outbreak in San Diego, The Center co-hosted a community forum and held vaccinations clinics in our parking lot. The Center also launched a succesful MPOX campaign to prevent the spread of the virus.

2022

The Center gathered community to celebrate The Respect for Marriage Act which guarantees federal recognition and protection of same-sex and interracial marriages.

2023

The Hillcrest Youth Center moved to its forever home, which features multiple rooms to host activities and resources for youth, including the community closet, a game room, library, lounge, kitchenette, and a private area for therapy and HIV testing.

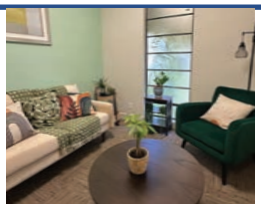


2023

The Center expanded Safe STAY from four beds to 21 beds for transitional-age youth ages 18-24. The new Safe STAY Wellness Center is a space designed by and for LGBTQ+ and BIPOC youth.

2023

The Center's Behavioral Health Services opened a dedicated office on 5th Avenue, allowing them to see clients and groups in person and virtually.



2023

The Center launched its new housing program, Adult Housing Services, focusing on adults 18 years and over, including seniors, transgender and nonbinary clients, and our BIPOC community.

2024

The Center celebrated 50 years of service to our community at our 50th Anniversary Gala.



2024

The Center held its inaugural LGBTQ+ Luminaries Lunch to celebrate our community during Pride month.



2024

Beginning September 2024, The Center expanded its hours at the Main Center to include Saturdays from 10am-4pm to better serve our community.

2025

The Center, in partnership with San Diego Pride, North County LGBTQ Resource Center, and TransFamily Support Services, established the San Diego LGBTQIA+ Regional Table to strengthen regional advocacy and action. The table announced its unified commitment to resist federal attacks on our community's rights during a joint press conference.

SAN DIEGO LGBTQIA+ REGIONAL TABLE

2025

The Center celebrated the grand opening of the new Safe STAY Wellness Center, doubling capacity to 43 emergency beds and marking a historical milestone for LGBTQ+ transitional-age youth experiencing homelessness in San Diego.



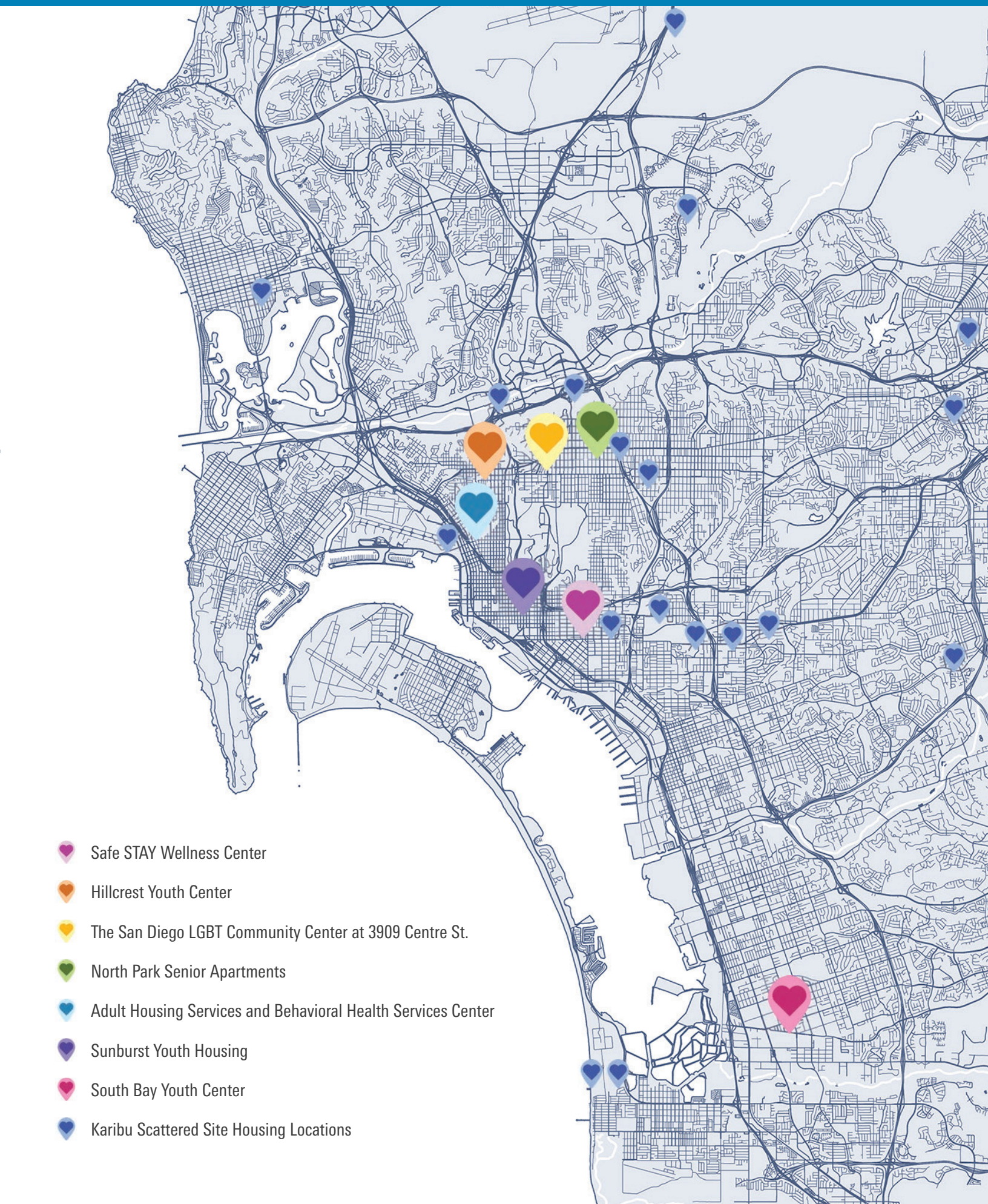
2025

On June 5, 2025, The Center officially entered a groundbreaking Memorandum of Understanding with the Mexican Consulate in San Diego, establishing a shared commitment to providing culturally competent, LGBTQ-affirming care and services to Mexican nationals through both The Center and the Consulate.





THE CENTER'S LOCATIONS ACROSS SAN DIEGO



THE CENTER'S LOCATIONS



CENTRE STREET – HILLCREST

Mailing Address
PO Box 3357
San Diego, CA 92163

Street Address
3909 Centre Street
San Diego, CA 92103
Phone: 619.692.2077
Fax: 619.260.3092

Hours of Operation:
Monday-Friday 10am-8pm
Saturday 10am-4pm

HILLCREST YOUTH CENTER

514 Pennsylvania Avenue
San Diego, CA 92103
Phone: 619.692.2077 x626

SOUTH BAY YOUTH CENTER

1180 3rd Avenue, Suite C1
Chula Vista, CA 91911
Phone: 619.800.3203

SUNBURST YOUTH HOUSING

Phone: 619.692.2077
Hours of Operation:
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

SAFE STAY WELLNESS CENTER

Phone: 619.694.6182
Hours of Operation:
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

ADULT HOUSING SERVICES AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES CENTER

Phone: 619.692.2077

THE CENTER

The San Diego Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center, Inc. (d.b.a., The Center) is one of the largest and most vibrant LGBTQ+ community centers in the nation. Functioning as the San Diego LGBTQ+ community's anchor organization, The Center is led by a 11-member board of directors, employs more than 100 paid staff, and utilizes more than 1,200 community volunteers to achieve its twin goals of promoting LGBTQ+ health/wellness and human rights. The Center provides targeted programs and services to the full diversity of the San Diego LGBTQ+ community, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, nonbinary, immigrant, and HIV communities to the betterment of our entire San Diego region. The Center provided more than 109,00 service visits last year to San Diego community members, and through its events, activities, and advocacy, touched the lives of thousands more. For more information on The Center, visit thecentersd.org and follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

www.thecentersd.org
Tax ID Number: 23-7332048

/At.The.Center
@LGBTCenter
/San-Diego-LGBT Community-Center
/LGBTCenterSD