

Center Early History

We celebrated twenty years of a GLBT Center in Cincinnati in 2013. Specifically, our founding date is September 17, 1993 when the by-laws were signed, subsequently recorded with the State of Ohio and the Center granted its 501c3 status by the Internal Revenue Service. Most people think of large community Centers such as Atlanta, Chicago or New York, but according to CenterLink, the national organization of Centers, of the 200 some Centers in the United States most are smaller organizations.

Your local Center was formed from a predecessor organization called the Greater Cincinnati Gay & Lesbian Coalition founded in 1978 and subsequently incorporated as a non-profit in 1984. At the close of the Coalition in 1994 to create the Center - some forty groups were involved in this umbrella organization.

Years of Change

Much has changed since then, the GLBTQ Greater Cincinnati is now served with all stripes of organizations serving youth to seniors, politics to health organizations, numbering in the hundreds according to the local GLBT press. Yet, one of the primary roles of the Center has remained the same: to serve as an informational resource to the broader community. Unlike the big Centers, often associated with an HIV group or political rights group, the Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Greater Cincinnati is an independent, all volunteer group, which works with the community.

The Center opened its first location on December 17, 1993 at Longworth Hall, third floor, off Pete Rose Way. At its opening, The Center served as the home of the former Gay & Lesbian Switchboard. In 1996, the Center moved to 230 E. Ninth where its grand re-opening was held on October 11, corresponding to National Coming Out Day. With the advent of broad adoption of the internet and popular social media, the Center discontinued the "Switchboard" and "hot line" approach moving to an on-line web presence so that anyone can access local resources all the time. Finally, the Center inked the lease to its last home at 4119 Hamilton Avenue in Northside on November 23, 1998 where it operated until it closed as a "bricks and mortar organization" on November 9, 2013.

Evolution of "The Center"

Your Center board recognized that over the years the need for physical space was not a primary need for today's GLBTQ allied groups. Thanks to social progress, our communities are often welcomed to meet at many area venues which was not the case two decades at the founding of the Center.

We also realized in recent years, people accessing us more often than not began to reply on our "contact us" feature of our web page, or email, voice mail, rather than visiting. As a result, The Center felt it could best serve the local GLBTQ allied communities by returning even more proceeds through the grant/sponsorship progress rather than maintaining a physical space that was less and less utilized.

GLBT Center Cincinnati History

Since the Center is a "private foundation," our first grant to a non-profit was Cincinnati Pride in 2014. The Center continued its on-line presence through 2021 when the Google site was closed.