



Advocacy &
Services for
LGBTQ+ Elders

We refuse to be invisible®

SAGE's National LGBTQ+ Elder Housing Initiative (NHI) Baltimore Monthly Newsletter: Oct. 2023

SAGE's NHI is dedicated to providing information that helps LGBTQ+ elders and allies make informed decisions when it comes to housing. For LGBTQ+ older people, finding a place that's welcoming—where they can feel free to be themselves and be treated respectfully and compassionately—is a mainstay of our program.

Welcome

We are so thrilled to bring you our newsletter about SAGE's housing work in Baltimore. This monthly newsletter will provide information and updates about the project, as well as opportunities to get involved. Thank you for joining us on this journey!

October is LGBTQ+ History Month

Hello all! Happy LGBTQ+ History Month! As we celebrate the important history of LGBTQ+ communities this month, it is especially important that we thank our community's elders, who fought long and hard for many of the rights and joys that the LGBTQ+ community experiences today.

Baltimore has such a rich history of queer and transgender advocacy dating back to the early 1900's. We have been honored to have the opportunity to meet with a number of individuals who were true pioneers of Baltimore's early LGBTQ+ advocacy, and we look forward to meeting more of the incredible people who paved the way for our community. Of note in this rich tapestry of advocacy work is the persistent efforts of black LGBTQ+ activists and transgender activists who have been at the forefront of the LGBTQ+ movement for many years. To these advocates and to all our elders, we thank you.

Why do we need LGBTQ+ Affirming, Affordable Elder Housing?

As the Baby Boomer generation ages, the United States will see a significant increase in older adults, specifically LGBTQ+ older adults. Studies have shown that nearly half of older same-sex couples were discriminated against when searching for housing and that almost 90% of transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) older adults fear gender-based discrimination when searching for housing. You can learn more about these studies and about advocating for LGBTQ+ welcoming housing at the link below.

With the growing number of LGBTQ+ older adults and lack of safety for LGBTQ+ older adults to even seek out housing opportunities, safe and affirming housing is a vital need for LGBTQ+ older adults in our community. We are working to respond to this need by developing inclusive and affordable spaces for LGBTQ+ elders to age with dignity, respect, and pride.

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

Meet our Partners: Pennrose

Bricks and Mortar, Heart and Soul

We are excited to introduce our developer partner for this project, Pennrose. Pennrose is a national developer with years of experience developing affordable housing. Pennrose has various regional offices, one of which is located in the heart of Baltimore, and they have developed a number of affordable housing projects in Baltimore.

They were the developer partners on one of the first LGBTQ+ affirming buildings for older adults, the [John C Anderson Apartments](#) in Philadelphia, PA. After the success of this building to house and support LGBTQ+ older adults in Philadelphia, Pennrose began planning to replicate this model across the country. Since then, they have opened a new LGBTQ+ affirming, affordable development in [Cincinnati](#), and they are working towards LGBTQ+ affirming, affordable developments in [Boston](#), Colorado, New Haven, and, of course, Baltimore! We are incredibly grateful to have them as our developer partner on this project! Learn more about them at www.pennrose.com.

Meet the Team

We would like to take a moment to introduce you to our SAGE Baltimore team. This team of advocates has been working extensively over the last year to learn about the needs of LGBTQ+ older adults in Baltimore by speaking with individuals and building key partnerships with community organizations. If you ever have any questions about this project, please reach out to them; they are here to help!

Thomas Godwin (they/them): Thomas Godwin is the Assistant Director of the National LGBTQ+ Elder Housing Initiative at SAGE. They have their master's in social work, and prior to working with the National LGBTQ+ Elder Housing Initiative, Thomas has experience working in mental health crisis care and children's mental health. Thomas has also served as a consultant and educator for organizations around issues of sex education, relationships, gender identity, and sexuality. They enjoy celebrating moments of LGBTQ+ joy and exploring outdoor spaces.

Alex Kent (she/her): Alex first joined SAGE in 2008 and has played many roles at the organization, including running programs and activities for our older adults in New York City, providing cultural competency training to service providers throughout the country, and working with our National Resource Center on LGBTQ+ Aging to develop caregiver resources. Alex was instrumental in building the SAGECAP program in Baltimore, which became Chase Brexton's still flourishing ElderPride program. She has lived in Howard County for over a decade, chaired the Howard County LGBT Older Adults Task Force, and was part of the leadership team that organized the inaugural HoCo Pride event in 2019. Alex has a master's degree in nonprofit management and is extremely proud to have dedicated her entire career to serving the LGBTQ+ community.

Check Out Our National Symposium Series

SAGE's National Housing Initiative partnered with Openhouse in San Francisco to host our 2023 Social Services Symposium Series in September. This series highlighted the challenges that LGBTQ+ elders face in housing and services, and it focused specifically on the challenges experienced by LGBTQ+ elders of color and TGNC identifying elders. Watch the recording of this series at www.openhousesymposium.org. Session two of the series features Baltimore's own Melissa Deveraux of Baltimore Safe Haven. Check it out!

Thank you for being a part of our efforts to bring LGBTQ+ affirming, affordable housing for older adults to Baltimore City. If you have any questions about this work, please contact us (contact information below). Stay on the lookout for more opportunities to get involved in this project. As opportunities arrive, we will share them here!

We wish you well this October! Have a spooky day!

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