



"EMBRACING THE FUTURE: 46 YEARS OF PRIDE AND THE JOURNEY AHEAD"

● 30 November 2023 ●

The beauty of progress lies in the promise of a future where acceptance knows no bounds, and love, in all its hues, is all we need to paint the path forward. Pride Houston is thrilled to share the inspiring narrative of our evolution, triumphs, and commitment to a united LGBTQ+ community. We have weathered storms, and yet, our story remains untold. Today, we unfold the pages of our resilience and the promise of hope.

While we acknowledge the shadows of the past, our gaze is firmly fixed on the path ahead. Holding past administrations accountable and defending our trademarks has been a crucial step, but our current Board, champions of transparency and accountability, has embraced the mission of fixing and preserving the 46-year legacy of Pride Houston. Together, we have forged a future where the echoes of advocacy are heard, and the promises of equity and equality are fulfilled.



Balancing our mission with community demands is no easy feat, but Pride Houston has risen to the task of adapting. Sometimes, courage is doing the right thing when it's not the most popular thing. While we can't be everything to everyone, we are committed to being a vital organization the community has supported for 46 years with a constant look forward and not back.

Amid challenges, we proudly organized two celebrations and a Montrose block party post-pandemic, including impactful events for this year on National Coming Out Day and Trans Day of Remembrance that featured memorial tributes in partnership with several community organizations such as Allies in Hope, Parents of Trans Youth, Tony's Place, etc. and donations to grassroots organizations whose mission focuses on the transgender community. Within the past two years, we've awarded almost \$30,000 in scholarships, including a \$5,000 donation to Out for Education.

For World AIDS Day, we will raise awareness again as we distribute free OraQuick In-Home HIV Test kits to the public at community partner locations. Our dedication to community engagement remains unwavering. Our brand echoes beyond Pride Houston, amplifying grassroots organizations. Collaborations enrich the fabric of our community. This tradition of giving back is one we hold dear and aspire to continue.

"Gazing into the hopeful eyes of our youth, it becomes clear why fostering connections is paramount. It's not just about seeing themselves in us; it's about equipping them to carry the torch of a brighter future. My focus is to partner with as many who are willing in building bridges of understanding, so every face reflects the promise of inclusivity and progress," says Austin Williams, Outreach Director.

To ensure business continuity and address concerns of the past, we've had our bylaws reviewed by legal professionals to remove ambiguity and provide clarity empowering Board members to easily make binding decisions for the organization, utilized IT solutions to ensure all Board members have adequate access to all our financial records, sponsors, media contacts, vendors, celebration planning documents, ensuring openness. Contrary to misconceptions, we've made strides without compromising public safety. Our volunteer-run Board ensures fiscal responsibility and successful outcomes.





Our rebuilt Board stands as a testament to diversity, embracing Allies, people of color, and a spectrum of LGBTQ+ identities. "As a board member, my commitment extends beyond meetings – I wear a rainbow pin and fly the flag proudly. It's a symbol not just for those who already stand boldly but for those who may not feel brave enough today. Let it serve as a beacon, a silent assurance that they are not alone. In displaying this courage, we empower others to embrace their authenticity, fostering a community where every individual finds strength in unity," says Amara Casey, IT Director.

Board meetings, always the proper forum for the public to interact with the Board, now extend a more open invitation by placing the dates on our Facebook social media page, allowing any member of the public to request a Zoom link and address the entire Board. Transparency is not just a commitment; it's our guiding principle. This organization is committed to constant change where it is necessary. The continued support of sponsors and participants speaks volumes.

We announced in October the "You Won't Break Our Pride" Festival and Parade will take place on Saturday, June 29, 2024, marking the 46th annual Houston Pride celebration. This event will be a showcase of our community's diversity, power, and enduring beauty. In addition to our summer celebration, we recognize the unique challenges presented by Houston's notorious heat and humidity. That's why Pride Houston 365 is excited to announce an additional celebration to our annual lineup—a Fall Festival! This cooler-weather event will provide an opportunity for our community to come together once again, fostering connections and celebrating diversity in a more temperate climate.

Pride Houston stands firm in our commitment to unity within the LGBTQ+ community. Pride is not a competition but a celebration of diversity, acceptance, and love. Our approach isn't one of rivalry; it's about following our rules, complying with laws, and running our race to fulfill our mission. Collaboration and community-building are at the forefront. Internationally recognized events have been and continue to be our hallmark.

We don't exclude anyone from choosing to participate in our celebration, but we respect the choices of all when it comes to participating.

"Our mission is to tear down barriers and ensure Pride is not just an event but a year-round celebration open to all. Recognizing the diverse needs of our community, we filed for a permit for a Fall festival alongside our Summer festivities, acknowledging that inclusivity means offering choices. We are on a path to making future Pride celebrations hopefully free and accessible to everyone, crafting a legacy where celebration knows no bounds and every season echoes the spirit of unity," says Pride Houston President Kendra Walker.

Our goal is to provide an array of events that cater to diverse tastes, ensuring you don't have to choose; you can support it all.



Information accessibility remains a priority. Promoting unity through division isn't our strategy. We encourage direct communication. Reach out to us, schedule talks with our Board, partners, sponsors, volunteers, and production team for meaningful conversations with us at info@pridehouston.org or bod@pridehouston.org.

Thank you for your continued support as we embark on this journey together, where hope, unity, and a vibrant LGBTQ+ community flourish.

With boundless pride,

Pride Houston 365
Board of Directors