



**SHOULDERS
TO STAND ON™**

TO STAND ON™
SHOULDERS

**SHOULDERS TO STAND ON
PUBLIC LIBRARY INITIATIVE**



Funded by a grant received from the
LGBT Giving Circle of the
Rochester Area Community Foundation

SHOULDERS TO STAND ON

Public Library Initiative for the Monroe County Library and Pioneer Library Systems

The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley has received a grant from the LGBT Giving Circle of the Rochester Area Community Foundation for its **STSO Public Library Initiative** to provide free screenings of the documentary film *Shoulders to Stand On* in libraries of the Monroe County and Pioneer Library Systems, NY. The documentary reveals an unknown and thus far undocumented chapter of Upstate New York's diverse local history. **STSO** captures the stories, struggles and achievements of our LGBT pioneers who made important sacrifices to make Rochester and upstate New York a better place to live for all our families.

STSO had its world premiere screening during ImageOut Film & Video Festival in October 2013. On June 3, 2014, the documentary aired locally on Public Broadcasting System's WXXI, and earlier this year, the film was a featured program at the Local History & Genealogy Department of the Central Library of Rochester & Monroe County.

The mission of the **STSO Public Library Initiative** is to raise awareness, increase visibility and inform the general public about an underserved population in our community. By building upon the longstanding natural alliances with local library systems, the **STSO Public Library Initiative** will connect diverse sections of the general population and broaden our geographic reach. This initiative will also strengthen partnerships between urban and suburban public libraries in both the Monroe County Library System and the Pioneer Library System counties with the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley.

As a part of this initiative, you will have the opportunity to display the **Forging Alliance Exhibit** which documents the 40+ year history of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, and some of the 6,200 AIDS posters from 124 countries in 68 languages and dialects, donated to the University of Rochester's Department of Rare Books, Special Collections and Preservation by retired physician Edward C. Atwater, M.D., '50, an emeritus professor of medicine at the University of Rochester Medical Center. The Forging Alliance Exhibit and the AIDS poster collection (aep.lib.rochester.edu/browse) make visible the hidden and untold stories of your neighbors who fight for equality every day.

The Gay Alliance is requesting the Monroe County and Pioneer Library Systems support this initiative, hold a screening for their employees and staff, and encourage individual libraries to schedule public screenings in the 2015 calendar year.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Bailey

Evelyn Bailey, *Chair*

STSO Library Initiative

Executive Producer, *Shoulders to Stand On* Documentary

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SHOULDERS TO STAND ON: ARCHIVING OUR HISTORY.

In 2003 the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley began to document and preserve the history of the LGBT community in the Rochester, NY region and its impact across the state and nation. Available to teach and inspire future generations, this project gives credibility to our community and culture. The **Shoulders To Stand On Program** has six initiatives:

- **The Roots Chronology Initiative** digitization of the *Empty Closet* newspaper, the oldest continuously published gay newspaper in New York State;
- **The GAGV NYS Archives Documentation Initiative** identified 260+ Rochester LGBT organizations, agencies, groups and individuals that set the bar for gay activism and religious tolerance from 1960 to today;
- **The Oral Histories Initiative:** The 102+ oral histories are the foundation of the 90-minute documentary on the History of the Rochester LGBT community. Oral histories will continue to be collected as history is created. These will be made available online;
- **The 90-Minute Documentary Film:** *Shoulders to Stand On* celebrates the brave men and women who had the courage to step out of the closet, allowing their voices to be heard, in the tradition of a city whose history is firmly grounded in freedom and equality for all. The finished documentary will be marketed to film festivals and PBS Television stations around the nation for presentation/broadcast;
- **Writing and Publishing the History of the Rochester LGBT Community:** The history of the Rochester LGBT community will be written and published;
- **Gay Rochester Educational Resource Website:** The current website will be re-designed and transformed into an educational toolkit, providing information, opportunities to get involved and submit the story of your own LGBT history, study guides and other resources for churches, corporate diversity programs, and educators looking to include LGBT studies to their curriculums.

To view the documentary trailer and purchase a DVD/BluRay, go to: www.gayalliance.org.

For more information on the Shoulders to Stand On Program, contact:

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SHOULDERS TO STAND ON: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History of Rochester, NY

Produced by the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley
in association with Indovino Productions

The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, the recognized and visible umbrella organization and the voice of the entire Rochester LGBT community, the work done by the 260+ organizations, agencies, groups and individuals and their impact on Rochester and the Genesee Valley Region to survive as a part of New York State's rich cultural, political, social and economic history. The societal focus on inclusiveness has increased the LGBT community's need to maintain its own identity by documenting and preserving historical records that give definition to who the LGBT community is, and its contribution to improve the quality of life of the Rochester community through its leadership in the areas of health, civil rights, social justice, and economic growth. This documentary will insure visibility and credibility to our very existence.

Mission: The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley is dedicated to cultivating a healthy, inclusive environment where individuals of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions are safe, thriving, and enjoy full civil rights.

For more information, please contact:
Shoulders To Stand On Documentary Project
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Funded in part by:



THE COMMUNITY
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