

Dear Members and Friends,

Dear Members and Friends,

Once again a very busy month with many programs and events! There is always something on at AGA and it's been great to see so many people coming along to our programs.

I really enjoyed attending our recent discussion night on "Being an Ally". The discussion was particularly interesting as there was a focus on the "Darlington Statement" that addresses human rights priorities and issues for intersex people in Australia and New Zealand. This is an important and historic Statement that was developed recently in Sydney by intersex groups and individuals. We were fortunate that Steph, who was co-facilitating our discussion with Majka, was also involved in developing the statement. AGA hopes to be able to provide some support for the ACT context of the statement.

We have recently welcomed Casey to our staff team as a Community Engagement Project Officer. Casey is with AGA till at least June (and possibly longer) and will be working specifically on our Volunteer Program, Community Engagement Strategy and evaluation of current programs. Casey has introduced themselves further on in the newsletter!

Looking forward to seeing everyone soon. Keep warm as the chilly weather begins! We always make sure that AGA is warm!

Warm regards,

**Tania Phillips**  
Executive Director

# AGA HAPPENINGS



April 2017

## Building Communities

One of the things that I love about AGA is how diverse our community is. Our membership spans generations, from our under 10s to those in their later years. We have a multitude of different words we use to describe ourselves, sometimes under the umbrella terms of intersex, transgender and gender diverse, and sometimes not. We have a range of backgrounds, abilities, interests and opinions. We include individuals, families, partners, allies and friends. We have so many different, small communities in our larger AGA family, and that's what makes our community truly unique.

We're now into the second month of the March to June calendar. As I was reflecting on our community, and what the needs of our community are, I thought about the ways that we make spaces for each of our smaller communities at AGA. Our Families' Dinner and Youth Group are now regular events, but for this calendar we've added other events for specific groups. For example, we have dinners and afternoons out for women, men and intersex and non-binary people as well as our Over 50s group, a Partners' dinner and kids' afternoon. These are all times for these smaller communities to get to know each other a little better, talk about issues that are directly relevant to them and discuss ideas about what they might want to do in the future.

This month our discussion group has also focused on the topic of being an ally. I choose this topic not only so we could talk about what people outside of our communities can do to be allies to us, but also talk about how we can be allies to each other. I encourage all of us to keep learning about the issues that affect our communities and how we can continue to come together to support each other. These are valuable conversations to have as we grow and keep working to meet the need of our fantastically diverse community.

**Majka McLean-Engstrom** – Community Engagement  
Coordinator



## What's Been On at AGA

Our Families' Dinners have really been growing over the last couple of months! In April, we had a lot of families and kids. We had so many kids that we had to set up a Lego and colouring in station in the hallway! The discussions in our Families' group really varies, this month we discussed topics such as school camp and coming out to other family members and family friends, as well as the order of the colours in the rainbow. It's great to see so many new, and familiar, faces every month!

Every month, we also have an art workshop facilitated by Ziggy, one of our lovely members, during drop-in. At our last workshop, we were all challenged to draw various items without looking at the paper. It was a great time for everyone! The next workshop will be happening during drop-in on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

### Contact Us

#### A Gender Agenda

67 Ebdon Street, Ainslie, ACT, 2602  
PO Box 4010, Ainslie, ACT, 2602  
(02) 6162 1924  
support@genderrights.org.au  
www.genderrights.org.au

## Introducing Casey!

Hi folks!

I've come onboard at AGA recently as Community Engagement Project Officer. I'll be supporting Majka with some of their workload as well as working on a few other projects over the next few months. I bring pretty varied experience to the job, having worked across a number of fields; Community Development, Government, Outdoor Education and the Arts. I've done everything from delivering the Safe Schools Coalition up in QLD to running arts projects with LGBTIQ communities on the outskirts of Melbourne. A common thread through all of my work has been celebrating diversity and supporting inclusion, so I feel like I'm a pretty good fit here at AGA.

Discoveries from my first two weeks (having just moved from QLD):

- Canberra is a lot cooler than Brisbane, but don't put your heater on until ANZAC day!
- Drop in sessions are a lovely way to get to know the community.
- When in doubt, ask Majka!
- AGA House has the best back steps to sit on for a morning cuppa.
- It's perfectly normal to see kangaroos hopping down the street. Don't be alarmed.

I look forward to meeting you all over the coming weeks!

Cheers,

Casey

(They/them/theirs pronouns)

Tayla, Ziggy and Thom playing  
with a synthesizer during drop-in.



## Everyone Can Play Launch

AGA recently hosted the launch of a new publication from the ACT Human Rights Commission, “Everyone Can Play: guidelines for local clubs on best practice for inclusion of transgender and intersex participants”. The launch was held on 6 April with some speakers over lunch in the sunny backyard at AGA House. Speakers were Jake Blight (Chair of AGA), Karen Toohey (Discrimination Commissioner), Peter Hyndal (who worked with the Commission to draft the guidelines) and Matt Warren from Varsity Derby League (who spoke about roller derby and its approach to inclusion).

The guidelines aim to support local sports that want to be more inclusive by providing practical guidance, information about legal rights and obligations, and addressing some myths. The Commission hopes that the guidelines will give sports the information and encouragement they need to aim for ‘best practice’ inclusion, rather than focus on complying with legal obligations or a misconceived need to comply with elite level restrictions around participation.

Many sports (including basketball, softball, touch football, tennis, triathlon, soccer and cricket) were represented at the launch, which shows the level of interest locally in improving practice and welcoming new participants. Now that the guidelines have been released, the Commission plans to work with interested clubs on implementing more inclusive practice, and to help build links between people interested in participating and their local clubs.

This is the first time that guidelines like these have been released in the ACT, and it’s exciting to see the level of interest they have attracted already. The Commission acknowledges this is a learning process and expects that work with clubs and players over the next 12-18 months to put the guidelines into practice will provide lots of opportunities to improve the resource and any further work done in this area.

You can download “Everyone Can Play” from the ACT Human Rights Commission website at <http://hrc.act.gov.au/> or get a hard copy by calling 6205 2222.

**Karen Toohey, ACT Discrimination Commissioner**

## What’s On at AGA

Date	Event
Fri 21 Apr, 6:00pm-8:00pm	Youth Group Rock Climbing. Meet at Canberra Indoor Rock Climbing in Mitchell for an evening of adventure. Climbing cost covered, RSVP
Fri 28 Apr, 5:00pm-6:30pm	Writing Group. Come and join our monthly writing group. No experience required, just a willingness to learn. This workshop is professionally facilitated.
Sat 29 Apr, 6:00pm-9:00pm	Community Dinner. Meet up with friends as we share a meal at AGA House. Dinner provided.
Tues 2 May, 5:30pm-7:30pm	Families’ Dinner. Meet up with other parents of transgender, intersex and gender diverse people. Kids welcome. Dinner provided.
Fri 5 May, 4:00pm-5:00pm	Walking group. Meet at AGA House for a walk on Mount Ainslie.
Sat 1 May, 6:30pm-10:30pm	NewCTN. Share dressing tips and ideas about gender. BYO dinner.

## AGA Out & About

### Gugan Gulwan Youth Day

As part of celebrations for National Youth Week, Casey and Majka attended the youth day at Gugan Gulwan. It was great to be able to have a stall at the day where we provided lots of information about AGA and the way people can get involved.

---

### Launch : ACT Human Rights Commission's "Everyone Can Play: Guidelines for Local Clubs on Best Practice Inclusion of Transgender and Intersex Participants"

AGA hosted this launch at AGA House. It was great to see so many sports clubs turn up for the launch of the guidelines that were developed by the ACT HR, but also get to know a bit more about AGA. We are hoping to extend our partnerships in the sporting area in the future!

---

### People with Disability ACT

AGA recently met with People with Disability ACT to discuss how we might possibly collaborate. Stay tuned.

---

## Health Needs of LGBTIQ Women Over 55

A team at the Western Sydney University team is working in collaboration with the NSW Department of Family and Community Services to conduct a large scale study exploring the impact of LGBTIQ-affirming health and community care on older (aged 55+) gender and sexually diverse women's health. Given that existing services are designed to safeguard wellbeing and social connection; it is imperative to understand how interactions with these services may either support or work in direct contrast to the service's mission. You can help by completing a short survey or sharing your experiences on our online forum at [www.silverGSDwomen.com](http://www.silverGSDwomen.com). You could also help by sharing your experiences in a 1-hour long phone interview. All interview participants receive a \$30 gift voucher for their contribution. If you are interested, please contact Brooke Brady at [b.brady@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:b.brady@westernsydney.edu.au) or 0410 128 221.

### Call for Expressions of Interest: Join the Board of the National LGBTI Health Alliance

- *Are you interested in improving the lives of LGBTI Australians?*
- *Would you like to be involved in the improvement of health and wellbeing across the lifespan of LGBTI Australians?*
- *Do you have a mix of skills and experience that may benefit Australia's National LGBTI Health organisation by contributing to their governance processes?*

The National LGBTI Health Alliance is conducting a formal Board recruitment process and seeking energetic, enthusiastic and committed applicants.

New Board members will be provided with training, orientation and mentoring.

The Alliance seeks people who have exemplary skills, competence, and/or identities related to the following important communities and areas:

- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People with a disability
- People with intersex bodies
- People of non-binary gender experience
- People with legal and accounting skills and experience.
- People with strong governance skills and strategic insight.

Expressions of Interest should include your Curriculum Vitae and a Statement addressing the skills and experience you would bring to the Board.

The Application process will close on Friday 28th April. Applications and any questions regarding Board positions should be addressed to [rebecca.reynolds@lgbtihealth.org.au](mailto:rebecca.reynolds@lgbtihealth.org.au)