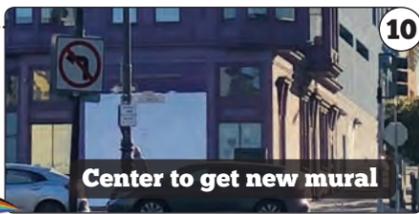




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Courtesy SFAF

SFAF CEO Joe Hollendonner

SF AIDS Foundation confirms layoffs

by John Ferrannini

The San Francisco AIDS Foundation confirmed May 4 that it has laid off employees as a result of “impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and associated declines in revenue,” according to Chad Ngo, the foundation’s communications manager.

Seventeen employees were laid off, according to Joe Hollendonner, SFAF’s CEO. These include four leadership roles that were eliminated, according to Ngo.

The layoffs were last week, Hollendonner wrote in a statement. Neither answered the amount in the revenue decline or whether senior management would take pay cuts, as happened in 2002.

“We have made the difficult decision to enact a reduction in our workforce in order to preserve San Francisco AIDS Foundation’s long-term fiscal health and achievement of our strategic plan,” Ngo stated. “We value the contributions our staff have made to our organization and community, and thank the affected staff for their service. As a matter of policy, we are not able to comment further on individuals affected or other personnel matters publicly.”

Hollendonner wrote that the foundation’s revenue almost doubled in recent years, but was nonetheless impacted badly by COVID-19 among other things.

“As a result of increased medication costs, our pharmacy program has seen a decline in net revenues over the past six months and that trend is expected to continue in the year ahead. This, coupled with the cancellation of AIDS/LifeCycle – our largest fundraiser – for two years in a row because of the pandemic, required us to make structural changes to the organization in order to protect its long-term fiscal health and to set the next CEO up for continued success,” Hollendonner wrote. “The board and leadership of San Francisco AIDS Foundation appreciate the significant contributions made by the 17 employees who were laid off last week, and we thank them for their service. We also value the continued efforts of our 200+ person workforce as SFAF continues to make significant strides towards achieving the goals of our strategic plan.”

One person who was let go was Courtney Pearson, according to sources. She was the vice president of policy. Also let go was Emily Mariko-Sanders, who was a counselor at Strut. Her LinkedIn page states she is “looking for my next adventure.”

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City College staff speak out against layoffs

by John Ferrannini

Members of City College of San Francisco’s extended community are speaking out about proposed layoffs that would lead to cuts in classes and programming.

It is anticipated that the college’s board of trustees will vote at its May 10 meeting to go forward with the plan. It already approved the sending of layoff notices to 163 faculty members and 34 administrators across 39 departments as a way of dealing with a projected deficit of \$33 million.

Now, the faculty union, the American Federation of Teachers Local 2121, and members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors are advocating the city provide emergency funding to the institution, which has struggled with budgetary problems for years.

A rally and march to oppose the budget cuts is scheduled for Saturday, May 8, at 11 a.m. at City Hall, according to Athena Waid, who does political and communications work for AFT 2121. At a May 3 virtual news conference Waid also said that the union is seeking people to sign an open letter to the trustees.

“If CCSF implements these layoffs, entire departments will be left with no full-time faculty,” the letter states. “Our ability to write or update curriculum as required by accreditation standards, work with community agencies, bring in students, or do outreach needed to ensure San



Rick Gerharter

City College trustees are expected to vote on a proposed layoff plan May 10.

Francisco’s Black and Brown students know about the opportunities City College provides will be severely diminished. Students will lose access to office hours and faculty support. The structure that keeps our college going as an intellectual and community resource will be undermined.”

In a statement, City College stated it is in talks with AFT 2121 “negotiating the impacts of the

layoffs,” and there is a mutual goal of reducing the number of them. The college itself requested \$15 million from the city, according to the San Francisco Examiner.

“We understand the demoralizing effect these actions might have, but we have no money and by not cutting salary expenditures, we risk being taken over by the state,” stated interim Chancellor Rajen Vurdien, Ph.D. “For many years this college has not operated at full capacity. We have offered single section after single section that has not been filled to capacity. We have paid for faculty and administrators to support a non-sustainable class schedule. There is nowhere for us to make savings. In order for this institution to continue to serve the community and future generations, we must reduce salary expenditures.”

For its part, the chancellor’s office said that the cuts are part of a “right-sizing” of the college.

Rosalinda Zapeda, director of media, governmental relations, and marketing for the college, told the B.A.R. that “unfortunately there’s a lot of misinformation going around.”

“We issued notices in March. Those notices were based on seniority,” she said, adding that if faculty who didn’t get notices decided to leave in the past two months it will change who actually gets laid off come the vote. “Part-time faculty at a community college don’t factor into actual layoffs because they don’t know if they will be teaching semester by semester.”

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SF landmarks famed lesbians’ residence

by Matthew S. Bajko

The San Francisco home of the co-founders of the country’s first lesbian rights organization is now a city landmark. The two-story cottage that Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin shared for more than five decades is the first local LGBTQ historical property protected solely for its ties to lesbian history.

It is also the first private residence owned by lesbians to receive landmark status in the Western United States, according to local historians. In San Francisco, it is the fifth site to receive city landmark status specifically for its importance to LGBTQ history.

“It is where this beautiful couple kissed each other good night and drank coffee together in the morning for more than 50 years,” said Shayne Watson, a lesbian and architectural historian who co-founded the Friends of the Lyon-Martin House group to advocate for the preservation of the women’s home.

Gay District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman instigated the landmark process for the Lyon-Martin House at 651 Duncan Street after the Noe Valley property, which also includes a vacant garden plot, sold last summer for \$2.25 million. At the request of preservationists, Mandelman initially sought for the landmark to include the entire hillside site.

But the new owners, Paul McKeown and his wife, Meredith Jones-McKeown, lobbied for the landmark designation to solely cover the Lyon-Martin House due to concerns the fuller his-



Rick Gerharter

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted May 4 to landmark the Noe Valley home once owned by Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin.

torical recognition for the property would curtail their ability to construct their family home on the vacant parcel, which has a street address of 649 Duncan Street. Earlier this year the city’s Historic Preservation Commission sided with the family and recommended landmark status solely for the residential structure.

Mandelman chose to move forward with the landmark for just 651 Duncan Street, and the Board of Supervisors approved the designation at its May 4 meeting. It requires a second vote by the supervisors May 11 before being sent to Mayor London Breed for final sign off.

“Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin were queer activists before queer activism was a thing. The

modern LGBTQ rights movement is built on the foundations laid by these women and their contemporaries, and it is fitting that their home is the first San Francisco historic landmark dedicated to lesbian history,” Mandelman told the Bay Area Reporter. “They shared this home for more than half a century and it has clear historic value that should be preserved and celebrated. Early LGBTQ leaders like Phyllis and Del changed the world for the generations of queer people that would follow.”

It is expected to become an official city landmark by June 20, ahead of the city’s traditional Pride weekend. Discussions between the property owners and historic preservationists are ongoing on how to document the home, its place in LGBTQ history, and how it will be used going forward.

“We hope this will be an opportunity for many more people to learn about them and the work they did,” said Jones-McKeown during a hearing last week before a supervisor committee.

Due to it being located in a residential neighborhood, it is unlikely to be opened to the public as a museum. One idea preservationists are exploring is for it to be home to an artist or activist in residence program.

Journalists who first met in Seattle in 1952, Lyon and Martin helped launch the influential Daughters of Bilitis, the first political and social organization for lesbians in the United States. They purchased the San Francisco property in 1955. Their home was a gathering place within

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Biden's got our backs

Having passed his 100th day in office, President Joe Biden has attempted to remedy four years of direct attacks by his predecessor with some important accomplishments for the LGBTQ community in pursuit of equity. He lifted the ban on transgender troops serving in the military. He nominated – and saw confirmed by the U.S. Senate – the first openly gay cabinet secretary, Pete Buttigieg at transportation, and the first openly transgender woman to serve in a senior position, Dr. Rachel Levine as assistant secretary for health. According to the LGBTQ Victory Fund, Biden has appointed at least 200 known out people to his administration, “exponentially more than any other president at this point in their administration,” the organization stated in a news release. “These appointees make an incalculable impact every day, drafting policies within agencies, advising on legislation, and debating critical issues at the highest levels,” stated Anise Parker, president and CEO of the Victory Fund. She added that the organization continues to work with the administration to ensure that trans and nonbinary people, queer people of color, and women are fully represented.

Even straight allies are making a huge difference. The Department of Housing and Urban Development, led by Secretary Marcia Fudge, formally withdrew a rule proposed in the Trump era that would have allowed taxpayer-funded homeless shelters to turn away transgender people on the basis of their gender identity. Last June the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, ruled 6-3 that a federal law – Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 – that bars discrimination on the basis of “sex,” also prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. HUD announced earlier this year that it would fully implement the *Bostock* decision in its application of the Fair Housing Act (https://www.ebar.com/news/latest_news/302239) and



Screengrab

President Joe Biden delivered his address to a joint session of Congress, as Vice President Kamala Harris and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi applauded when he mentioned the Equality Act.

take up cases of anti-LGBTQ discrimination in housing, which is consistent with the Supreme Court’s decision and the executive order Biden signed on his first day in office that ordered federal agencies to implement the ruling across the board for all laws barring sex discrimination.

Biden’s first address to a joint session of Congress last week contrasted positively in style and substance compared to recent presidents. No bombast or lies, like former President Donald Trump reliably spouted. No congressman shouting “You lie,” as happened during one of former President Barack Obama’s speeches (indeed, the House chamber was at reduced capacity due to the COVID-19 pandemic). Instead, the country got a glimpse of a president who tries to lead by example and who attempted to persuade Americans about how his proposals will help the country as it recovers from the economic fallout of the pandemic.

Of course, there is still work to do. The top priority is passage in the Senate of the Equality Act, and while Biden doesn’t have a direct role in that, he did again come out in support of it last week. “I also hope Congress will get to my desk the Equality Act to protect LGBTQ Americans,” he said. Then, referencing anti-trans legislation in many states, Biden signaled strong support for trans people: “To all transgender Americans watching at home, especially young people who are so brave: I want you to know your president has your back.” That simple statement spoke loudly and profoundly to trans and nonbinary people across the country, especially after four years of being constantly targeted and scapegoated by the Trump administration. Now the work has moved to states where the former president is popular, as state lawmakers attempt to erase trans people through ridiculous policies that even they know have no rational basis. We shudder to imagine what life would be like now without a president who has our backs, and instead with one who puts a bullseye on them. ▼

Guadalajara's quest for the Gay Games

by Gustavo Stauffert

As a proud Guadalajara native, or Tapatío as we refer to ourselves locally, I spend my days waxing poetic about all our beautiful city has to offer visitors. Guadalajara has an enviable heritage as the birthplace of tequila, mariachi, and charrería – Mexico’s national sport. But there is another defining aspect of the city that is just as important – our longstanding position as one of the most welcoming destinations in the world for LGBTQ+ visitors.

Tapatíos, including those with generations of roots in the region as well as new international arrivals, are the type of people who celebrate individuality and welcome change. This collective mindset is just one reason why international chefs, artists, and entrepreneurs have migrated here to introduce innovative fusions of their craft. The eclectic, creative energy is palatable across all areas of the city, including our large LGBTQ+ community. Our leaders are committed to fostering this spirit and ensuring that our LGBTQ+ community continues to thrive. As part of these efforts, the state of Jalisco (of which Guadalajara is the capital) named its first sexual diversity director, Andrés Treviño Luna, who guides the state on LGBTQ+ goals and issues. The Guadalajara Tourism Board has furthered this cause as a member of the International Gay and Lesbian Tourism Association, and by participating in nationally recognized certification programs that serve LGBTQ+ visitors.

Holding true to Mexican tradition, Guadalajara is known for its warm, welcoming hospitality, so we are not the type of people to keep the magic of our city to ourselves. It is an honor to share Guadalajara with the many travelers we welcome from around the world each year, and we hope to see even more if selected to host Gay Games XII in 2026.

We are honored that Guadalajara has been named a finalist to host the Gay Games along with Munich, Germany and Valencia, Spain. It’s a city of inclusivity with a beautiful contrast of tradition and modernity that athletes, spectators, and others attending the Gay Games can thoroughly enjoy. LGBTQ+ athletes of all ages, athletic experience, sexual



Courtesy Guadalajara Tourism Board

Gustavo Stauffert, director of the Guadalajara Tourism Board, advocates that the city should be chosen for Gay Games XII in 2026.

orientation, gender identity, physical challenges, and health status will participate in more than 35 sports at this prestigious event. San Francisco hosted the first two editions of the Gay Games in 1982 and 1986, setting the example for future host cities.

So, why Guadalajara? Hosting large-scale events for the LGBTQ+ community is right up our alley. We revel in them. Every June, we host one of the largest Pride celebrations in Latin America, which regularly attracts more than 100,000 revelers. These visitors come to celebrate their individuality among a rainbow spectrum of travelers as they enjoy a vibrant parade and entertainment, rallies, and more.

Visitors attending Guadalajara Pride have the chance to witness the intersection of heritage and our contemporary culture through our diverse mariachi musicians. Mariachi is on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage list, dating back to the early 1900s when it kept to conservative traditions for many years. However, today, there has been an evolution of the genre that embraces mariachi of all sexual orientations, including members of all-female and LGBTQ+ mariachi

bands. They play their music, an ode to their heritage, proudly and can be seen not just at Pride, but at Guadalajara’s International Mariachi Festival held every September. This festival is a mecca for mariachi with more than 500 participants from around the globe. The best of the best play alongside those who simply love music in a grand parade. Other festivals of note include Guadalajara’s International Book Fair, the world’s second largest book fair that highlights an LGBTQ+ literature section, and the city’s International Film Festival, Latin America’s most prestigious film festival which features the “Premio Maguery Award” for the best of LGBTQ+ cinema.

There is plenty to do in Guadalajara, even when a festival isn’t taking place. When Gay Games athletes have completed their events and are ready to relax, they will have myriad nightlife options. Guadalajara has the most LGBTQ+ bars and nightclubs of any city in Mexico, with more than 50 LGBTQ+ businesses. (Be sure not to miss Tacos Gay for late-night cravings.) The Chapultepec and

Zona Centro neighborhoods offer the best of the best when it comes to lounges, dance clubs, and popular drag shows. For those who prefer quieter downtime, there are UNESCO World Heritage Sites to be explored including the Museo Cabañas, which features floor-to-ceiling murals by famed José Clemente Orozco; the sweeping blue agave fields and distilleries that produce the world’s tequila; and the Guachimontones, one of the few circular pyramid sites in the world that offer a quiet, spiritual place to be.

As a city, Guadalajara truly reflects the Gay Games’ core principles of “Participation, Inclusion and Personal Best,” and we hope to have the opportunity to bear witness to the joy and spirit of the Gay Games athletes together. However, no matter the outcome of the bid, we would be honored to welcome you to our city at any time and hope to see you soon. ▼

Gustavo Stauffert is the director of the Guadalajara Tourism Board

