



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The Center Long Beach Announces Inaugural Launch
of Mental Health Counseling Program**

Long Beach, California, January 22, 2009 – On February 4, at 4pm, The Gay & Lesbian Center of Greater Long Beach (The Center Long Beach), in partnership with First Lady Nancy Foster, Councilmember Suja Lowenthal, and Councilmember Larry Forester (Signal Hill), is proud to announce the inaugural launch of their Mental Health Counseling Program.

The counseling center's primary goal is to provide affordable therapy for the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer community in a safe and supportive environment. The launch will take place at **The Art Theater at 2025 East 4th Street**. A reception will follow afterward in The Center's lobby where small hors d'oeuvres will be served. The event is open to the public and all are welcome.

The Center Long Beach received a grant of \$25,000 from LA County Supervisor Don Knabe to start the program. The program will offer counseling services to help people deal with issues such as depression, anxiety, relationship issues, HIV status, substance use, and domestic violence. **"Supervisor Knabe has been very supportive of our community and a great friend to us at The Center. This wouldn't have been possible without his help and backing," said Executive Director Kimberlee Woods.**

The Mental Health Counseling Center is able to be launched because a group of community members came together as a committee to support its inception. Many of these members have full time jobs, but still found time to give of their talents and expertise to support this effort. The committee was facilitated by co-chairs Richard Lewis (DLBA) and Dr. Carrie Rickard (Memorial Medical Center).

"This event marks our continual commitment to improving mental health services and providing vital resources for the well-being of our residents," said Councilmember Suja Lowenthal.

For more information about the Center Long Beach, please visit www.centerlb.org

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About The Center Long Beach

The Gay and Lesbian Center of Long Beach is located at 2017 E. Fourth Street in Long Beach. The Center was officially incorporated in 1980 as One in Long Beach, Inc. and has been providing a variety of health, social, advocacy, legal, and service programs to the LGBT community in the Long Beach area for three decades. The Center serves approximately 21,000 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender clients and constituents annually through 23 different programs and services.

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