



Media Contact: Andy Perez
aperez@zerepa.com

LGBTQ Center Long Beach adds new community members to board of directors

Center also adds staffer to the Older Adults Services Program

Long Beach, CA (November 9, 2021) – The **LGBTQ Center Long Beach** today announced the appointment of three new members to its board of directors as well a new hire in the Older Adult Services Program. **Jason Acosta**, (he/him) a San Pedro resident and Senior Vice President, Strategic Partnerships of Hispanic Scholarship Fund, **Chris Molessa** (he/him) of Long Beach and Senior Manager, Supply Chain Business Optimization of Raytheon Technologies, and **Ellie Perez** (she/her), a Long Beach resident and Executive Director of Visit Gay Long Beach, will serve a 3-year term. **Valentina D'Alessandro** (she/her) of Long Beach has been named the Older Adult Services Program Manager, a full-time position.

“The board of The Center continues to reflect the multi-cultural population of greater Long Beach,” said Carlos Torres, executive director of the LGBTQ Center Long Beach. “This is an exciting time as our board will lead the expansion of services for not only our regular clientele but also for people from Long Beach neighborhoods where health, mental health, youth, transgender, and older adult programs are simply not available.”

The board is in the process of executing an ambitious strategic plan that includes adding a new building as The Center’s programs, activities, and staff have outgrown the current location on 4th Street. The leadership is committed to implementing the most inclusive practices and services for clients to guarantee each person finds a safe, welcoming space with opportunities to authentically thrive in the Long Beach community. For more information on the strategic plan, visit <https://go.centerlb.org/StrategicPlan>.

Perez is an experienced management professional and educator with an accomplished history of working in these fields. As the Executive Director for Visit Gay Long Beach and a member of the LGBTQ community, she delights in advocating for LGBTQ+ & BIPOC visibility and inclusion where the need arises.

“As a lesbian Latina and mother of a trans child, it's my life's mission to advocate for others and to help make our world safer for all of us,” remarked Perez. “Uplifting the voices of communities that I intersect in is vital to our survival. I'm honored to be selected to be on the board of the LGBTQ Center Long Beach.”

Acosta, a native of Norwalk, CA, credits the city of Long Beach with helping him to gain confidence in his true sense of self and identity. He and his husband Alex met in Long Beach and now reside in nearby San Pedro, CA. He is Senior Vice President, Strategic Partnerships at the Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF) where he is responsible for developing, cultivating, and stewarding relationships and partnerships with community-based organizations, other non-profits, K-12 school administrators, universities, and professional leaders.

"As a proud gay man of color, I am tremendously honored to have the opportunity to support the vibrant, diverse, and increasingly inclusive LGBTQIA+ community in Long Beach and the surrounding areas," said Acosta. "I look forward to engaging all supporters in order to continue, strengthen, and enhance the resources that The Center provides to all who seek our much-needed services."

Molessa has over 15 years of experience in Supply Chain Management within the aerospace and defense industry. He is a Senior Manager, Supply Chain Business Optimization at Raytheon Technologies (NYSE: RTX), a premier aerospace and defense company. In addition to his work at Raytheon, he is the co-founder of Keen Social, a boutique social media marketing agency based in Long Beach. He has volunteered and supported several event committees for the Center and is excited to offer his experience in service.

“I look forward to serving on the board of The Center to help further its mission, providing services to LGBTQ+ community members and as a place where all are welcome, and our community can thrive,” commented Molessa. “Serving others in the LGBTQ+ community is very important to me, the mission and services provided to our community by the LGBTQ Center of Long Beach make it an ideal organization to serve and support.”

D'Alessandro (she/her) comes to The Center from the Los Angeles LGBT Center where she supported more than 30 national School Districts as part of the Out for Safe Schools® campaign. As Older Adults Services Program Manager, she leads a program of online and in-person activities such as art classes, discussion groups, and group walks. She has more than 15 years of experience in education and worked at Arcigay, Italy's foremost national LGBT rights organization, the LGBTQ Center of Bologna, the GAY LEX Law Firm and other agencies. D'Alessandro was a member of the Stonewall National Education Project (SNEP) Organizing Committee, as well as Equality California's Safe and Supportive Schools Advisory Committee. She studied Education at University of Bologna and later continued her studies in Neuropsychology at the University of Trento.

The LGBTQ Center Long Beach supports more than 25,000 people a year through programs including youth and family services, older adult services, mental health counseling,

legal services, domestic violence support, trans health programs, HIV and STI testing, and more than 20 weekly support groups. Currently many of these services are offered online during the pandemic. HIV/STI testing is available by appointment Monday through Friday in The Center at 2017 E. 4th Street in Long Beach. For more information on services, visit CenterLB.org or follow @CenterLB on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

###