



San Francisco Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Community Center *Volunteer Spotlight*

March 2010

Joshua Shrader



Joshua has been a much appreciated contributor to the LGBT Center's San Francisco Newcomers' Assistance Program (SNAP) since Late 2007. Joshua has been volunteering for SNAP since his very first days following his move from Redding, California. "I wanted to get involved with something in San Francisco after my move to the big city. I had lived in the Bay Area before and remembered how daunting and isolating San Francisco could be to someone new to this great big community".

Joshua comes from a rich background of community involvement and volunteering. He has taught CPR and emergency crises intervention classes for the American Red Cross, performed HIV testing in the East Bay, and been involved with LGBT community planning. While in Redding, he spearheaded a volunteer grassroots effort to produce the only Pride festival north of Sacramento. Billed as the Northern California Pride Festival, Joshua helped organize a Pride festival with limited funds and an all volunteer staff. "That experience taught me the power of giving, the strength we have in our community, and showed me the effect that taking pride in our visibility has on both young and old".

From the very start Joshua has been an invaluable asset to SNAP in many different capacities. He has helped plan, organize, and run many social and networking events for SNAP- events that build community and preventing isolation among many gay and bi men. Joshua has been the go to person to volunteer for many fundraising events where the Center was a beneficiary. He has tabled at streets fairs and community events, as well as conducted outreach on the behalf of the SNAP program and the Center. As a part of SNAP, Joshua has mentored young gay & bi men that were new to San Francisco on how to navigate the city, make healthy choices, and build supportive relationships with other men.

This past winter when funding for the SNAP program was in danger of being cut, Joshua represented SNAP & the Center before the SF Health Commission and successfully testified on the impact and relevance of SNAP to the gay/bi men's community, helping secure the future of SNAP and many other HIV prevention programs in San Francisco. "SNAP has always helped me out when I've needed some help, and in turn I've been able to provide for and witness what kind of impact a community program like SNAP can do for others". And finally, Joshua is currently involved in helping program some strategic planning focus groups as a way to insure community input in the future of SNAP, helping the program stay effective and current on the community's HIV prevention needs.

- David Gonzales, HIV Services Manager