

camp aurora



June 5, 2007

Camp Aurora needs your support.

For the last year, the Camp Aurora Steering Committee has been dedicated to creating and developing a subsidized 4-day camp with a focus on building upon and nurturing the leadership capacities and resiliency of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit (LGBTT /Queer), and allied youth. Located at Camp Manitou just outside of Winnipeg, Camp Aurora is scheduled for August 27-30, 2007.

With support to date from the Rainbow Resource Centre and The Winnipeg Foundation, the Camp Aurora Steering Committee is very close to actualizing the vision of providing an affordable and accessible camp for 35 LGBTT and allied youth from Winnipeg and throughout Manitoba.

Enclosed is more information about Camp Aurora as well as details about how you can assist in ensuring that Camp Aurora will be available to youth in the summer of 2007. There are a number of sponsorship and support options for your consideration. In return for your contribution, your business or organization will be recognized for its generosity. To ensure that your sponsorship is recognized in printed materials, please contact the Camp Aurora Steering Committee regarding your contribution no later than July 15, 2007.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Camp Aurora Steering Committee by e-mail at auroracamp@yahoo.ca, or through the Rainbow Resource Centre by phone at 474-0212, should you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Davis, Shelly Smith, Jason Granger, Gary Monkman, Jonny Sopotiuik
Camp Aurora Steering Committee

What is Camp Aurora?

Camp Aurora is a subsidized 4-day camp scheduled for August 27-30, 2007 at Camp Manitou that will focus on building upon and nurturing the leadership capacities and resiliency of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit (LGBTT), and allied youth ages 14-21. Camp Aurora is modeled after the precedent-setting Camp fYrefly initiated in Edmonton, Alberta.

Why is Camp Aurora important?

Currently, there is a gap in opportunities for queer youth to experience leadership development that acknowledges the specific concerns and needs of this group. Homophobia, transphobia, and heterosexism still exist within most youth programming. By in large, queer youth are still over-represented in national suicide, drop out, and substance use rates. This is evidence for the need for this targeted camp program.

The benefits of this project extend far beyond the 4-day camp. The hope and intention is that this camp will be the catalyst for a ripple-effect of positive benefits both in the lives of the involved youth and in the broader community through increased networking, by involving the youth of the Peer Project for Youth at the Rainbow Resource Centre in the planning processes, in the development of more gay-straight alliances within schools, and by investing in and training youth leaders for future camps.

What are the goals of Camp Aurora?

The primary goal of Camp Aurora is to support LGBTT and allied youth further develop their self-esteem, decision-making abilities, and leadership skills so that they can make significant contributions to their schools, communities, and home environments by:

- 1) Addressing homophobia, transphobia, and heterosexism,
- 2) Presenting and engaging with positive role models for LGBTT and allied youth,
- 3) Providing opportunities for LGBTT and allied youth to acquire new skills and tools,
- 4) Encouraging civic engagement participation and volunteerism, and
- 5) Facilitating social inclusion specifically for marginalized youth within both rural and urban settings.

Camp Aurora will accomplish this goal by collaborating with community and youth leaders to offer a wide range of powerful, youth-focused workshops and activities.

Who is supporting Camp Aurora?

Camp Aurora has been developed and organized by a dedicated voluntary steering committee with support from the Rainbow Resource Centre. A grant from The Winnipeg Foundation has provided a large portion of the funds needed for Camp Aurora. However, your support is needed to ensure that Camp Aurora will be available for 35 LGBTT and allied youth in Manitoba.

How can I help?

In order to offer Camp Aurora to youth for a minimal registration fee of \$25.00, the costs of the camp must be subsidized through grants and donations.

The Camp Aurora Steering Committee has been very successful in securing most of the funds required to provide a camp that is affordable to any youth who wishes to attend, however, more funds are still required.

Your support will go directly to sending youth to Camp Aurora. Each contribution of \$250.00 will secure a spot for one youth at Camp Aurora.

Rainbow Sponsor	\$3,000.00	Subsidizes 12 Youth
Platinum Sponsor	\$1,000.00	Subsidizes 4 Youth
Gold Sponsor	\$750.00	Subsidizes 3 Youth
Silver Sponsor	\$500.00	Subsidizes 2 Youth
Bronze Sponsor	\$250.00	Subsidizes 1 Youth

What will I receive in return?

Rainbow Sponsor	<u>Logo</u> printed in the Camp Aurora Thank You in <i>OutWords Inc.</i> , on a banner at the camp, on printed materials for camp participants, and on the web site.
Platinum Sponsor	<u>Name</u> printed in the Camp Aurora Thank You in <i>OutWords Inc.</i> , on a banner at the camp, on printed materials for camp participants, and on the web site.
Gold Sponsor	Name printed on a banner at the camp, on printed materials for camp participants, and on the web site.
Silver Sponsor	Name printed on a banner at the camp, on printed materials for camp participants, and on the web site.
Bronze Sponsor	Name printed on a banner at the camp, on printed materials for camp participants, and on the web site.

Charitable tax receipts will also be issued for your donation.



The unfortunate reality.

Many LGBTT youth drop out of school due to harassment or low self-esteem, and fear of "being found out."

Studies have found that more than 25% of LGBTT youth have severe drug and alcohol problems.

Several studies have found that approximately 40% of homeless "street" teens self-identify as gay or lesbian yet there are relatively few resources specifically aimed at meeting their needs.

Queer youth are at increased risk for drug/alcohol problems and dropping out of school.

Early exposure to diversity and sexuality issues helps to reduce prejudice and homophobia, including internalized homophobia which often leads to self-destructive behaviors.¹

A study by Village Clinic found that 25% of LGBTT youth had attempted suicide for reasons related to being gay.²

Camp Aurora will support and empower LGBTT and allied youth in hopes of addressing and changing these realities.

¹ <http://www.lambda.org/youth.htm>

² Village Clinic. Winnipeg, MB. 1989.