



Brought to you by Virginia's own Transgender Task Force

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# Transgender Health

## Physical Fitness for Trans People

Physical fitness is a concept we hear about all the time at school, in popular magazines, in advertisements for fad diets and exercise machines, and in the news. In the last decade, the problems of childhood obesity and overweight among Americans have been the subject of news headlines fairly regularly, as public health organizations focus attention on the issue in an effort to improve the health of US citizens. As most everyone has already heard somewhere, poor physical fitness contributes to multiple chronic health problems like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and heart disease.

Trans people face these same health concerns, but because of the stigma associated with gender variance and the discomfort many trans people feel with regard to their physical bodies, it seems likely that they will find it even more of a challenge to become and/or stay fit.

Especially in regard to exercise, there are some notable barriers that come up for many trans people. Previous negative experience in the school gym class and locker room is something that keeps lots of people away from health club settings. Add to that a discomfort with being in a public setting while

performing unfamiliar activities such as aerobics or weight training, and a gym can be pretty intimidating. Another problem with health clubs is the cost of membership. If you are struggling with maintaining adequate employment, a situation that is not at all uncommon for trans people, this can be

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quite a problem. However, if you don't have a lot of experience with exercise, you may not be aware of how to put together an exercise regimen that you can do at home. While there is inexpensive equipment that can be purchased for this purpose, it might be hard to know where to start if you were one of those kids who avoided gym class at all costs.

Another common barrier is simply low confidence in one's ability to make positive changes around fitness-related activities. It should not be underestimated how negative feelings like anxiety, doubt, shame, or fear tied to one's own body can interfere with things like motivation and the belief in the possibility of taking on new behaviors like eating differently or exercising. Fortunately, there are some great solutions

**Another nice benefit of exercising is the production of endorphins, chemicals produced by the brain during exercise.**

to dealing with these barriers, many of which are discussed in other articles in this newsletter. Read on to learn about some compelling reasons to break down those barriers and increase fitness.

For transgender persons there are a number of tangible benefits to getting and staying in shape. Tailored exercises can help your body better match your gender identity, either by bulking up in certain areas (for example increasing shoulder and neck size for FTMs or thighs for MTFs), trimming down in others, or by helping the body speed up the redistribution of fat that happens when taking cross-gender hormones. Another nice benefit of exercising is the production of endorphins, chemicals produced by the brain during exercise. They naturally make you feel good and can combat the negative vibes you might be getting from other parts of your life.

Being fit is thought to increase the successfulness of surgeries and improve recovery. In particular, well-developed pectoral (chest) muscles can aid a surgeon in determining how to sculpt the best shape for your new male chest. In any kind of surgery (well, perhaps not eye surgery), excess fat means that incisions

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### Inside: 4 Different ways YOU can get involved:

- Join the Transgender Task Force! See p. 8 for contact info.
- Join the Virginia HIV Community Planning Group. Contact Cat Hulburt at (804) 864-7962 or [Cat.Hulburt@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Cat.Hulburt@vdh.virginia.gov)
- Write a letter to the editor or an article for this newsletter! See **Announcements** on p. 7 for upcoming newsletter topics.
- Add your event to the to the Upcoming Events section on p. 7!

# Fitness for Male to Female Transgender Persons

Kathleen Caywood

Making your birth body "fit" for being a woman is a specialized case of being fit. You don't need expensive equipment or costly health clubs to become fit this way; you can achieve that fitness with some dedication and simple exercises. For you, the benefits of exercising go beyond physical health.

Fitness is a pretty general term, and just as the term is general, so is its implementation. You can be a little bit fit if you walk just 20 minutes a week, for example. Compared to someone who never walks, you are probably a bit more fit. Then again if you walk 30 minutes, four times a week, you will probably be even more fit.

"Fit" also implies suitability for a purpose, as in the phrase "fit for duty". If you're doing construction work, you need to have muscles that are capable of getting you through the day safely. If you're a computer programmer, bulging shoulder muscles are not an asset to your job.

As a trans woman, your body needs to be fit for moving with fluidity and grace, especially in heels\*. Have you

ever seen a man trying to walk in high heels? Ugly, isn't it: he's usually all hunched over and swaying from side to side.

Graceful, elegant movement in heels

can be accomplished with suppleness and balance based in well-toned muscles, especially thigh and calf muscles.

Toned muscles will stretch instead of tear if you should step on a stone and

*\*Of course, not all women or trans women want to wear heels, so this article is taking some liberty with this generalization.*

**Toned muscles will stretch instead of tear if you should step on a stone and bend your ankle while you're balanced on 3-inch spikes. This is a different quality of fitness than what you may be used to doing with your birth body.**

**You are going to keep your pancreas, stomach, lungs, spleen, knees, wrists, spine -- all those parts! -- for the rest of your life. You can come to love them.**

bend your ankle while you're balanced on 3-inch spikes. This is a different quality of fitness than what you may be used to doing with your birth body.

Dozens of companies would love to sell you high-tech strengthening machines. If you already own equipment like this, I hope you are using it. Otherwise, read on.

You will need a large-enough area to swing your arms and legs, and to lie flat on the floor -- say 8 feet by 8 feet. You will need both a hard floor and a soft floor: either thick carpeting or a yoga mat for the hard floor. I've seen "Pilates mats" for sale at K-Mart for \$10-12. Or, you could use a 2-foot by 5-foot piece of thick-pile carpet to cushion the floor; it should work as well.

Assemble your own set of exercises by combining body movements from yoga, Pilates, and modern dance, or maybe even tai chi. Every one of those offers a comprehensive program for experiencing your body and participating in your own health -- but you can also pick and choose from all those to create a set of movements you like to do.

Women's magazines like *Cosmopolitan* frequently have fitness sections with nicely-illustrated descriptions of movements that work on firming specific muscle groups or toning areas of the body.

Start slowly -- maybe 5-10 minutes three times a week -- and stick with it! I've seen too many people go gung-ho the first two days, but within a week they've given up completely. Start with exercises you know: bending, stretching, rolling your pelvis, rolling your head, stretching your thigh and calf muscles. Stick with exercises that feel good, and

movements you like.

Let your body speak to you as you work: some exercises are so easy that your body gets bored, while others may be too difficult for starting points. When an exercise is right, your body will know it.

More concretely, I have selected exercises that work on these areas:

- Loosening the neck and face muscles
- Loosening the shoulders, shoulder blades, and arms
- Flexing the spine, front to back and side to side
- Loosening the hips
- Stretching the thigh muscles, front and back
- Stretching and strengthening the calves and feet

For me, all of the above are preparation for the elementary ballet: bending the knees with feet flat on a hard-surfaced floor, then rising to the balls of my feet and back

down. Then I flee into my fantasy world and do kicks as if I were a Las Vegas showgirl -- in heels. It takes strength in the legs to hold my whole weight on one leg while the other leg is moving. But guess what? That's exactly what we do when climbing or descending stairs in heels. We can walk gracefully in heels when our legs have the supple strength to hold us steady as we move.

That's pretty much it for me: 15-20 minutes of stretching and strengthening, then 5-10 minutes of dance kicks, three times a week.

Use those exercises to get to know your body better. Notice that you can turn a little further or a little easier one way than another. That's OK: your

*(Continued on page 6, Fitness for MTFs).*

# Bodybuilding for Transgender Persons

Leland J. Albright

Transforming yourself takes a lot of patience, time, will power, and dedication. This is true even more so for transgender community members. It is typically due to the fact that there is more in the transformation process than in the regular fitness community. A way to start transitioning, pre-hormones and pre-surgically, is through the world of bodybuilding.

The transgender community and the bodybuilding community have quietly gone hand in hand because of the achievements gained without hormones and surgery. Some of the transgender community still prefers to work out and weight train in the comfort of their own homes. Home gyms are appealing to the transgender community because of comfort levels and personal goals being met without the discomfort or discrimination sometimes associated with a gym.

Depending on the gym a transgender person goes to, they still may experience discrimination. They can be ridiculed for being too feminine or too masculine. For example a person that identifies as male may be harassed for having soft features, lack of musculature, high voice pitch, being curvy, having tiny hands or not having body or facial hair. Same goes for someone that identifies as female; they may be bothered for having sharp features, being broad or having too much musculature, low voice pitch, having large hands or an abundance of body or facial hair.

Make sure when choosing a gym to keep a couple things in mind. The cost of membership is important. Ask about sign up, monthly, and annual fees. Find something that is affordable. Physical transition is an expensive process and it is important save up for hormones or surgery, if those are part of your plan. Equipment is another thing to look for in a gym. The equipment should match or accommodate your current and future

fitness goals. For example, if you are interested in bulking up and serious weight lifting, then a gym with more weights and less cardio machines is perfect and vice versa. Location is a key point to look at as well. If a gym is closer to you, this means you don't have to make more time to travel to the gym in addition to your work out. In short, do some research, see what your needs are, and see if the gym can meet them.

Locker rooms and showers can be intimidating for anyone, especially to transgender individuals. Here are a couple tips for the locker room and showers to make your transition smoother. First tip, if you do not pass all the time then it is not advised to use the locker

**Locker rooms and showers can be intimidating for anyone, especially to transgender individuals.**

room or showers. This can be a safety issue and it may be best to avoid a conflict. Also, if you have not legally transitioned, you may have less legal ground to stand on in your choice of locker rooms. When in doubt you can always use a bathroom stall. The bathroom stall technique also works if you are not entirely comfortable changing in front of others. It isn't recommended that a female to male (FTM) person use the showers if they haven't had chest surgery. If the gym has separate shower stalls and there is still discomfort with showering at the gym, there is always the possibility of going to the gym early in the morning or late at night. During these times there are generally less people and there will be less traffic in and out of the locker rooms and showers. A final option is to change into workout clothes before coming and then shower and change at home afterwards.

Even though bodybuilders and transsexuals are fairly common within the gym, there is still a lot of judgment and discrimination between the two communities. A lot of this animosity stems from the use of

steroids. Testosterone and Estrogen are considered steroids. Transsexuals want these hormones to transition and bodybuilders want testosterone (in particular) to have an edge, athletic or aesthetic, over their peers and competitors. Bodybuilders do not understand why transsexuals need to use hormones and criticize transsexuals for having legal access to steroids.

That being said, there are two sides to this. Some bodybuilders believe that Body Dysmorphic Disorder should be taken seriously like Gender Identity Disorder. Some feel that they should have the same rights to change their bodies just as transsexuals do. The other side to this argument is that transsexuals have to go through a process to be prescribed and start hormone replacement therapy.

Medically speaking, the only difference between bodybuilders and FTM transsexuals on steroids is the starting levels of testosterone. Biological (or cis-sexual) male bodybuilders who use steroids usually have a starting testosterone level of 500 to 900. Then the use of steroids can bring their levels up to the thousands. Transsexuals who use steroids have a starting testosterone level of 29-500 depending on whether they are FTM or MTF (male to female) transsexual identified. FTMs

**Even with all of the miscommunication between both communities it is important to point out that not all bodybuilders think this way. Many are more sympathetic and even supportive toward transgender and transsexual individuals.**

will use steroids to get to a testosterone level of 500-800 then maintain that level through the supervision of an endocrinologist or other qualified medical practitioner. MTFs start with a high testosterone level then gradually, with the help of estrogen and/or testosterone blockers, lower the levels to below 200.

The use of steroids legally or illegally continues to be a source of dis-

*(Continued on page 6, Bodybuilding).*

# T Without Pain: A Review of Topical Testosterone Gel

Julian Carr, J.D.

Six months ago I began testosterone treatment for the first time, and I have been using topical testosterone gel (AndroGel 1%, at 5 grams per day) rather than intramuscular injections. I apply the gel in the morning to my upper arms and shoulders and allow it to dry, which only takes a few minutes, before dressing for the day.

I had two primary reasons for choosing gel versus injections. First, like many folks, I didn't relish the thought of administering my own shots via a large needle. Second, and for me the more important factor, I was concerned about potential mood swings that might result from a semimonthly shot. I thought an everyday treatment might help keep my hormones (and emotions) more stable.

My voice began deepening after about a month of treatment, and some very light facial hair began developing within that same time frame. Neither my voice nor facial hair has changed very much since these initial developments, however. After about two months of treatment, my menstruation stopped completely. Within the last month or so, I have started seeing larger muscles in my biceps and triceps regions, as well as increased hair growth on my stomach and upper legs.

My emotions seem to have remained

relatively stable during this time period. Initially, I did notice an increased intensity to my emotions, though no noticeable change in frequency of emotions. This seems to be leveling off more recently, however. I have also seen a moderate increase in my sex drive.

I am not often read as male at this point (i.e., I don't "pass"). This is not a large issue for me, personally, but it very well might be for some individuals.

Unfortunately, I can't provide a direct comparison with intramuscular injections, as I've never undergone injection testosterone treatment. That said, to provide a balanced picture, I can mention some of the downsides to the gel treatment I've experienced. At my six month appointment, my doctor walked in and regarded me with a look I can only describe as "dismayed." She explained that I was far behind in terms of physical developments compared to where her other testosterone-taking patients usually are at the six month mark, and she has doubled my AndroGel prescription in response.

It's also important to note that testosterone gel is expensive--two to three

times more expensive than injectable testosterone. If one's insurance doesn't cover it, it's probably not a financially feasible treatment option for many.

Lastly, the gel can be washed off or transferred to others through skin contact for a period of several hours after initial application. Not only does this mean the user might not be receiving the full dose of testosterone but also that

those coming into contact with the gel might be getting some very unwanted testosterone. (My partner is trans female and on estrogen hormone therapy, and ze very much does *not* want any of my testosterone!) This means that showers, swimming, massages, romantic encounters, etc., must be planned with the time of gel treatment in mind.

All in all, despite all of these issues, I have been pleased with the results I've seen from my treatment thus far, and I appreciate having been able to forgo intramuscular injections. Although all hormone treatments are highly individual and others might see very different results than the ones I've seen, I hope this information is useful for others who are trying to decide on the testosterone treatment that might work best for them. ♠

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## Physical Fitness

(Continued from page 1)

must be made deeper into the tissue, so there is more area that needs to heal. Also, when the body is in good shape, it can devote more energy to healing from a surgery, and the chance of complications during the healing process goes down. Many surgeons will not do plastic surgery if the patient is a smoker because smoking decreases the size of the capillaries in and near the skin and makes

it more likely that skin grafts, or skin that is otherwise detached from the tissue underneath (as in liposuction), will survive surgical procedures.

Another area that is worth consideration has to do with hormones. Better fitness will decrease the likelihood of some negative side effects that trans people can experience from the use of hormones. For FTMs, testosterone can cause higher cholesterol and high blood pressure; for MTFs, there is some evidence that estrogen may increase the

chance of blood clots and cardiovascular disease. Smoking can have a particularly negative effect on fitness for trans women by decreasing levels of estrogen, thereby making it less effective, in addition to increasing other health risks, like cancer.

Finally, being more fit feels better! When you start to see differences in how you feel because you've made choices to eat better, increase your level

(Continued on page 5, Physical Fitness)

*We allow our ignorance to prevail upon us and make us think we can survive alone, alone in patches, alone in groups, alone in races, even alone in genders.*

*-Maya Angelou*



#### Seven Things that contribute to fitness for anyone:

- Healthy diet
- Maintaining healthy weight
- Regular exercise
- Adequate rest
- Avoiding, cutting down, and/or quitting smoking and other substance use
- Avoiding or limiting the use of alcohol
- Motivation!

### Physical Fitness

*(Continued from page 4)*

of physical activity, or made some other healthy change in lifestyle, it can help you feel more in control of your body and your life. This is true for all people of course, but because trans people often experience frustration and other negative feelings around their bodies, it makes it all the more meaningful and empowering when they can feel in control of making healthy changes that bring their bodies more in line with their identities. ♠

#### To learn more about physical fitness for trans folks:

- Check out **trans-health.com**'s excellent articles on fitness and training: <http://www.trans-health.com/displaysection.php?sid=3>
- A great article about a Canadian transsexual woman who runs marathons: <http://www.examiner.com/marathon-in-national/the-transsexual-marathon-runner-meet-jennifer-mccreath-part-1>

- Worried about Flu Season?
- Stressed about Transitioning?
- Dealing with new hormones?

## Chinese Medicine can help.



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Acupuncture and Chinese Herbs  
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[www.bluegreendragoninc.com](http://www.bluegreendragoninc.com)  
In The Cary Court Shopping Center in  
Carytown

## From the Editor:

### Some Online Health Resources for Trans Folks:

- TransHealth.com: <http://www.trans-health.com/> - An amazing wealth of articles covering many subjects
- Transgender Mental Health: <http://tgmentalhealth.com/> - A relatively new blog by an expert in the field
- Transgender Health Resources: <http://www.amsa.org/AMSA/Homepage/About/Committees/GenderandSexuality/TransgenderHealthCare.aspx> - This is a very impressive collection of links and description of the need for these resources by the American Medical Student Association.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's site on Transgender Persons: <http://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/transgender.htm> - They've got some really useful resources!

### Some Other Websites Folks May Want to Check Out:

- TransGriot: <http://transgriot.blogspot.com/> - "News, opinions, commentary, history and a little creative writing from a proud African-American transwoman about the world around her."
- GenderBlog by Kathleen: <http://genderblog.gendersong.com/> - A Virginia trans woman's thoughtful blog - "Gender, Transgender, and Christian Transsexual - Thoughts about All These."
- Trans Talk: <http://www.destrantalk.blogspot.com/> - Another Virginia trans woman's blog with more of an activist focus, "...addressing the issues forcing all of us into marginalized minorities."
- FTM Scouting the Unknown: <http://www.ryansallans.com/> - A detailed website and journal by Ryan Sallans about his transition and life.

## Fitness for MTFs

(Continued from page 2)

body doesn't have to be perfectly symmetrical in order to be perfect. I speak to my muscles as I stretch them. I praise my body. I compliment my body for its abilities, beauty, and grace.

It is this body-knowledge and self-appreciation that are the benefits beyond health that I mentioned at the beginning of the article. Knowing your body and treating it respectfully are steps to self-acceptance and self-love.

Yes, I know your body today may have some parts that aren't consistent with who you really are. The other 95% of your body, however, is complete and whole. You are going to keep your pancreas, stomach, lungs, spleen, knees, wrists, spine -- all those parts! -- for the rest of your life. You can come to love them.

In sum, this article looked at how MtF physical needs influence your fitness needs, and how you can develop your own, personal set of exercises to meet those needs. And meeting those needs can enrich your life and enhance your happiness and self-esteem. ♠

## Bodybuilding

(Continued from page 3)

trust and misunderstanding between the transgender and bodybuilding communities. Even with all of the miscommunication between both communities it is important to point out that not all bodybuilders think this way. Many are more sympathetic and even supportive toward transgender and transsexual individuals. Continuing education on the pertinent issues that affect both of these communities will allow fitness, determination, and commitment to bring them together in mutual understanding. ♠

www. **VA PRIDE** .org  
Presents:

# PrideFest 2010

September 25th, 2 - 8pm  
Kanawha Plaza, Richmond, VA

Brought to you by:  **Nationwide**  
*On Your Side*

Featuring Performances by:

*Lady Bunny* M O R G U E A S M  
[ Alex Funk ] Amy Henderson  
narissa bond Karl Marks  
TIFFANY DEVEREAUX AND CAST  
and MANY MANY MORE!



 presented by **GAYRVA**

**SCHEDULE | SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**  
1 PM - To/From PrideFest To/From Shockoe & Carytown  
4 PM - To/From PrideFest To/From Shockoe & Carytown  
6:30 PM - "GAYRVA" The Bus Event @ PrideFest  
8 PM - From PrideFest To Shockoe & Carytown  
10 PM - 2 AM - Club Route (see map above)

Other Upcoming Virginia Pride Events:

### VA PrideFridays in September

- 1st Friday at Barcode
- 2nd Friday at Godfreys
- 3rd Friday at Nacho Mamas
- 4th Friday at Capital Ale House

### Movie Screening of "Just Say Love"

September 19th and 20th

### PrideGala 2010

September 24th - 8pm - 11pm

More information on all of our events can be found at [www.vapride.org/events](http://www.vapride.org/events)

**Volunteer TODAY!** [www.vapride.org/volunteer](http://www.vapride.org/volunteer)



*"While there is as yet no language for who I have become, I articulate my gender -- silent to the ear, but thunderous to the eye."*  
Leslie Feinberg (from Trans Liberation)

## Announcements:

- **Upcoming Topics for the Transgender Health Newsletter:**
  - Winter — **Healthy Housing**, deadline for submission is **October 27, 2010**.
  - Spring — **Checking up on HIV in Trans Communities**, deadline for submission is **February 23, 2011**.
  - Summer — **Trans Communities of Color**, deadline for submission is **May 11, 2011**.

Is there a topic related to transgender health that you'd like to see covered in an upcoming issue? Suggestions for topics, along with readers' input via letters to the editor & articles are wanted and needed! Please note, articles should be limited to 2 pages,

single spaced, 12 pt font. Contact the editor, Ted Heck, via email at [Ted.Heck@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Ted.Heck@vdh.virginia.gov) or phone at (804) 864-8012 if you'd like to contribute in any way.

- The Virginia Department of Health maintains a **Transgender Resource & Referral (R&R)**, now listing 65 resources for transgender people all over the state. Click [here](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DiseasePrevention/Hotline/TransgenderRRList.pdf): [www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DiseasePrevention/Hotline/TransgenderRRList.pdf](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DiseasePrevention/Hotline/TransgenderRRList.pdf) to access the PDF. If you are a provider and you'd like to be added to the R&R listing, click [here](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DiseasePrevention/documents/pdf/TrangenderRRForm.pdf) to download the form: [www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DiseasePrevention/documents/pdf/TrangenderRRForm.pdf](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DiseasePrevention/documents/pdf/TrangenderRRForm.pdf)

## Upcoming Events:

- September 19 — **Pride in the Park 2010** at Elmwood Park in Roanoke, VA, 11 am - 6 pm, featuring entertainers Kelly King, Mike Rickard, Carol Plunk, and many others. For more details, see <http://www.roanokepride.com/>.
- September 25 — **Pride Fest 2010** at the Kanawha Plaza, in Richmond, VA, 2 pm - 8 pm, featuring entertainers Lady Bunny, MORGUEASM, Alex Funk, and many others. To find out more, visit <http://www.vapride.org/>.
- October 8 - 10 — **TransFaith Summit 2010** at The Radisson Hotel in Culver City, CA. Sponsored by Freedom Center for Social Justice. The Summit's goals include bringing the talent and efforts of trans communities of color more to the center of work already being done within the broader transgender community and strengthening the trans faith community through training and networking. Find out more and register here: [http://www.transfaithincolor.org/trans\\_summit\\_2\\_005.htm](http://www.transfaithincolor.org/trans_summit_2_005.htm)
- November 11 - 13 — **The Future of Aging is in Our Hands: A National Conference and Expo for LGBT Older Adults**, at the CUNY Graduate Center, NY City. Based in the belief that LGBT older adults are the experts on their lives, this unique conference will bring together LGBT older adults from around the country for three days of interactive workshops, exciting plenary sessions and multiple networking opportunities. For more information or to register, go to <http://www.sageusa.org/specialevents/home.cfm?ID=70>
- November 19 - 21 — **Transcending Boundaries Conference** in Worcester, MA. Education, social activism, research, and support for persons whose sexual orientation, sexuality, gender

identity, sex, or relationship style do not fit within the binary confines of male or female, gay or straight, monogamous or single. To find out more or to register, go to <http://www.transcendingboundaries.org/>

- June 2 - 4, 2011 — **10th Annual Philadelphia Trans-Health Conference** at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. 2011 marks the 10th anniversary! "We expect to see a record number of community members this coming year, and we are focusing on building creative community partnerships." Visit the website to learn more about the conference or to get involved: <http://www.trans-health.org/>
- August 5 - 7 — **Gender Odyssey** in Seattle University, WA. A conference for those interested in the thoughtful exploration of gender. Since 2001, attendees have traveled from all over the U.S., Canada, and overseas. The workshops, events, and programs allow exploration of ideas related to our lives and gender. All are welcome: families, partners, providers and friends. For more information, check <http://www.genderodyssey.org/>

### Ongoing Events

- See page 8 for listings of regular support group meetings around Virginia.

Would you like to see an announcement or an upcoming event listed here? Contact Ted Heck at **804-864-8012** or [Ted.Heck@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Ted.Heck@vdh.virginia.gov). The deadline for the next newsletter is **October 27, 2010!**

### What is the Virginia Transgender Task Force?

The Virginia HIV Community Planning Group (CPG) identified transgender persons in Virginia as a priority population. To identify the health related needs of transgender persons, focus was turned to conducting research, increasing understanding and knowledge of transgender communities in Virginia and developing transgender sensitive and specific HIV interventions and health care. From this, the Transgender Health Initiative was born with leadership from the Transgender Task Force (comprised of CPG members, transgender individuals, community members and researchers). The goals of the Task Force are to:

- 1) Inform effective training to promote culturally competent health care to the transgender communities;
- 2) Develop and maintain a statewide resource guide to be distributed across the state to facilitate increased access to care for Transgender individuals;
- 3) Develop and implement HIV prevention programs for the transgender community.

## Brought to you by Virginia's own Transgender Task Force

To be added to the newsletter email distribution list, or to get more info or get involved, contact Ted Heck:

109 Governor Street, Rm. 326  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Phone: 804.864.8012 - OR -  
▶ [Ted.Heck@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Ted.Heck@vdh.virginia.gov)

The Virginia HIV Prevention Community Planning Group (CPG) includes people from various backgrounds, expertise, and life experiences coming together as one to aid in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS in Virginia. Transgender persons are an essential part of the Virginia CPG. **Have your voices heard!** If you or anyone you know is interested in applying to the Virginia CPG or have any questions, please call Cat Hulburt at (804) 864-7962 or email at [Cat.Hulburt@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Cat.Hulburt@vdh.virginia.gov)



Building healthy transgender  
communities!

# Community Resources

To have your resource listed here, contact the Transgender Health Newsletter at the number or email address listed above on this page.

## Central

**James River Transgender Society** — A peer-facilitated support group in the Richmond, Virginia area for anyone on the MTF spectrum. 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month, 6 pm — 8 pm. Call (804) 358-6343 or go to <http://www.jrts.org/> for directions or other info.

**Richmond Transformers** — A peer-facilitated social and support group in the Richmond, Virginia area for anyone on the FTM spectrum. 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month, 7 pm — 8:50 pm at the Fan Free Clinic, 1010 N. Thompson St., Richmond, VA. Partners, relatives and supportive friends are welcome on alternate months. Call (804) 358-6343 for directions or other info.

**TG Clinic at the Fan Free Clinic** — Free transgender-specific healthcare for anyone in Virginia, including hormone therapy, HIV testing, and primary care services. Every Tuesday 6 pm to 9 pm, 1010 N. Thompson St., Richmond, VA, by appointment only. Call (804) 358-6343 and ask to speak to Linda Kendall or Reed Bohn for more info.

## Eastern

**Gender Expression Movement @ The Rainbow Bridge Connection** - A social, educational, and support group in Hampton Roads for all transgender people, friends, and family. We meet the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month at 7 PM. Call (757) 409-2568 for more info or email at [Info@RBCNLMCC.org](mailto:Info@RBCNLMCC.org).

**TS Ladies Talk**— A peer-facilitated support group for MTF transsexual women in the Tidewater area. For more info, call Vega at (757) 575-7690 or Mocha at (757) 235-4874. Every Monday, 6 pm — 8 pm at Tidewater AIDS Community Task Force, 9229 Granby St., Norfolk, VA. Call (757) 583-1317 for directions or other info.

**Transition Your Life Clinic** — Free specialized transgender care, including health screenings, hormone therapy, and HIV testing, Fridays, 1 - 4pm, Park Place Medical Center, 3415 Granby Street, Norfolk, VA 23504. Appointments ONLY. Call (757)640-0929 or email [mmaster@accessaids.org](mailto:mmaster@accessaids.org).

**Trans Masculine Group @ Rainbow Bridge Connection** - A social, educational and support group in Hampton Roads for masculine identified people and their specific needs. Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7 PM. For more information, please call (757) 409-2568 or email [Info@RBCNLMCC.org](mailto:Info@RBCNLMCC.org).

## Southwestern

**Roanoke TRANSformation** — A social support group for persons who no longer identify as the sex they were assigned at birth and have, are, or are considering transition. We meet on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of every month from 6pm-7:30pm at The Drop-In Center 369 Church Ave SW, Roanoke VA 24016. Meet-

ings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month are open to Significant/Supportive Others. For more information call (540) 982-2437 or email [dropcenter@aol.com](mailto:dropcenter@aol.com).

**Roanoke TRANSformation SOs** — A social support group for Significant/Supportive Others of persons who no longer identify as the sex they were assigned at birth and have, are, or are considering transitioning. We meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month from 6pm-7:30pm and with Roanoke TRANSformation on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month from 6pm-7:30pm, at The Drop-In Center 369 Church Ave SW Roanoke VA 24016. For more information on either group, call (540) 982-2437 or email [dropcenter@aol.com](mailto:dropcenter@aol.com).

**SW Virginia Transgender Support** — A peer-facilitated support group for MTF transsexual women in the Roanoke area. This group is specifically for those who have transitioned, those in transition, or for those wanting to start. Email [elbrke01@yahoo.com](mailto:elbrke01@yahoo.com) for more info.

## Northern

**DC Area Transmasculine Society (DCATS)** — A peer facilitated social and support group in the D.C. area for anyone on the FTM spectrum. For more info, go to <http://www.dcatsinfo.org/>. Meetings are 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month 5 pm — 7 pm at the Whitman-Walker Clinic, 1701 14<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. Call (202) 745-6171 for directions.

**MAGIC D.C. (Metro Area Gender Identity Connection of Washington D.C.)** — a peer-facilitated support group for transsexual, genderqueer and other gender identity questioning people living in the greater D.C. Metropolitan Area. Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month at 8 p.m. at the Falls Church Presbyterian Church, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, 225 E Broad St, Falls Church, VA. Email [info@magicdc.org](mailto:info@magicdc.org) or visit [www.magicdc.org](http://www.magicdc.org) for more info.

**PFLAG T\*Families Support Group** — A peer-facilitated support group for family and friends of both FTM and MTF trans persons in Northern VA. Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month at Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street Fairfax, VA. Contact Libby at 703-691-2026 or [mcknyt@gmail.com](mailto:mcknyt@gmail.com) for more info.

**Rainbow Tuesdays Clinic** — A free clinic for gay and bisexual men and for both FTM and MTF trans persons happens every 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday, 5 pm — 6:30 pm. Get HIV and STD testing and hepatitis A/B immunizations at the Alexandria Health Dept., 4480 King St., Alexandria, VA 22302.

**Transgender Education Association (TGEA)** — Celebrating over 25 years of support to the D.C. area TG/TS/TV/CD communities. Meetings are the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month. Email [TGEA4U@yahoo.com](mailto:TGEA4U@yahoo.com) for more info or visit <http://www.tgea.net> on the web.