



Ordaa!

Stronger together

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Job Opportunities

GALZ seeks to fill the positions of Programme Officer Gender and Key populations and the Finance and Admin Officer. Both posts are based in Harare.

The Programme Officer Gender and Key populations' duties will be to ensure the interests of women members of GALZ are represented in all areas of GALZ's work.

The Admin Officer will be responsible for the day-to-day office maintenance (both premises & equipment) in a systematic manner and ensuring smooth functioning of the office.

The positions were advertised on various media platforms including the Kubatana platform. Applications closed on the 20th of March 2017.

Applications are currently under review and only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. The selected individuals are expected to assume office on May 1, 2017.

Celebrating International Women's Day!

International Women's Day 2017 was celebrated in both Harare and Bulawayo. The management of GALZ decided to honor and host women within the organization and those from other partners' organizations such as Trans Smart and Pakasipiti in Harare and VOVO in Bulawayo. The events saw a total of 86 participants with 64% being either, lesbian, bisexual women or transgender men. Transgender women and gender non-conforming individuals constituted 16.3% of the guests, the remainder were other invited community members.

It was an opportunity for the women and women membership to raise awareness of issues within the lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBT) community.

In Bulawayo, the quorum discussed the opportunities available for women within the organization.

Guests shared stories of their lives especially around gender and sexuality. The stories included the day to day challenges that women face and issues they have to deal with in the community (both mainstream and LGBTI). They also had a chance to share their narratives using art. They painted and drew representations of

themselves and women in general. Some of the issues that came out of the depictions were:

- The heteronormative nature of mainstream society makes it difficult for LBT women as they are a target by virtue of their gender and sexual

orientation

- Patriarchy manifests itself within the LGBTI community as well as there is a bias towards gay and bisexual men and as a result women have limited voice or platform to speak on their issues.

- There is still need to advance the rights of women as women face violence in public spaces and in their homes and for LBT women it is especially difficult to get justice as fear of being outed is a barrier to reporting abuse.

- The common factor that linked group members was that they identify as women but some of their struggles were different as a result of differences in age, sexual orientation, gender identity, language, religion, family structure, financial standing, etc.

While in Harare, it was highlighted that there is an increase of correctional rape or sexual abuse cases. Men within society are raping lesbian women to 'correct' that which they view is wrong. These cases and many more in which members are being violated, discriminated and verbally abused because of their choice in dressing and because of their body language are the tips of the iceberg. LBT women are compounded by societal expectations. Discussing possible opportunities within the organization, the women suggested capacity building, skills for life and SRHR services as part of the package that could assist members in knowing what to do in instances of abuse.

As part of the celebrations, the women are running a campaign called the Sanitary Ware Drive to help each other in light of the further worsening economic crunch.

Overall the events brought with them lessons for both men and women within the organization. There is still work to be done to ensure equal opportunities for men and women.



Rainbow 263 Film Training & Festival

GALZ in partnership with the Beijing Gender Health Education Institute (BJQU) hosted the first Queer University Video Capacity Building Training in Africa. The training was held from the 3rd – 9th of March 2017 in Harare, Zimbabwe. International acclaimed filmmakers Kit Hung and Xiaogang Wei were part of the trainers together with Collen Magobeya and Time Baluwa from Zimbabwe.



46 applications were received, out of which 9 were selected to take part in the training. The selection criteria included competence of the English language and computer basics, a background in multimedia, photography, journalism and filmmaking were an added advantage. Links to previous works were required for those with the aforementioned qualities. Geographical location was considered to allow those in marginal areas who do not often get opportunities to advance their skills to participate. Participants were from Harare, Mutoko, Masvingo, Bulawayo and Norton participated.

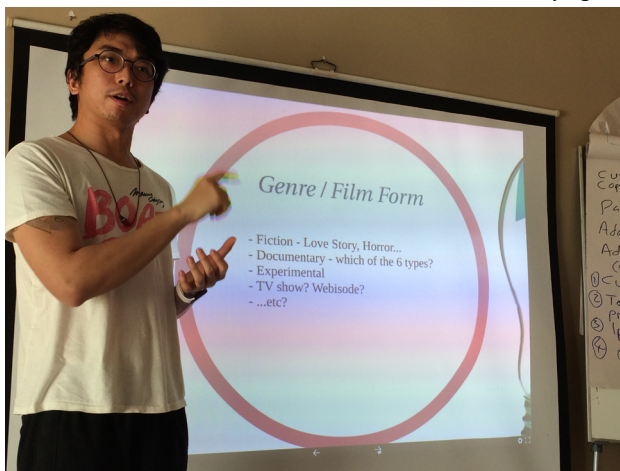
The program, which was mainly based in Asia focused on important elements of film making for LGBTI groups. The training explored lighting and composure, online video/video news production, filming practice, video editing, documentary theory and production, contemporary works and the history of queer films and their purpose in the modern day.

Trainees were shown works that were created by previous participants of the Queer University training in Asia and other international works created over the years

dating back as far as the 1960s. To further inspire participants Xiaogang shared with the participants his experience running Queer Comrades in China. He also went on to talk about their LGBTQ webcast and the Chinese LGBT movement and its development.

Participants were asked to produce a human size drawing on how they see their body then come up with questions based on their drawing. In pairs, they took turns to interview each other on camera and produce a 2 minutes video clip. A total of 13 videos were produced during the training, with the assistance of trainers. Participants were able to come up with ideas, scripting, filming and editing. All videos were screened and analysed by the trainers and trainees for the purposes of feedback and sharing of techniques.

The training offered 3 trainees the opportunity to direct and produce their own documentaries. Through a 5-minute pitching contest, the 3 were selected and will be provided with technical and financial support. Out of the 3, 2 outstanding trainees will be selected to attend the Chinese Film Festival in Beijing.



The Rainbow 263 Film Training concluded with a 2-day Film Festival that was held in Harare. Over 80 people attended the festival over the 2 days. The Film Festival showcased international films and local documentary films produced for the LGBTI community. The highlight features of the festival were the award-winning best picture film Moonlight and Kit Hung's Soundless Wind chime.

Young Matters

My struggle with sex and sexuality as a young gay teen

Growing up in Zimbabwe, as a young person with a different sexual orientation was very difficult and still is as an adult. But I can handle the life stressors better than in my teens. When I look back those years I was going through puberty and dealing with the dilemmas of being a teenager, I get all teary. I still get emotional about it, experience sharp pains in my chest and tense up.

My teen years were dark years filled with uncertainty, clouded by suicidal thoughts and fear. Behind closed doors and under the blankets I used to wonder how my future would be as an adult gay man. The future looked bleak, lonely, coated by isolation and possible incarceration. I knew back then, that if I give in to my feelings, emotions and thoughts, I was doomed. As a churchgoer I knew the bible had condemned me to death and I had no hope of being with the angels in the after life. Something a lot of young children or teens fantasy about.

The laws of the country had labeled boys or men like me criminals. I had read in the local Sunday paper that anyone who was attracted to people of the same sex was labeled a sodomite and must be put in prison. In the Sunday mass, the priest said we were sodomites, given our hearts to perversion and will burn in hell. I used to wonder why me? I used to wonder if it was a punishment for what my parents might have done? I also wondered if it was because I had stolen sugar from the mother's jar or the peanut butter I scooped from the grandmother's tin while she was not looking?

I would wake up in the morning at home or in the school dormitory with a heavy heart. Facing another day was hard full fear of what I might become in my older years. No one knew about my fears or my story back then until later years in my last years of high school. I also knew being gay man in Zimbabwe was nothing compared to being in hell as preached by the priest.

There was no one to share my feelings, fears and thoughts with. My parents had never discussed about sex or sexual feelings with my siblings or me. They were highly educated professionals with good jobs. The schools I attend only taught us about puberty stages and abstinence. Being Christian schools, the idea of sex was governed by fear of ending up in purgatory. To be continued...



Upcoming events and occasions

Occassions:

April 14 - 17 2017 :
Easter

April 18 2017:
Independence Day

Harare Activities:

LBT:

- Site visits
- Proposal writing workshop

Youth:

- IDAHOT Art workshop

Membership:

- Site visits
- Social Saturday
April 29, 2017

Bulawayo activities:

- SRHR workshop
- Social Saturday

Applications:

- IAS Educational Fund scholarship on HIV science
- African Leadership Centre Peace, Security and Development fellowship for African Scholars
- The Allard Prize Photography: Contest 6 photos of human Rights Issues and Anti-corruption efforts

For more information contact:
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Trans* Day of Visibility

Globally, the trans* community is highly discriminated against and stigmatised. This results in the community members suffering a myriad of issues related to well-being such as poor mental and physical health. The International Trans* Day of Visibility seeks to remedy this by encouraging the trans* community and its allies to promote and celebrate trans* identities.

GALZ and TIRZ collaborated to celebrate this day through a film screening and discussion. The event brought together 10 members of the trans* community from around Harare, along with 14 allies from

various organisations, to hear and discuss trans* realities in Zimbabwe, and map a way forward as to how to empower the trans* movement in the country.

The major commitment made by nearly all participants was that they would evaluate and correct any negative behaviours or ideas that they had towards or about the trans* community. Another major commitment was to advocate for trans* rights in their spaces.

Trans* community members also committed to not stigmatising each other.

5 lessons from pain

There is something about the past that is so addictive, it could be familiarity that breeds comfort or replaying scenes over and over again to find answers, yet most of the exhaustive process leads to the mind being entangled in a web of confusion and echoes of should have, could have.

We all have our own habits, whether good or bad. Mine is stocking up every little piece of paper or notebook that I have scribbled something in. On the rare occasions when I do decide to clear my bookcases to make space, I find myself, looking for an excuse for keeping every piece of paper and notebook, then end up restocking them again, even adding more to the piles with the hope that these will come handy at some point. Emotional baggage...

I am trying so hard not to fall into that temptation of dwelling on the past, but then I get the inner voice arguing that, if you don't go back to look for answers how can you move forward. Deep down I know it's my mind just giving me excuses to pile negative emotions again.

To find peace with myself for my own well-being I'm slowly coming to terms with the fact that although messy, scary, painful, and unsettling, with change comes growth. I am getting rid of the papers no matter how precious they might have seemed at some point, I am letting go, the same applies to memories, places and people that no longer contribute to my growth and well-being.

Despite all the pain, fears, regrets and mistakes, I now choose to focus instead on what these experiences have taught me. Below are some of the important lessons, which are helping me to pick myself, hope they save you too.

1. Learning to let go should be learned before learning to get. —Ray Bradbury
Inner peace is achieved when you remove yourself from things that longer contribute to your growth and happiness. Stop chasing pavements and begging for attention from everyone, everywhere. Don't be afraid to close doors that do not lead to your goals.

2. It ain't about how hard you are hit. It is about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward. How much you can take and keep moving forward. That is how winning is done! - Rocky Balboa
So what, it didn't work out, you put in work, did your best, don't give up. If you want it so bad you have to keep your head up, no matter how much you feel defeated, if you can look up, you can get up.

3. Choose all weather company, people who not only celebrate you but also inspire and motivate you. Be they virtual or physical, be sure to be with people who do not dampen your spirits. Misery loves company, be with positive people who uplift you, shut does for people who belittle you, or make you feel hopeless and worthless, you don't need that type of energy.

4. The two most important days in our lives, the day you are born and the day you find out why. - Mark Twain. Find your purpose; follow your passion you have nothing to regret but regret.

5. The biggest mistake is not making a mistake, because you will never learn. Life is a big game, no one has the secret, live, make mistakes, learn and keep playing don't be so hard on yourself. Negative self-talk and worry will not contribute to your wellbeing and success.

- Miles Tanhira (AFRICTRANS Wordpress Blog)



GALZ is a membership organisation providing services to the Zimbabwean LGBTI community

Whether you are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Intersex (LGBTI) and living in Zimbabwe, you are part of our community. Join GALZ in reaffirming its commitment to upholding and defending fundamental Human Rights and freedoms.

We offer the following spaces for interaction:

Youth spaces
Womens spaces
Mens spaces and
Social Events

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Website: www.galz.org @galzinf GALZ (page)



Why did you volunteer to represent women?

Women make my heart sing and it has always been my dream to heal, champion and inspire other women to be who they really want to become. A woman must prevail against her guilt (women going outside the 'norm' are perceived as guilty or generally blamed if anything goes wrong within the family) and be willing to suffer it as a price she must pay for her freedom. I see myself as a soft but radical feminist willing to reclaim her life and the lives of other women moment by moment.

As an LBT woman what has been the most fulfilling thing about the work?

As a lesbian woman listening to understand other women's stories has been most fulfilling. Listening to the fears, challenges and successes really reflects on the transformation of the greater realm and seeing wholeness manifesting into the lives of individual women.

What do you hope your legacy will be?

The legacy I aspire for is to keep to my integrity and love. To fulfil the thoughts that will eventually become actions and at the end of the day women will

say YOU did your best in every single transaction.

Where do you see the women's movement?

There is a saying that says; "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world." The movements have always been there and its time women take charge and be bold enough to stand for their rights otherwise the rights will remain unprotested. I stand with other women in the women movement in making things happen and breaking new grounds. The unspeakable will be spoken and the voiceless will be voiced.

Queer Voices

The women in our lives: LBT Women's coordinator Qb is 2017 Women's Day Champion!