

November 2019



Greetings!

It's been a little over one year since the spectacular Paris 2018 Gay Games 10 and momentum has shifted to Gay Games 11 Hong Kong 2022. Living authentically and standing up for your beliefs is not easy but it is necessary. Since the close of the 2018 Gay Games, we have celebrated WorldPride, the 50th anniversary of Stonewall. We have had discussion on what it means to be an athlete as with the Caster Semenya case. More people are coming out including athletes like Indian sprinter Dutee Chand, professional Mexican-American footballer Janelly Farias Rodríguez, and 40 members of 2019 Women's World Cup Soccer teams. The dialogue about acceptance of LGBTQ+ people and our place in sports has never been stronger and being part of this conversation is how change happens. Recently FGG held its first Annual General Assembly in Latin America where members had an opportunity to share experiences and ideas to bring change to our communities in their regions. We also celebrated local people who support us in our efforts and we were privileged to experience a key part of the culture as AGA coincided with the Day of the Dead. The recent events in Hong Kong have not deterred us from bringing our people, our culture and an understanding of how to celebrate diversity to disenfranchised regions. It's never been more important to show solidarity and it reminds us of our founder Tom Waddell's words that the "FGG is the largest political non-political organization in the world." As we look towards the new year, we encourage you to reflect on how far you've come and share your stories with us on social media to increase connectedness among our communities. #FGG #gaygames. #gaygameshk2022 #lgbtq #love



Joanie Evans, co-president

Sean Fitzgerald, co-president

**AGA 2019**

130+ delegates, Honorary Life Members (HLMs), and observers of the international Federation of Gay Games (FGG) from 21 countries recently participated in the Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Guadalajara, Mexico from October 31 - November 2, 2019. The AGA was a great success!

**5 Key Takeaways from AGA 2019**

1. We will find ways to continue to support LGBTQ+ sports and their participants in Latin America and the Caribbean
2. We cannot underestimate the importance of giving local people international recognition through our Awards Ceremony
3. We are in process of developing partnership and sponsorship opportunities with regional partners.
4. With the success of the outreach activities in Guadalajara, we saw real value in inviting past scholarship recipients and in outreach activities that focus on areas of under-representation in the Federation and in Gay Games. We will explore both elements with a view to including them in AGA 2020
5. Some logistical hiccups led to a motion from the floor that all paperwork must be completed and with delegates no less than three weeks before AGA 2020 to ensure a smooth AGA experience for all
6. Attendees greatly appreciated a session to aid understanding of the current situation in Hong Kong. It helped allay fears for people planning to go to Gay Games 11

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**FGG Board Election Results**

During the Guadalajara AGA, elections were held for the FGG Board of Directors. 10 incumbent Board members were re-elected to the Board in their current or new positions. In addition, the Board welcomed three new officers: Grace Thompson (Officer at Large from Washington, D.C.), Cyril Millet (Officer of Technology from Paris, France), and Dalma Paimann (Officer at Large from Guadalajara, Mexico). 11 additional Board members are in the middle of their two-year terms and were not up for election.

See photos at <https://gaygames.org/Your-Board>



### GGHK2022 Update - Join us for Hong Kong 2022 - Gay Games 11!



The Hong Kong Team delivered two sessions to update members on the progress of planning for Gay Games 11, one on the current situation in Hong Kong and the other outlining the work ongoing of the Hong Kong team for the 2022 Gay Games.

The FGJ and the attending members are leaving Mexico feeling confident that the Gay Games in Hong Kong will be a sensational sports and cultural event that will kickstart and foster LGBTQ+ connections among our communities in the city and region.

This will be the largest ever LGBTQ+ sports and cultural event ever held in Asia. 12,000 participants, 36 sports, and 20+ cultural events will take place over 9 days in November, 2022.

"Hong Kong is an opportunity to make a positive political statement by doing something that is fun and non-threatening and which can change peoples' perspectives of what it means to be LGBTQ+," said Gene Dermody, a participant in all ten Gay Games.

### Legacy Awards presented at Guadalajara AGA

Continuing a trend that started in 2009, the Federation of Gay Games held its Legacy Awards during the 2019 AGA in Guadalajara. A festive ceremony was emceed by FGG Officer of Ceremonies Eddie Young, with Co-Presidents Joanie Evans and Sean Fitzgerald doing the honors.

A total of 15 awards were presented to FGG honorees and to local and regional individuals and organizations. A torrential rainstorm and a brief power outage at Peligro Al Fondo only served to make the event more fun and successful! This Awards ceremony has become an important event as it celebrates the meaningful and hard work individuals and organizations do to promote acceptance and equality.

To see the complete list of Legacy Award recipients, visit <https://gaygames.org/Annual-Legacy-Awards>



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### Welcome our New Members!

"On behalf of the entire Federation of Gay Games, I welcome all our newest members."

- Bill McManus-VP Member Services

### Sporting Pride Ireland

Following on from the success of Team Ireland at the World Gay Games in Paris last year Sporting Pride, Ireland's national LGBTQ+ sports organization, has been established.





Sporting Pride is committed to making sport a more inclusive and diverse environment for members of the LGBTQ+ communities and in doing so, promoting the well known positive benefits of fitness and exercise to one's physical and mental wellbeing.

Participation rates in sports amongst the LGBTQ+ communities are below the national average. Homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, societal pressure and concerns around 'coming out' all contribute to a decline in participation amongst late teens and older LGBTQ+ people.

To improve participation rates Sporting Pride is developing two-pronged connected approach:

1. Promotion: Increase participation of the LGBTQ+ communities by supporting established LGBTQ+ sports clubs across the country to increase visibility of available sports and services, and removing barriers by working with National Sports Governing Bodies to develop LGBTQ+ inclusive programmes for every sports club in Ireland.
2. Competition: For those wanting to compete at national or international level we will encourage athletes to join Team Ireland at the regular national or international LGBTQ+ friendly competitions taking place throughout the world. The EuroGames in Rome in July will offer athletes an opportunity to experience international competition and applications to join the Team are now open. Team Ireland brought home over 40 medals, 13 gold, from last year's World Gay Games in Paris, in sports such as badminton, swimming, running and cycling.

**Orgullo Deportivo** is a nonprofit organization formed in alliance with Zorros LGBT, Azkatl Mexico and Divinas LGBT. It is dedicated to promoting the development and well-being of LGBTQ+ people in Mexico through sports and the provision of support and integration services.



Orgullo Deportivo's social services and programs center around sports activities for the development of LGBTQ+ people, including national, regional and local tournaments, allowing them to participate safely and without fear of prejudice or stereotypes in activities traditionally identified in Mexico with machismo and homophobia. Our target population are members of the LGBTQ+ communities, mainly serving young people and young adults in the range of 16 to 35 years.

We also promote funding campaigns to support young LGBTQ+ athletes with scholarships so that they can participate in national and international LGBTQ+ events. We have created an online map to facilitate the creation of new sports clubs throughout the country. People or teams can connect, sign up, recruit new members and publicize their sporting events. Check it out here [www.orgullodeportivo.org](http://www.orgullodeportivo.org)

#### **Olimpiadas LGBTI Ecuador**

The recently formed organization's goal is to participate with a delegation of Ecuador on the Gay Games 2022. Olimpiadas believes in the power of sports to improve lifestyle and health and unity. At the recent FGG Annual General Assembly, they collected ideas and shared experiences from organizations from around the world which they plan to funnel back into their projects in Ecuador to help improve the country.

**Federación Mexicana Deportivo de la Diversidad** - [www.facebook.com/pg/FMDDAC/posts/](https://www.facebook.com/pg/FMDDAC/posts/)

**National Gay Basketball Association** - <https://ngba.org>

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## **Opportunities For You To Get Involved**

### **1. Diversity and Inclusion**

The General Assembly adopted the Bylaw amendment to change the name of the board position to Officer Diversity and Inclusion.

**The Diversity and Inclusion Committee has a vacancy** and we welcome contact from people of diverse gender or sexual expression interested in joining the Committee and helping the FGG make real progress in advancing the depth and effectiveness of our Diversity and Inclusion focus.

For more information, questions or if you are interested in applying for this specific role, please contact Susan Hitchiner, Officer of Diversity and Inclusion at [susan.hitchiner@gaygames.net](mailto:susan.hitchiner@gaygames.net).

### **2. Site Selection for 2026 Starting March 2020!**

The Site Selection Process for the 2026 Gay Games will be commencing in March, 2020. If you are interested in having your city host the Gay Games please contact David Killian at [david.killian@gaygames.net](mailto:david.killian@gaygames.net) as soon as possible.

### 3. New Human Resources Working Group to start in Feb 2020!

As the Federation of Gay Games grows we need to pay good attention to how we recruit, on-board, motivate and support volunteers within the Federation. We are setting up an HR Working group - so if you have HR/Volunteer Management experience, please consider joining us. We will hold a monthly one hour conference call. First steps will be to draft a strategy for People Management and assign owners to drive the strategy forward. Please contact Viv Woodcock-Downey at [viv.woodcock-downey@gaygames.net](mailto:viv.woodcock-downey@gaygames.net) to apply or for more information.

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## FGG Partners With New Out Athlete Fund To Help Our Communities



In mid-October, the international Federation of Gay Games (FGG), announced the launch of Out Athlete Fund, a global grant giving organization for LGBTQ+ athletes. Out Athlete Fund (OutAF) provides grants to LGBTQ+ collegiate athletes and LGBTQ+ Olympic athletes around the world making it the premiere charity supporting out athletes in competitive amateur sports.

FGG is incubating the new foundation to accelerate its fundraising capacity and allow it to connect with the broader ecosystems of organizations supporting the cause of equality in sports.

"The mission of the FGG is built upon the core principles of Participation, Inclusion, and Personal Best™.", says Les Johnson, VP External Affairs for FGG, "LGBTQ+ people feel more able to be out today and, often, at an earlier age than when the FGG was founded. All ages of the LGBTQ+ communities have more access to avenues where they can be who they are. We recognize that today's LGBTQ+ athletes need the type of community support that the Gay Games provides. We are excited to be supporting a new organization that will extend our mission into collegiate and Olympic competition."

Out Athlete Fund Founder, Alex Soejarto, added, "We are thrilled to be sponsored and mentored by the Federation of Gay Games. LGBTQ+ athletes are making a difference and creating change globally by competing as their authentic selves. We are equally excited to offer grants supporting athletes to play openly and change perceptions of LGBTQ+ people among teammates, competitors, and fans."

For now, Out Athlete Fund will deliver services to athletes with the support of FGG's infrastructure but over time will scale up with committed resources so as to handle the operations of the fund itself while still in an engaged relationship with FGG.

By supporting LGBTQ+ athletes, financially and otherwise, to play in mainstream sports, OutAF enables these athletes to focus on excelling on the field of play, without their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression being an issue or point of discussion.

Learn more by visiting the site [Out Athlete Fund](https://outathletefund.org) or by contacting Alex Soejarto at 415-371-9480 [info@outathletefund.org](mailto:info@outathletefund.org)

### International Development and Outreach Update

The AGA in Guadalajara was FGG's first annual meeting to be held in Latin America. LGBTQ+ sports leaders from the region, some of whom received travel funding by FGG, had the opportunity to partake in several days of sessions where they learned about FGG, the Gay Games movement, and shared experiences with fellow members.

Participants from Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, and Suriname in our *Latin American and Caribbean LGBTQ+ Sports Summit* ranged from well-established groups like Didesex in Mexico or GAPEF in Argentina, to newer groups in the process of planning the creation of new clubs and teams to be of service to their communities.

Issues discussed included: how to find team members, how to raise money for programs, how to put a team together to take part in the Gay Games, how to encourage participation of trans\* players and whether sporting events based on a binary approach needs to be rethought. The camaraderie and inspiration gleaned from the session led to a huge boost in enthusiasm for all participants!

The action has also led to a flurry of new FGG Assembly member applications from around the region!







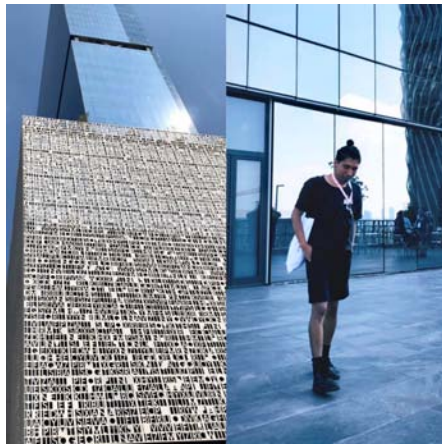
*"I am very motivated after arriving from Guadalajara, the Gay Games Federation has given me hope again and I am filled with more strength and power for my Political and Sports work here in Colombia and Latin America, thanks for looking at me, for giving me so much love and respect in the meeting I felt and they were very happy days, I wish to repeat them very soon and to be able to see everyone again.*

*I have been watching videos of France 2018 and previous games and I am really excited to know that I will fulfill my dream of participating in some world games representing my country and Latin America. Infinite thanks" - MiYu Alarcon*

*"Attending the AGA was a great gift, getting to know a little more about how FGG works, getting to know the representatives of Latin America motivated me to work even harder in Brazil for better days for the sport in the LGBT + community."*



*Participating in such a rich time of experience exchange makes us feel that we are on the right track, that we are not alone, and that we are part of a World Movement, and so we cannot give up on continuing to fight for inclusion, participation that makes us people. best in this world." - Diego Oliveira*



*"Agradezco a los Gay Games por seguir cambiando mi vida, ser un hombre gay orgulloso. Ellos nos inspiraron a crear el equipo Mermaids Mexico City, que busca la igualdad de los derechos LGBT+ por medio de la natación. La asamblea nos ayudó a compartir ideas con otros equipos que tiene una trayectoria y experiencia amplia para poder adaptarlo a nuestras necesidades. Fue increíble tener opiniones de personas de America Latina, que vamos de la mano por una comunidad latina libre. Gracias Gay Games, sigamos creciendo.*

*I thank the Gay Games for continuing to change my life, being a proud gay man. They inspired us to create the Mermaids Mexico City team, which seeks equal LGBT + rights through swimming. The assembly helped us share ideas with other teams that have extensive experience and adapt to our needs. It was amazing to have opinions of people from Latin America, who go hand in hand for a Free Latino community. Thanks Gay Games, let's keep growing."* - Ulysses Fitch

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### **Personal Best and Participation Story - Nicolas Pineda, Orgullo Deportivo**

*"I am very happy that the AGA has been carried out in Mexico, this excites us and motivates us to continue working for LGBTQ+ sports in our cities. In my personal case, the Gay Games became a motivation since I first went to Cleveland 2014 where I competed in athletics and my results were not good. I was last in the competitions! But at the same time, I witnessed a 90 year old lesbian woman running the 100 meters. That moment changed my life and became a true inspiration that motivated me to prepare myself. At Gay Games Paris 2018 I ran the same races and won 3 medals! Now I am committed to motivating more athletes in my country to live the enriching experience that Gay Games is."*



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### Hip Hip Hooray! Let's hear it for PCA!

The Culture & Ceremonies Committee congratulates the Pride Cheerleading Association (PCA) on their successful transition into Sport for Gay Games 11: Hong Kong 2022! PCA is an affiliation of Member Teams united by a common philanthropic mission: to support people living with life-challenging conditions in the LGBTQ community and beyond. <https://www.pridecheerleadingassociation.org>

By including this traditional sport, the Gay Games 11 Hong Kong team aims to introduce cheerleading to broader Asian audiences. Competitor CHEER teams will vie for gold, silver, and bronze. Cultural exhibition events will continue including performances at opening and closing ceremony, raising funds for the FGG Scholarship Fund as well as locally-selected nonprofits.





*Members of PCA with Co-President Joanie Evans at AGA 2019 Dia de los Muertos celebration. Pictured left to right: Diana Ahumada (CHEER Los Angeles), Colyn Fiendel-Milani (CHEER New York), Anthony Chavira (CHEER San Francisco), Joanie Evans (FGG Co-President), Paul Ruiz Lee (CHEER Los Angeles), Sara Toogood (CHEER Seattle)*



*Members of PCA with Co-President Sean Fitzgerald at AGA 2019: Guadalajara Dia de los Muertos celebration. Pictured left to right: Diana Ahumada (CHEER Los Angeles), Colyn Fiendel-Milani (CHEER New York), Anthony Chavira (CHEER San Francisco), Sean Fitzgerald (FGG Co-President), Paul Ruiz Lee (CHEER Los Angeles), Sara Toogood (CHEER Seattle)*



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**Share your stories of Participation, Inclusion and Personal Best™ with the hashtag #gaygames**

Since the first Gay Games in 1982, the Federation of Gay Games mission promotes equality in and through sport and culture and ensures that the Gay Games, the world's largest sports and culture festival open to all, take place every four years under the founding principles of *Participation, Inclusion, and Personal Best™*.

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**Federation of Gay Games** <contact@gaygames.org>  
Reply-To: communications.committee@gaygames.net  
To: Communications Committee FGG <communications.committee@gaygames.net>

Fri, Nov 15, 2019 at 11:04 AM

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**Federation of Gay Games** <contact@gaygames.org>  
Reply-To: board@gaygames.net  
To: FGG Board of Directors <board@gaygames.net>

Fri, Nov 15, 2019 at 11:10 AM

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