

Welcome to the March 2021 Edition of Participate!

Join us for Gay Games 11 Hong Kong 2022, 11-19 November!

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Joanie Evans, co-president



Sean Fitzgerald, co-president



It's almost end of the 2021's first quarter...

...And there is an element of Spring in the air. Each Spring brings a feeling of hope and it certainly seems that the world is emerging from its period of isolation to embrace renewal. Our ways of living will be impacted by all the occurrences from 2020 in both good and challenging ways, and at FGG we continue on our journey to help organizations and individuals Return to Play. Excitingly, Spring also marks the opening of the soft registration for Gay Games 11 Hong Kong 2022. Be sure to check the GGHK website at gghk2022.com for the latest information and below in the GGHK2022 section to learn more about Hong Kong itself and what it has to offer from its beaches to its food. In this issue of Participate, check out our latest Ambassadors, updates from our Culture Committee and opportunities for you to get more involved with FGG.

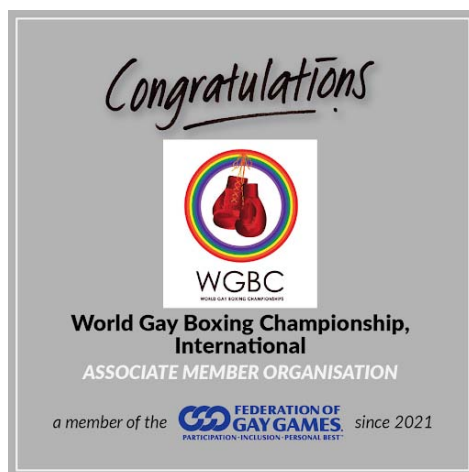
#FGG #gaygames. #gaygameshk2022 #lgbtq #love

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Franie Zio". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "F" and a decorative flourish at the end of the "Zio".A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sun". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Membership Update

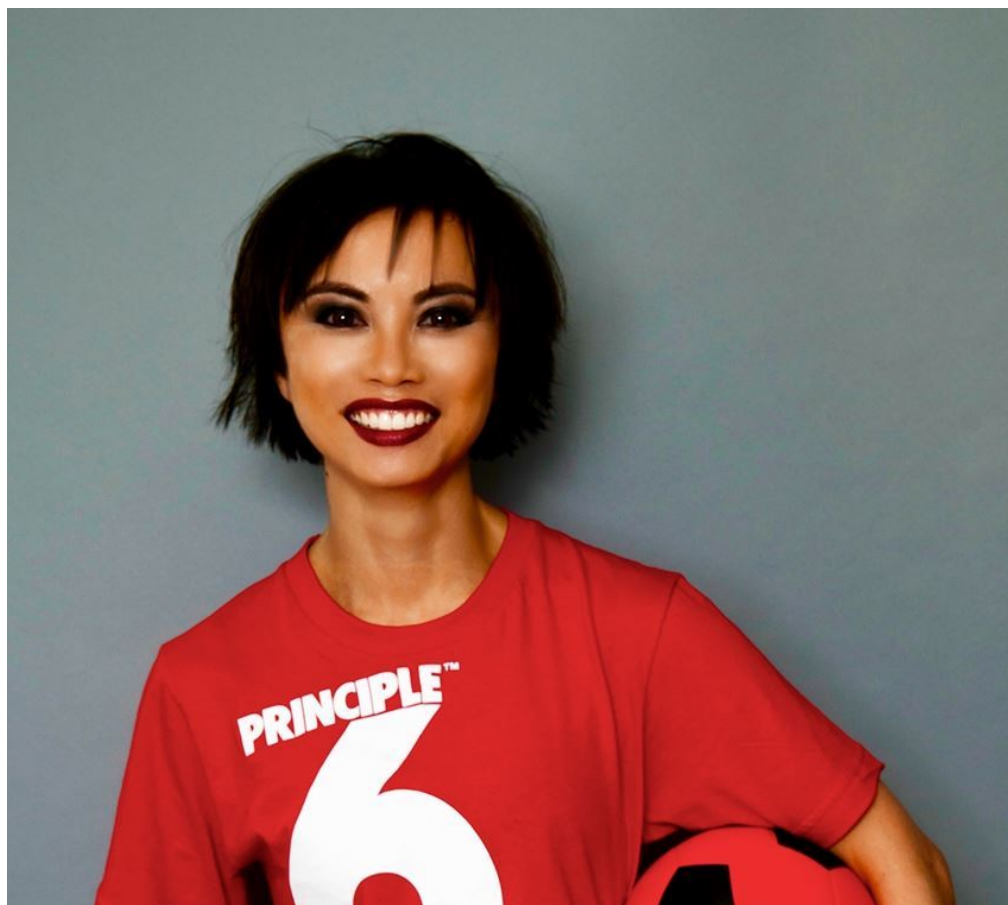
Congratulations to the two new organizations that recently joined the Federation!!



FGG Ambassador Profiles

In this month's newsletter, we are excited and honored to introduce you to three new FGG Ambassadors: Amazin LeThi who is a Bodybuilder and speaker, activist and Ambassador for 6 organizations including Athlete Ally and Stonewall; Joanna Lohman, a former pro Soccer player and author of 'Raising Tomorrow's Champions'; and Bethany Tucker, a bisexual para-athlete who is part of the Athletics Pride Network.

Meet Amazin LeThi





What's your story?

My name is Amazin LeThi and I'm a global LGBTQ advocate, keynote speaker, athlete, published author and global ambassador for 6 international organizations. I'm a global citizen.

What does sport give you that nothing else does?

Sport gave me the confidence to stand in my truth and be my unapologetic queer authentic self. Through difficult points in my life sport gave me the mindset to survive and triumph. I wouldn't be the person I am today if it wasn't for a lifetime of sports in my life.

What negative experiences did you have and how did you deal with them?

I've suffered a terrible amount of racism and bullying in sports because I'm Asian. When it happened as a child and teenager it was very difficult to deal with because I was the only Asian person in sports and had no support system but this personal experience has led me to all the global advocacy work I do today around sports equality and educating people of the barriers and challenges that Asian athletes face in sports.

What advice would you give to any LGBTQ+ athletes either professional or not?

When you stand in your truth and live authentically and unapologetically you'll be far more successful in life and sports. Always remember that you are enough and that you've always been enough and that you're always worthy of owning the space you're in.

Why do you want to be a Gay Games Ambassador?

As an advocate and athlete this will be an amazing opportunity to represent the Asian LGBTQ athletic community and work alongside the largest LGBTQ sports event in the world to champion diversity and inclusion and to highlight the challenges and barriers Asian LGBTQ people face in sports.

What else do you want us to know about you?

I'm currently training to compete in competitive shooting and hope to compete in a future Gay Games in shooting and be the first out athlete to represent Vietnam in this sport.

✖

Meet Joanna Lohman aka Rainbow Warrior



What's your story? Who are you? Where are you based?

My name is Joanna Lohman and I am a former professional soccer player and member of the United States Women's National Team. I played professionally for 16 years and built a platform for social impact. Upon retirement in 2019, I became the first player in Washington Spirit history to have her jersey retired. I am also an author of **"Raising Tomorrow's Champions"**, a human rights activist, and serve as a sport diplomat for the U.S. State Department, traveling the world and running programs that promote gender equality, conflict resolution, and cultural understanding in less developed nations. As one of the first openly gay soccer players in the world, my nickname is the "Rainbow Warrior" and I focus on helping individuals and groups understand the steps involved in living an unabashedly authentic life — based in deep-rooted acceptance and discovering comfort in their own skin. As a professional speaker, I also have shared my message with organizations all over the world including: The Minnesota Vikings, The Human Rights Campaign, Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Qualcomm, Lifetime Television, and many more.

I am based in Washington, DC with my partner Melodie and our dog, Dewey.

What does sport give you that nothing else does?

Sport has been a safe space for me since I was a young kid growing up in Silver Spring, MD. It has offered me countless opportunities to be my true self and explore my own identity through the inevitable pain and failure you experience on the field of play. Sport has opened my life to world travel where I have gained perspective of different cultures and gratitude for the ability to play sport professionally as a woman. It has also helped me to develop traits that have made me successful post retirement. The resiliency, grit, determination, and focus needed to be an athlete transcends to my off field career, and

really enables me to excel.

In terms of soccer specifically, there are so many things I love: being a part of a team and getting to work with people I respect and admire towards a common goal - that provides motivation and purpose; the cerebral and endurance aspects of soccer...it requires a great deal of fitness and intelligence to play the game.

Also, as part of a team sport, you learn that you are not unique in your struggles. You realize you are an important piece of a collective. You also learn, being only a part of something larger, that a lot of life is out of your control so it's imperative to focus on the few things YOU can control as opposed to agonizing over what you cannot. This lesson has served me every single day.

Lastly, soccer is the world's game. It is an incredible tool to break down barriers and I can travel the globe building connections with others through the sport. It is why they call it "the beautiful game".

What negative experiences did you have and how did you deal with them?

There were many negative experiences but looking back those were the moments I learned and grew the most. Being misgendered in the United States and internationally helped me to develop patience and realize my true purpose in life - to expand the definition of what a woman can look like. Getting seriously injured (I had back surgery and tore my ACL) helped me to expand my identity outside of being just an athlete. And losing, fighting for playing time, and struggling to get minutes all built my resiliency when faced with any type of setback.

With blood, sweat, and tears, I have struggled on many occasions to follow my dreams. The challenges have made me a more resilient individual, have given me confidence to persevere, and the ability to pick myself up after defeat.

What advice would you give to any LGBTQ+ athletes either professional or not?

It is cool to be vulnerable - to open yourself up to be totally present in the moment and to feel. Use those feelings to grow and build awareness of who you are and who you want to be. And do not be afraid to express those feelings through your play on the field and through your passions.

Regardless of your personal journey there will be pain and moments of struggle. Do not numb those moments because you will get through them faster if you embrace the challenge. And always remember, you are beautiful and valuable. Love yourself unconditionally and know that no matter how it is or how hard it gets, you are not alone.

Why do you want to be a Gay Games Ambassador?

I want to be a Gay Games Ambassador because I KNOW the power of sport. I have seen that power in breaking down barriers and uniting us for social justice. Also, having the opportunity to PLAY brings such unbridled joy and experiencing that with others can be transformational.

What else do you want us to know about you?

I want people to know about the book I have just written, "Raising Tomorrow's Champions". The book features interviews with more than 150 current and former

Champions . The book features interviews with more than 150+ current and former USWNT athletes, including Mia Hamm, Abby Wambach, Megan Rapinoe and Michelle Akers. The resulting book is full of personal photographs and intimate insights from not only some of the game's biggest stars, but also their parents and coaches. With a deep understanding of today's reality, the first three chapters address topics not often covered in a book like this - gender equity, LGBTQ issues, and systemic racism. In addition to providing insights from a plethora of USWNT legends, part of the mission for "Raising Tomorrow's Champions" is to draw attention to underserved communities and marginalized would-be athletes. A portion of proceeds from book sales will be donated to support causes near and dear to the hearts of the soccer community.

The book can be purchased here: rtcsoccer.com



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Meet Bethany Tucker





What's your story? (Who are you? Where are you based?)

I am Bethany Tucker (her/she) , a bisexual para-athlete with left sided Cerebral Palsy based in Bristol UK. I work full time and at night I am a T37 Athlete. I have been involved in the sport since I was 22, I have competed at Diamond Leagues, in the Great City Games Manchester and Internationally.

What does sport give you that nothing else does?

I got referred to Athletics by my chiropractor who wanted it to help me with my mental and physical health/wellbeing. I was diagnosed with clinical depression and my coach and sport saved my life. Sport gives me confidence to be myself and to better myself in all areas of my life.

What negative experiences did you have and how did you deal with them?

I used to go to church having been brought up in a Christian home but when I told my church I had feelings for both men and women I was immediately prayed for. I once was told that anything that doesn't serve you or that doesn't add to life isn't worth it so I respected myself and this lovely community so much that I walked away.

What advice would you give to any LGBTQ+ athletes either professional or not?

Be you and never be afraid to shine!! Everyone in this world is striving to be the best version of themselves they can be. Aim high and enjoy this one life you have been given!! Whatever your challenges, face them with grit and determination. You can and will achieve!!

Why do you want to be a Gay Games Ambassador?

I would like to be a Gay Games Ambassador because I believe that as a bisexual para-athlete I can encourage and inspire other para- athletes like myself to compete and feel part of a wonderful community of people.

What else do you want us to know about you?

When I am not working or doing my sport I enjoy singing and food. I love Harry Potter and my favourite go to song for Karaoke is I will Survive!!

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Gay Games 11 Hong Kong 2022 Update

GAY GAMES 11

HONG KONG 2022

UNITY IN DIVERSITY
在多元中團結



Gay Games 11 Hong Kong 2022 will take place 11th-19th November 2022. This will be the first time a Gay Games has taken place in Asia, and it will feature 36 sports, 14 cultural events and a rich calendar of cultural events for 12,000 participants and 75,000 spectators. Registration will open in Q1/Q2 of 2021. For more information go [here](#).

Important dates for your diary:

- Pre-registration opening March 2021
- Registration opening June 2021
- GGHK 11-19th November 2022

Support GGHK in your community, sport club or city

We are looking for Champions (volunteer role) to promote GGHK within your LGBTQ+ community, sport club, city, country or region. Read more [here](#) about this role and how you can apply.

Learn more about GGHK

- Want to learn more about GGHK or have any question?:
- Watch recordings of our monthly webinars on our [Youtube channel](#)
- Check out our [website](#)

Contact our Customer Service Experience team for your questions hello@gghk2022.com

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Watch the recording of GGHK's February Webinar [here](#)

"Volunteer for GGHK and live the experience of a lifetime!"



**Webinar 25th February 2021
Volunteer for GGHK and
live the experience of a lifetime!**



 <p>Joanie Evans Federation of Gay Games - Co-President</p>	 <p>David Wong GGHK - Chief of Staff</p>
 <p>Greg Morley GGHK - Director of People and Organisation</p>	 <p>Betty Grisoni GGHK - Moderator / Head of D&I</p>



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Get to know Hong Kong



1. More than 100 beaches

Hong Kong might be best known for its densely packed skyscrapers, crowded streets, and luxury shopping, but the Southeast Asian city isn't just an exciting urban getaway. With more than 450 miles of coastline, 100 beaches, and 260 outlying islands, Hong Kong is a haven for nature lovers and sun seekers.

In less than 30 minutes, you can reach Hong Kong Island's south side to surf at Big Wave Bay, enjoy sunset cocktails at Shek O, or party at Repulse Bay Beach and South Bay Beach. Camping in Sai Kang is also a great experience, you can rent the tents from the restaurant, enjoy bbq, sleep on the beach, wake up with sunrise and the sound of waves!

2. Food

Hong Kong is home to a wide range of culinary experiences that encompass uniquely local encounters to the best of international foods. Hong Kong cuisine is mainly influenced

by Cantonese cuisine, European cuisines (especially British cuisine) and non-Cantonese Chinese cuisines, as well as Japanese, Korean and Southeast Asian cuisines. Try a variety of street food and enjoy some of the cheapest Michelin-starred restaurants in the world. Hong Kong is home to over 60 Michelin-starred restaurants, many of which are spearheaded by internationally renowned chefs. Complex combinations and international gourmet expertise have given Hong Kong the reputable labels of "Gourmet Paradise" and "World's Fair of Food"

3. Transport

Hong Kong is internationally famous for its safe, affordable and reliable public transport system that keeps the city moving at its trademark lightning speed. If lightning is too fast, you can switch gears by hopping on an unhurried tram or ferry and savour the city at an old-world pace.

Octopus Card

You won't be in Hong Kong long before you notice locals bleeping their way through MTR turnstiles and supermarket checkout counters with Octopus cards. This is an extremely versatile stored-value electronic card that can be used for most public transport, as well as purchases in convenience stores, fast food shops, supermarkets, cake shops, vending machines and more. Simply place the Octopus card over a reader and the payment amount will be automatically deducted from the stored value.

Airport Express

The best way to get to and from the airport is via the Airport Express train, it takes approximately 24 minutes to reach Hong Kong Island and is the fastest way to get between the city and the airport. Airport Express passengers are able to take a free shuttle bus from Kowloon and Hong Kong stations to major hotels. Both these stations also provide free in-town check-in services for major airlines.





MTR (Subway)

Getting around Hong Kong to enjoy its world-class attractions couldn't be easier with the quick and efficient MTR system, connecting 95 stations all over Hong Kong together. Each station has their own colour, and do you know there's even a rainbow [station](#)?

Taxi

With the exception of some very remote areas, taxis are plentiful throughout Hong Kong. They can usually be hailed on the street (except in restricted areas). All are metered, air-conditioned and clean. Base fee (incl. 2.00 km) is HK\$ 24 / EUR 2.5 / USD 3.

Next time we will tell you all about the outdoors, nightlife and arts scene in Hong Kong.

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Culture

Congratulations to Pride Cheerleading Association (PCA)! Your successful inaugural virtual event was informative, engaging and fun! Cheers! Thanks for sharing your stats!

Summit Stats!

January 15-17, 2021

First Annual *Virtual* Educational Summit, and it was one helluva first:

- ☆ 30 sessions
- ☆ 45 Presenters
- ☆ Over 100 Participants
- ☆ 4 BROADWAY Stage Managers - not joking!
- ☆ 27+ hours of inspiration, education, & perspiration!



27+ hours of inspiration...
and education...
and perspiration!

SUMMIT
PRIDE CHEERLEADING ASSOCIATION
January 15-17, 2021

(One helluva first, if you ask me.)

www.PrideCheerleading.org/summit

GALA

CHORUSES

CONGRATULATIONS GALA BOARD & STAFF!

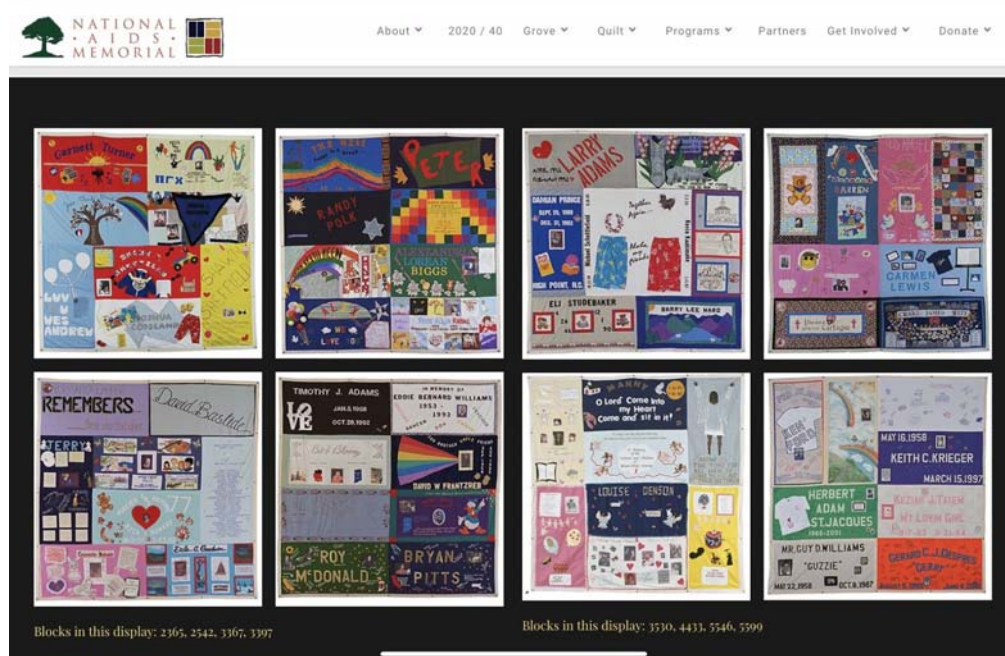
- Michael Tate, President
- Maria-Elena Grant, Vice President
- Karen Lane, Board Director
- Oscar Urtusastegui, Board Director
- Dwight Joyner, Director of Development & Engagement





[AIDS MEMORIAL QUILT HONORS BLACK LIVES LOST TO AIDS](#)

VIRTUAL EXHIBITION ENDS ON MARCH 31



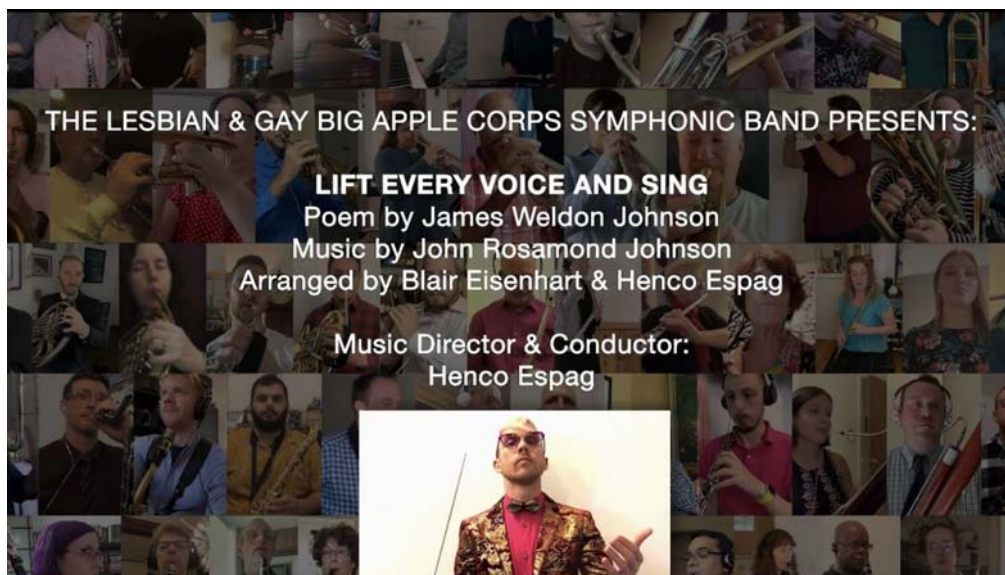
[SF LESBIAN/GAY FREEDOM BAND GENERAL'S MANDATE - CHINESE NEW YEAR PARADE 2021](#)





General's Mandate - Chinese New Year Parade 2021 - SF Lesbian Gay Freedom Band

[LGBAC Symphonic Band - Lift Every Voice and Sing](#)



LGBAC Symphonic Band - Lift Every Voice and Sing

Marketing

Calling All Gay Games Pin Collectors!

When you attend the Gay Games, does your name badge end up looking like the one in this photo? If so, you'll be very interested to know that during Gay Games 11 in Hong Kong, the first-ever exhibition of Gay Games pin collections will be presented in the Festival Village. This will be an exciting opportunity for you to showcase your hard work in collecting your Gay Games pins over the years. Even if yours are sitting in a box somewhere, you've got more than 20 months to find those pins and organize them in a presentation format.





Photo credit: JeanFrancois Vansnick

More details about this Gay Games pin collection exhibition will be announced very soon in future issues of this newsletter. Meanwhile, start looking around for your pins and see all the memories they bring back to you. These are the memories you'll want to share in Hong Kong in 2022.

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Human Resources - We Need Your Help!

The Federation of Gay Games runs entirely on volunteer effort. We are always delighted to hear from you if you have a couple of hours a month, consider volunteering with us. We need lots of people with specific skills to support the work of our Board Members and the Committees. This month we are specifically looking for the following skills and expertise.

Our **Technology Committee** is looking for volunteers with website management and development skills, database management, or skills in using the Google Suite of programmes - email, docs and forms, file management. Apply [here](#)

The **Marketing Committee** is seeking experienced marketing professionals, and graphic designers to help us to drive our marketing strategy forward.

The **Communications Committee** is seeking people with skills in the following areas:

- Writing press release
- Writing news stories for our website

- Writing newsletters - Participate regularly reaches 13,000 readers
- Social Media management - keeping our facebook, instagram, twitter and LinkedIn pages up to date

The **International Development Committee**

Current openings for 3-4 individuals who can commit at least 5 hours each month of productive and efficient engagement with the team. We want talented people who can think vertically in a broad landscape.

- Are you an "out" leader in your local sports community?
- Do you approach projects, partnerships and people with integrity and curiosity?
- Do you have strong written communication skills?
- Do you have working knowledge of local legislation?
- Do you speak multiple languages or engage regularly with embassies on development projects?

If you answered yes to ANY of these questions we would like to work with you to implement a comprehensive network of localized support around the globe to ensure current and potential FGG members have the tools, benefits and opportunities they need to have a sense of belonging and be their best!

The **Human Resources task force** would like to hear from you if you have HR skills/qualifications to help us manage our volunteering strategy.

Apply [here](#) for any of the above roles.

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SMILE... and help the Gay Games Change the World!

Do you shop Amazon.com? You can make a quick change to your account and every dollar you spend will support the Federation of Gay Games mission to promote equality in and through sport and culture!

On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you are prompted to select a charitable organization from Amazon's list of eligible organizations. You can change your selection at any time.

To change your charitable organization:

- Sign in to smile.amazon.com on your desktop or mobile phone browser.
- From your desktop, go to Your Account from the navigation at the top of any page, and then select the option to Change your Charity. Or, from your mobile browser, select Change your Charity from the options at the bottom of the page.

- Search for Federation of Gay Games" to select the FGG as the charitable organization to support.

For more information about the AmazonSmile program, go to <http://smile.amazon.com/about>.

NOTE: This program may or may not be available when shopping from your country. Please check on your end.

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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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