



**Open Door Fund**

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THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

**2010 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, &  
Transgender (LGBT) Boulder County Survey  
Report**

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## Executive Summary

The Open Door Fund Advisory Committee, part of the Community Foundation serving Boulder County, conducted an online survey in the spring of 2010. LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) people who live or work in Boulder County were surveyed. The survey helps the Open Door Fund Advisory Committee, which will distribute \$35,000 this year for LGBT programs, know more about the local LGBT community and its needs.

The Boulder County LGBT community as represented by the roughly 300-person sampling is highly educated (73.9% have at least a bachelor's degree) and mostly white (87.7%). 57% of survey respondents live in Boulder and 43% live outside of the Boulder city limits. The median age of the sample is 42, and the age of respondents is well distributed from 14 to 80. 49.5% are male, 45.0% female, 2.9% transgender, and 3.6% other. 44.5% of respondents identify as gay men, 31.5% as lesbians, 14.9% as bisexual, 5.5% as other, and 3.6% as pansexual or omnisexual. Nearly just as many respondents report being single as do being in a committed monogamous relationship, and 73.1% report being "out" in their identity most everywhere.

Many needs are identified in the survey, but the most common are: social opportunities, networking, and connectedness with other LGBT people; greater awareness and visibility of LGBT organizations; counseling and therapy; health; and youth and elder services. The Open Door Fund will focus on funding these needs.

These needs are expressed by lesbians, gay men, bisexual people, and transgender people alike. It's also worth noting a number of differences in the experiences of transgender and bisexual persons. For example, a much larger percentage of transgender respondents (56.3%) report experiencing discrimination or harassment in the past year because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression than do male respondents (23.0%) or female respondents (16.8%). There is also a stark difference between the percentage of bisexual and pansexual/omnisexual respondents (36.4%) who are "out" most everywhere and the percentage of mostly out gay and lesbian respondents (82.1%). Additional differences exist based on other demographic factors such as age, race/ethnicity, and relationship status.

Although the survey does not purport to be statistically representative of the entire Boulder County LGBT population (all survey respondents had internet access, could read and write in English, and had some connection to the local LGBT community), it provides helpful data to understand what it's like for many people to be L, G, B, or T in Boulder County.

## **About this Survey**

This survey was conducted in the spring of 2010 by The Open Door Fund Advisory Committee, part of the Community Foundation serving Boulder County. The survey applied to LGBT people who live or work in Boulder County, including the cities (Boulder, Longmont, Louisville, Lafayette, etc) and unincorporated county area. Its purpose was to help the Open Door Fund Advisory Committee know more about the local LGBT community and its needs.

The survey was administered online via an independent company, Survey Monkey, which assured that responses would be anonymous and that results would be objectively tabulated. Paper survey forms were also made to be available, although none were completed. To generate numbers for the survey, emails were sent to various LGBT groups and lists in the area. A link to the survey was also available on the Open Door Fund website. The survey was open from early March until the end of May. A total of 315 LGBT and similarly identified people started the survey, with 292 (92.7%) completing it.

## Demographic Highlights

### Age

- Mean Age: 41.4; Median Age: 42
- Lowest Age: 14; Highest Age: 80
- Age Distribution:

| Age Group | Response Percent | Response Count |
|-----------|------------------|----------------|
| < 20      | 4.7%             | 14             |
| 20-29     | 24.3%            | 73             |
| 30-39     | 15.9%            | 48             |
| 40-49     | 19.9%            | 60             |
| 50-59     | 23.3%            | 70             |
| 60+       | 12.0%            | 36             |

### Location

- 57% of survey respondents reside in the city of Boulder, and 43% live outside the city of Boulder.
- The Boulder County city with the second highest concentration of LGBT respondents is Longmont, with 10.4%.

### Education and Employment

- 18.4% of the survey sample is comprised of CU students.
- A staggering 50% of respondents have completed post-graduate education. 73.9% have at least a bachelor's degree, significantly higher than the overall Boulder County rate of 57%.
- The unemployment rate of survey respondents is 5.5%. This is consistent with the overall county rate of 5.8% and better than the early 2009 statewide unemployment rate of 7.2% and the national rate of 7.6%\*.
- Of the survey respondents who are employed, 80.8% are employed in Boulder County; 19.2% are employed elsewhere.

### Race/Ethnicity

- As with the overall Boulder County population, this LGBT sample is overwhelmingly white. 87.7% of respondents identified as European/White, which is consistent with the overall county rate of 87%\*.
- The second largest racial/ethnic group represented in the survey is Latino/a, Chicano/a, Hispanic, with 4.8%.

### Family, Relationships, and “Outness”

- Nearly just as many respondents report being single as do being in a committed, monogamous relationship.
- 14.3% of respondents report having dependent children.
- 73.1% of respondents report being “out” in their identity most everywhere.

### Comparing the LGBT Survey Sample’s Demographics with Overall Boulder County\*

|                                      | LGBT Survey Sample | Overall Boulder County |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Median Age                           | 42                 | 36                     |
| % of Residents > age 60              | 12                 | 12                     |
| % of European/White Residents        | 87.7               | 87.0                   |
| % of Residents living in BC < 1 year | 7.8                | 13                     |
| % of Residents who are College Grads | 73.9               | 57                     |
| Unemployment Rate                    | 5.5                | 5.8                    |

\*Overall Boulder County statistics taken from the 2009 Community Indicators Report by the Community Foundation of Boulder County

### Comparing Demographic Data from 2010 Survey with 1997 Survey

This is the second survey of the LGBT Boulder County community that the Open Door Fund has conducted. The first was in 1997. The table below compares demographic data from the two surveys. As can be expected and consistent with general population trends in the United States, the 2010 sample is older, slightly less white, and less likely to work full-time due to higher rates of retirement and unemployment.

|  | 1997 Survey | 2010 Survey |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Mean Age; Median Age                   | 38; 37      | 41.4; 42    |
| Live in City of Boulder                | 63%         | 57%         |
| % of European/White Residents          | 90%         | 87.7%       |
| % of Residents living in BC > 10 years | 36%         | 46.5%       |
| % of Residents who are College Grads   | 81%         | 73.9%       |
| Employed Full-time                     | 66%         | 56.1%       |
| Retired                                | 4%          | 9.0%        |
| Students at CU                         | 20%         | 18.4%       |
| Unemployed                             | 1%          | 5.5%        |

## Community Needs

While a community as diverse as the LGBT community has many needs, five needs emerged as the most common in this survey:

- 1) Social Opportunities, Networking, and Connectedness
- 2) Awareness and Visibility of Existing LGBT Organizations and Activities
- 3) Counseling and Therapy
- 4) Health
- 5) Youth and Elder Services

### **Social Opportunities, Networking, and Connectedness**

The dominant theme from this survey was the community's expressed need and desire for more social gatherings and events where LGBT people could meet and interact with each other.

- More than one-third of respondents (36%) indicated that finding a sense of community or connectedness with LGBT people within Boulder County was either somewhat difficult or difficult.
- Of the 48 people who wrote in a response to the open-ended question, "Other services important to you?" (Question 16), 19 mentioned social opportunities or networking.
- LGBT social, community-building and/or recreational activities were the most needed services among those listed in the question, "In your opinion, how needed are each of these potential LGBT-related services in Boulder County?" A resounding 93.3% indicated these services were either somewhat needed or really needed, with 60.4% indicating they were really needed.

Included in the expressed need for more social opportunities was a number of people expressing interest in a coffee house or similar type of gathering place for LGBT people. This was a typical comment:

"With the Yard-of-Ale closed, a consistent place (not necessarily a bar) is really needed for social networking in Boulder. We're such a liberal town supposedly, yet where do we go to meet other gay folks?"

It's also worth noting that, of the many comments we received to open-ended questions, the comments expressing a need for social opportunities were some of the most impassioned. One person wrote:

"...The LGBT etc social scene here is awful, at least for those of us who fall between the undergraduate scene on campus and the middle-aged, married with a family scene."

Another wrote:

“SOCIAL SCENE FOR TWENTYSOMETHINGS! Maybe it does exist, but I haven't found it very accessible at all, or easy to get information about... I've found it incredibly hard to connect with anybody outside of the few out men I know.”

### **Awareness and Visibility of Existing LGBT Organizations and Activities**

A startling finding from this survey is that many LGBT people in Boulder County are simply not aware of the many wonderful LGBT organizations and activities that do exist. The previous quote illustrates that, although additional social opportunities may be needed, people also need to be better informed about the opportunities that are already in place.

- Twenty-four LGBT-related organizations or events were listed in the survey, and respondents were asked to indicate if they were not aware of them, aware of them but have not participated, have participated occasionally, or considered them an important organization/activity. The most common response for 15 of those 24 organizations/activities was: “not aware of them”.

Several other comments reiterated this need, including the following:

“There needs to be more funding towards LGBT awareness. I would love to participate in charities, events, etc. but I do not know when or where they are located. I am so far separated from the gay community that I am a little taken aback when something gay does pop up in my face.”

“Let the community know about the different services...I am unaware of any.”

“Once you find a social network, it is easy to find glbt community, but I think much of what exists is not visible. With the closing of Word is Out, I wonder where a lesbian new to Boulder would go to find connections and information.”

### **Counseling and Therapy**

It is clear that receiving counseling and therapy is a strong community need.

- 22.4% of respondents currently use counseling and therapy, while an additional 11.9% report needing these services now but not using them.
- The vast majority of those who need counseling but do not access it do not do so because they cannot afford the service.



It is unclear why people who need counseling need it and not clear whether the need has anything to do with being L, G, B, or T, but affordable counseling services are definitely a need. As one person wrote:

“Counseling and psychotherapy is available, but it's extremely expensive and my insurance doesn't cover any of it - unless I have a diagnosed mental disorder.”

## **Health**

Health-related services were second only to social opportunities among the needs that people expressed in the open-ended questions. The vast majority of these needs pertained to sexual health, including HIV/AIDS services and STI-testing. One respondent expressed a need for a resource for finding LGBT or LGBT-friendly doctors or health care professionals.

LGBT health services also ranked very high in the question asking individuals how needed various services are. 83.7% indicated that LGBT health services are either somewhat needed or really needed, with 50.2% indicating they are really needed.

## **Youth and Elder Services**

A substantial amount of people also expressed a need for youth and elder services, particularly in the open-ended questions. Desired elder services included estate and end of life planning, aging in place, community housing, medical care, and opportunities to socialize with other elders.

Needed services for youth were less specific, although OASOS received a good bit of appreciation. It's also worth noting that LGBT youth services had the highest percentage of respondents assigning it “really needed” status, with 62.3%.

## Comparison of Identities within the LGBT Community

The LGBT community is neither homogenous nor monolithic. Therefore, it is necessary and important to compare various identities within the LGBT community to see if significant differences emerge. This section does just that. Since social opportunities, networking, and connectedness was the most expressed overall need in this survey, particular attention is paid to the responses to that question, “How easy is it for you to find a sense of community or ‘connectedness’ with LGBT people in Boulder County?” among the various identities.

### European/White Respondents and People of Color

#### Similarities

- The geographic distribution of white respondents and respondents of color in this survey was fairly close. 50% of respondents of color reported living in the city of Boulder, compared to 57.9% of white respondents.
- Education attainment was also close. 70.2% of respondents of color were at least college graduates, compared to 74.2% of white respondents.
- White respondents (73.0%) and respondents of color (72.2%) had roughly the same rate of being “out” most everywhere.
- White respondents (13.2%) and respondents of color (17.1%) were fairly close in reporting that they use organized religion now.
- White respondents and respondents of color were similar in expressing need for social opportunities, health, and youth and elder services.

#### Differences

- European/White respondents have lived in Boulder County longer than the respondents of color. Only 14.6% of white respondents have lived in Boulder County 1-2 years or less, compared to 28.2% of respondents of color. Furthermore, 47.6% of white respondents have lived in Boulder County for more than 10 years, compared with only 37.5% of respondents of color.
- A higher percentage of employed respondents of color (32.1%) work outside of Boulder County than do employed white respondents (17.6%).
- Respondents of color (51.4%) were a bit more likely to be in committed, monogamous relationships than their white counterparts (42.2%).

- Respondents of color (59.4%) were much more likely to view LGBT racial/ethnic minority-oriented services as “really needed” than white respondents (39.3%). Write-in comments from people of color regarding needed services included, “How to be brown and under privileged and religious and queer in Boulder County” and “Services that are specifically and culturally appropriate that are not white focused, white based, and white targeted.”

Responses to the Question: “How easy is it for you to find a sense of community or ‘connectedness’ with LGBT people in Boulder County?”

|                            | European/White | People of Color |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Easy                       | 21.6%          | 13.5%           |
| Somewhat Easy              | 28.6%          | 32.4%           |
| Neither Easy Nor Difficult | 14.5%          | 13.5%           |
| Somewhat Difficult         | 23.4%          | 24.3%           |
| Difficult                  | 11.9%          | 16.2%           |

These numbers are somewhat close overall, but there is a meaningful difference in that white people are more likely to find a sense of community to be easy while people of color are more likely to find it difficult.

### **Females, Males, and Transgender Individuals\***

\*Note: For purposes of comparison with females and males, people who selected “other” for gender (most of whom self-identified as gender-queer) are included in this section under the category of Transgender.

#### Similarities

- The main similarities between females, males, and transgender people in this survey pertained to expressed needs. There was across the board interest in the five aforementioned community needs.
- These three identities were also fairly similar in terms of race/ethnicity.

#### Differences

- There were noticeable differences in location. Only 51.1% of females in this survey live in the city of Boulder, compared to 60.1% of males and 72.2% of people identifying as transgender or other.
- The transgender sample (mean age: 28.8) was much younger than the female and male samples.
- There were differences in employment. 12.4% of male respondents are retired, compared to only 6.5% of female respondents (despite females and males having roughly the same average age), compared to none of the transgender

respondents. 61.2% of females work full-time, compared to 54.2% of males and 33.3% of the transgender respondents.

- Transgender respondents (55.6%) and female respondents (26.3%) were much more likely to identify as bisexual or pansexual/omnisexual than the male respondents (only 7.8%).
- Significant differences of rates of people in committed, monogamous relationships existed among the genders. 53.6% of female respondents are in such relationships, while only 36.6% of males and 16.7% of transgender individuals report as such.
- The female sample (20.1%) also reported a higher rate of having dependent children than did the male (11.1%) and transgender (0%) samples.
- Male respondents (77.0%) were more likely to be “out” most everywhere than female respondents (70.3%), who were more likely to be “out” than the transgender respondents (61.1%).
- Transgender respondents (33.3%) are more likely to be using counseling services than females (22.7%), who are more likely to be using those services than males (14.5%).
- The transgender sample was also more likely to use religious services (22.2%) than the male (13.9%) and female (12.1%) samples.
- A much larger percentage of transgender respondents (56.3%) reported experiencing discrimination or harassment in the past year because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression than did male respondents (23.0%) or female respondents (16.8%).

Responses to the Question: “How easy is it for you to find a sense of community or ‘connectedness’ with LGBT people in Boulder County?”

|                            | Female | Male  | Transgender or Other |
|----------------------------|--------|-------|----------------------|
| Easy                       | 23.9%  | 19.0% | 0%                   |
| Somewhat Easy              | 34.8%  | 24.8% | 23.5%                |
| Neither Easy Nor Difficult | 14.5%  | 15.0% | 5.9%                 |
| Somewhat Difficult         | 21.0%  | 23.5% | 52.9%                |
| Difficult                  | 5.8%   | 17.6% | 17.6%                |

Here, there are major differences. The vast majority of transgender respondents (70.5%) report that finding a sense of community or connectedness is either somewhat difficult or difficult. This is significantly more than any other identity group. Also noteworthy is the differences between males and females. Males (41.1%) are more likely to find a sense of community difficult or somewhat difficult than females (26.8%).

### **Monosexual (Lesbians + Gay Men)\* and Bisexual + Pansexual/Omnisexual People**

\*Note: With only one exception that will be discussed in this section, the outcomes comparing lesbians with gay men were nearly identical to the outcomes comparing females and males. Therefore, rather than be redundant, this section will examine similarities and differences between monosexual people and bisexual and pansexual/omnisexual people.

#### Similarities

- The racial/ethnic composition of the bisexual + pansexual/omnisexual generally matched that of the overall sample.
- The bisexual and pansexual/omnisexual respondents expressed similar needs to the gay men and lesbians.
- Both samples reported similar rates of having been harassed or discriminated against in the past year because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression.

#### Differences

- The bisexual and pansexual/omnisexual sample had much higher percentages of females (63.2% vs. 39.9%) and transgender and other gender individuals (19.3% vs. 0.4%) than the monosexual sample.
- There was a stark difference between the percentage of bisexual and pansexual/omnisexual respondents (36.4%) who are “out” most everywhere and the percentage of mostly out monosexual respondents (82.1%). The fact that the female sample had a much higher percentage of bi/pan/omnisexual people than the male sample explains the difference between female and male “outness”. Thus, this is the aforementioned exception to the consistency of outcomes comparing females and males with the outcomes comparing lesbians and gay men. Unlike the female sample, which was less likely to be mostly out than the male sample, lesbians in this survey (83.5%) had a slightly higher rate of being mostly out than gay men (81.0%).

In the responses to the follow-up question asking respondents what prevents them from being out with more people, the bi/pan/omnisexual respondents reported both standard and unique reasons for not being more out. The standard (meaning: consistent with other identities) reason entailed fear of

losing friends and family. A unique reported reason among bi/pan/omnisexual individuals was a feeling that their identity as non-monosexual was irrelevant due to the fact that they are either currently in a monogamous relationship or have been dating monosexually in recent years. As one person simply put it, “It generally seems irrelevant, since I am married.” Another reason unique to this demographic was the unique resistance and misunderstanding that non-monosexual people face. One person’s expressed reason was, “Stigma by some, both hetero- and homosexual.” Another person wrote, “My parents say it is a ‘phase’, of being bisexual,” and yet another commented about her family: “they do not and cannot understand bisexuality.”

- Bi/pan/omnisexual respondents (14.0%) were more likely to report living in Boulder County for less than one year than monosexual respondents (6.1%) and also less likely to report living in Boulder County for more than 10 years (36% vs. 48.8%). The percentages for the other durations of residency were roughly the same.
- The bi/pan/omnisexual sample (mean age: 34.36) was a younger sample than the monosexual sample (mean age: 43.45). Perhaps not coincidentally, the sample had a higher percentage of CU students (26.8% vs.16.7%) and a lower percentage of full-time employees (43.9% vs. 58.5%).
- The bi/pan/omnisexual respondents (35.7%) were less likely to report being in a committed, monogamous relationship than the monosexual respondents (46.2%).

Responses to the Question: “How easy is it for you to find a sense of community or ‘connectedness’ with LGBT people in Boulder County?”

|                            | Monosexual | Bi + Pansexual/Omnisexual |
|----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|
| Easy                       | 20.9%      | 23.6%                     |
| Somewhat Easy              | 30.8%      | 18.2%                     |
| Neither Easy Nor Difficult | 15.4%      | 9.1%                      |
| Somewhat Difficult         | 21.4%      | 32.7%                     |
| Difficult                  | 11.5%      | 16.4%                     |

As with the transgender respondents (many of whom identify as pansexual/omnisexual), the bi/pan/omnisexual group was much more likely to find a sense of community or connectedness to be somewhat difficult or difficult.

## Youth (Respondents < 30) and Elders (Respondents 60+)

### Similarities

- The young population in this survey and the elder population had nearly the same percentages of respondents in a committed, monogamous relationship (38.4% of the youth, and 37.1% of the elders).
- Both demographics expressed high levels of need for social opportunities.

### Differences

- The young sample in this survey (74.7%) is much more likely to live in the city of Boulder than the elder sample (52.9%).
- Not surprisingly, the young sample (19.5%) had more respondents who have lived in Boulder County less than one year than the elder sample (none) and much less who have lived in Boulder County more than 10 years (15.9% vs. 74.2%).
- The young sample had a noticeably higher percentage of Latino/a, Chicano/a, Hispanic respondents than the elder sample (10.3% vs. 2.9%).
- The elder sample had no transgender or other gender respondents, while the young sample had 4.7%.
- While 38.4% of the young respondents identified as bi/pan/omnisexual or other, only 11.4% of the elder respondents did the same.
- Elders in this survey (80.0%) were much more likely to be mostly “out” than the youth (61.6%).
- Elders in this survey (12.1%) were more likely to use religious services than the youth (4.9%).
- Youth respondents were much less knowledgeable about the local LGBT community than the elders. The most common response to the participation question for 20 of the 24 LGBT organizations/events among youth was “not aware of them”, compared to 10 of 24 organizations/events for the elders.
- Youth respondents expressed higher interest in sexual health resources.
- Youth respondents were much more likely to report having experienced discrimination or harassment in the past year because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression than the elders (29.9% vs. only 2.9%).

Responses to the Question: “How easy is it for you to find a sense of community or ‘connectedness’ with LGBT people in Boulder County?”

|                            | Respondents < 30 | Respondents 60+ |
|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Easy                       | 15.1%            | 25.7%           |
| Somewhat Easy              | 31.4%            | 28.6%           |
| Neither Easy Nor Difficult | 11.6%            | 20.0%           |
| Somewhat Difficult         | 26.7%            | 17.1%           |
| Difficult                  | 15.1%            | 8.6%            |

Again, a substantial difference between groups in ease of finding a sense of community exists.

### **Residents of City of Boulder and Residents of Other Boulder County Cities**

#### Similarities

- As stated previously, the racial/ethnic composition of inhabitants of Boulder and inhabitants of other Boulder County cities in this survey was rather similar.
- Boulderites and non-Boulderites had nearly identical percentages of people in committed, monogamous relationships.
- The samples reported similar rates of having experienced discrimination or harassment in the past year because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- Both groups expressed similar needs.

#### Differences

- Respondents living in Boulder were much more likely to be residing in Boulder County for less than one year than those in other Boulder County cities (10.8% vs. 2.8%), and much less likely to be living in Boulder County longer than 10 years (36.4% vs. 63.2%).
- Boulderites in this survey had a younger average age than non-Boulderites (38.3 vs. 45.8).
- Boulder residents (10.8%) were less likely to have dependent children than those living in other Boulder County cities (19.5%).



Responses to the Question: “How easy is it for you to find a sense of community or ‘connectedness’ with LGBT people in Boulder County?”

|                            | Residents of Boulder | Residents of Other BC Cities |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Easy                       | 17.8%                | 24.2%                        |
| Somewhat Easy              | 29.9%                | 28.8%                        |
| Neither Easy Nor Difficult | 12.6%                | 15.2%                        |
| Somewhat Difficult         | 24.1%                | 23.5%                        |
| Difficult                  | 15.5%                | 8.3%                         |

Surprisingly, respondents who reside in Boulder report having a more difficult time finding a sense of LGBT community than people living in other Boulder County cities. This may be attributed to the aforementioned corresponding differences in length of residency in Boulder County. An examination of this variable follows.

### **Relative Newcomers to Boulder County and Long-Time Residents**

Responses to the Question: “How easy is it for you to find a sense of community or ‘connectedness’ with LGBT people in Boulder County?”

| Length of Residency        | < 1 + 1-2 yrs | 3-5 yrs | 6-10 yrs | More than 10 yrs |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------|----------|------------------|
| Easy                       | 13.3%         | 11.7%   | 28.3%    | 21.1%            |
| Somewhat Easy              | 28.9%         | 25.0%   | 34.8%    | 31.1%            |
| Neither Easy Nor Difficult | 8.9%          | 11.7%   | 8.7%     | 18.8%            |
| Somewhat Difficult         | 31.1%         | 31.7%   | 19.6%    | 19.5%            |
| Difficult                  | 17.8%         | 20.0%   | 8.7%     | 9.4%             |

As one might expect, there is a major difference between long-time residents and relative newcomers. It’s worth noting, however, that even respondents who have lived in Boulder County for 3-5 years report high rates of difficulty finding a sense of community, suggesting that it takes a long time for transplants to Boulder County to feel connected.

### Single Respondents and Those in Committed Relationships\*

\*Note: Since people in committed, monogamous relationships have already been cross-tabulated with other identities/variables, this section will compare feelings of connectedness and expressed needs and desire for social opportunities.

Responses to the Question: “How easy is it for you to find a sense of community or ‘connectedness’ with LGBT people in Boulder County?”

|                            | Single | Partnered |
|----------------------------|--------|-----------|
| Easy                       | 17.2%  | 27.6%     |
| Somewhat Easy              | 21.4%  | 32.8%     |
| Neither Easy Nor Difficult | 14.5%  | 16.4%     |
| Somewhat Difficult         | 29.7%  | 16.4%     |
| Difficult                  | 17.2%  | 6.7%      |

Again, a major disparity exists. Respondents who are partnered are much less likely to find difficulty finding a sense of community than respondents who are single. Despite this major difference, partnered respondents still expressed a high need and desire for social opportunities in response to the open-ended questions. In fact, the two impassioned pleas for more social opportunities quoted on pages 6 and 7 of this report came from individuals who are partnered! Furthermore, in response to Question 19, “In your opinion, how needed are each of these potential LGBT-related services in Boulder County?” partnered respondents were actually more likely to select somewhat needed and really needed than single respondents (96.1% vs. 90.1%)! These findings suggest that, although partnered people have an easier time feeling a sense of the community that does exist, they long for even more opportunities to connect with their community.

## **LGBT Community Organizations**

Boulder Pride, the umbrella organization for several LGBT services, is by far the best-known LGBT organization in Boulder County, known by 94% of respondents. Its email/web calendar of LGBT events is used by more than half of the community, and along with the Boulder Pride annual Block Party stood out as the most important activities of any LGBT group. Bent Lens and BCAP were the next-most important organizations for survey respondents. Also, many people have participated in PFLAG and Vox Feminista.

But most LGBT organizations providing services in Boulder County are not well known, and there appears to be a real need to increase their exposure in the community if they are to be effective. Consider, for example, GLS: Gay and Lesbian Sierrans (part of the Sierra Club). This group offers frequent hikes and social dinners in Boulder County, and most of their outdoor activities are free. This would appear to be an appealing way to connect with others. Yet 68.5% of those surveyed were not even aware that this organization exists.

Most of the people surveyed have some connection to some LGBT organization, since those organizations' email lists and websites were used to distribute the survey. Those surveyed are therefore a more-connected population than the LGBT population as a whole. So for 40% of those surveyed to say that they are not even aware that there are men's and women's choruses performing in Boulder County, there is work to be done for LGBT organizations to connect with the community.

Some organizations target a narrower demographic than the LGBT community as a whole, which may explain some of the limited awareness or participation. Some of these organizations are gender-based, while others are geographic-based (the Longmont potluck group, for example), or serve a part of the community, such as Rainbow Elders or the CU GLBT Resource Center. Data for these organizations comparing their awareness/participation rates with their target demographic and non-target demographic are on the following page.

As the following charts demonstrate, these organizations do substantially better at reaching their target populations (among survey respondents) than they do their non-target populations. Notably, for the CU GLBT Resource Center, of its target population completing the survey, 60% reported they have either participated occasionally or consider the center an important organization for them.

**Responses to the question: “What is your experience with each of these LGBT-related organizations/events that are active in Boulder County?”**

0 not aware of them, 1 aware of them but have not participated, 2 have participated occasionally, 3 an important organization/activity for me.

**CU GLBT Resource Center**

|             | 0     | 1     | 2     | 3     |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| CU Students | 12.7% | 27.3% | 40.0% | 20.0% |
| All Others  | 37.7% | 42.9% | 16.0% | 3.5%  |

**Dancin’ Divas**

|            | 0     | 1     | 2     | 3     |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Females    | 42.2% | 29.7% | 14.1% | 14.1% |
| All Others | 82.6% | 11.0% | 5.2%  | 1.3%  |

**Dining Out**

|            | 0     | 1     | 2    | 3    |
|------------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Females    | 65.4% | 23.8% | 6.2% | 4.6% |
| All Others | 86.9% | 11.8% | 0%   | 1.3% |

**Longmont LGBT Potluck Group**

|                | 0     | 1     | 2     | 3     |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Longmont Folks | 19.4% | 25.8% | 38.7% | 16.1% |
| All Others     | 63.0% | 29.2% | 5.8%  | 1.9%  |

**MGM (Many Gay Men) Potluck Group**

|            | 0     | 1     | 2     | 3     |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Males      | 35.9% | 16.9% | 29.6% | 17.6% |
| All Others | 74.0% | 26.0% | 0%    | 0%    |

**OASOS (Peer Support Group for Youth Age 13-20)**

|            | 0     | 1     | 2    | 3     |
|------------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| Folks < 21 | 52.4% | 33.3% | 0%   | 14.3% |
| All Others | 48.3% | 44.0% | 5.0% | 2.7%  |

**Rainbow Elders/Aging Services**

|            | 0     | 1     | 2     | 3    |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Folks 60+  | 17.6% | 50.0% | 26.5% | 5.9% |
| All Others | 59.3% | 33.3% | 5.7%  | 1.6% |

## Perceptions of Boulder County's LGBT Community

In addition to the feedback we received on specific Boulder County LGBT organizations, a number of people also commented on the LGBT community as a whole. While a few were appreciative of the community, there was a noticeable amount of criticism and dissatisfaction, as evidenced by the following quotes:

“Seems like many of the best social events in town (Boulder Red Party, BCAP events, ODF dinner, Boulder Bacchus wine tastings, etc.) require money to participate, thereby excluding those with limited disposable income.”

“Yes, all of the organizations in Boulder County that target the queer community are white focused and target white people...”

“There is not focus to the GLBT community in Boulder.”

“Many groups dominated by small-minded, provincial, "I'm on the board " income-stratified, "lived here longer than you" exclusive gay male cliques. Boulder is a very, very strange GLBT environment -- classist and racist and small-town. And a lot of internalized homophobia. I find people in general not very friendly compared to, say Denver. I have had several incidents at social events where people turn their backs on me or shun me and my partner -- this was particularly true right after I moved here--not very welcoming. This NEVER happened to me in Denver. Very strange social environment here!”

“I feel like the Boulder community is really divided into cliques.”

“There seems to be such a "click" when it comes to LGBT in Boulder. Boulder touts that it's "diverse" yet most find Boulder closed minded (not just LGBT).”

“Difficult to integrate gay men & lesbians at times, never mind the trans. Bisexuals are not in my orbit, to my knowledge.”

## **Conclusions and Limitations of Survey**

The Boulder County LGBT community as represented in this survey is highly educated, overwhelmingly white, and in need of social opportunities to connect with each other, information about local LGBT organizations and events, affordable counseling services, health services, and youth and elder services. Beyond that, things can vary greatly based on a number of demographic factors: race/ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, location, relationship status, and length of residency in Boulder County. When analyzing community needs, it is critical to look at both the overall community and identities and sub-groups within the community.

It's also important to note that this survey may or may not be representative of the entire LGBT community. The sample was not randomly selected, and it is impossible to survey every single LGBT person in Boulder County. The people who completed this survey all had internet access (which is not the case for everyone), could read and write in English, and must have been connected to the LGBT community in some way in order to receive the email invitation to complete the survey or to find the link on the Open Door Fund website. It's worth noting that such a strong need for social opportunities emerged among respondents of this survey, who were already connected to the LGBT community in some way. One can only imagine the feelings of LGBT people in Boulder County who weren't even connected enough to come across the survey!