



THE DIANA FOUNDATION BOOK PROJECT COMMITTEE

PRESS PACKET



MEDIA ADVISORY

April 29, 2019

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Book Project Committee Co-Chair

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**AMERICA'S OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY ACTIVE GAY ORGANIZATION PUBLISHES
65-YEAR HISTORY BOOK. INDEPENDENT BOOK COMMITTEE COMPLETES ITS 10 YEAR
CAMPAIGN TO TELL THE STORY OF THE DIANA FOUNDATION.**

Book Celebration and Distribution Event to be Held on May 5

HOUSTON, TEXAS – For nearly a decade, an independent committee has worked to publish the written history of The Diana Foundation, which is the oldest continuously active gay organization in the United States. The book, "The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History," is now complete and chronicles a full 65-year history of the organization. Founded in 1953 in Houston, The Diana Foundation has been a leading organization for the LGBTQ community raising millions of dollars to support local charities in the areas of health services, social services, and educational/cultural endeavors.

What: "The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History" Book Celebration & Distribution

Who: The Diana Foundation Book Project Committee Co-Chairs John Heinzerling and Tanner Williams; Brandon Wolf, author and historian; and Dan Maxwell, president of The Diana Foundation.

When: Sunday, May 5, 2019 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Remarks at 3:15 p.m.

Where: Westin Memorial City Hotel (Hibiscus Ballroom), 945 Gessner Road, Houston, TX.

Members of the media are encouraged to contact Tanner Williams at (713) 249-7370 or email tannerwilliams@gmail.com.

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Founded in 1953, The Diana Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit recognized as America's oldest continuously active gay organization. The Diana Book Project Committee is an independent collaboration of dedicated members. The Diana Book Project is 100 percent funded by the generous support of donors. Additional details may be available at www.DianaHistoryBook.com and www.TheDianaFoundation.org.



PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGOED FOR MAY 5, 2019

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**AMERICA'S OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY ACTIVE GAY ORGANIZATION FOUNDED IN
HOUSTON, TEXAS PUBLISHES 65-YEAR HISTORY BOOK**

"The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History"

HOUSTON, TEXAS (May 5, 2019) – For nearly a decade, an independent committee has worked to publish the written history of The Diana Foundation, which is the oldest continuously active gay organization in the United States. The book, "The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History," chronicles a full 65-year history of the organization. Author Brandon Wolf was joined by members of The Diana Foundation Book Project Committee to celebrate the release of the book at a special event on May 5 at the Westin Memorial City Hotel.

"We are thrilled to complete this important project to share the story of The Diana Foundation," said Tanner Williams, Book Project Committee Co-Chair. "Our book takes readers on an incredible journey through text and photographs, and explores how America's oldest active gay organization came to life to Houston, Texas."

Founded in 1953 in Houston, The Diana Foundation has been a leading organization for the LGBTQ community raising millions of dollars to support local charities in the areas of health services, social services, and educational/cultural endeavors. Many organizations benefiting from the Foundation's financial support include AIDS Foundation Houston, The Montrose Center, Legacy Community Health Services, The Botts Collection, The University of Houston LGBTQ Resource Center, and many more.

"The Dianas have a long history of supporting Houston's gay community," said John Heinzerling, Book Project Committee Co-Chair. "In fact, our book cites many examples where the Dianas provided the seed money to start many wonderful organizations still in operation today. Whenever our community has needed help the most, The Diana Foundation has always been there to make a difference in people's lives."

Beginning as a TV watch party for the 25th Academy Awards, The Diana Foundation grew to become a major social and philanthropic organization. Hosting its annual Diana Awards, which is a comedic spoof of the Academy Awards, Diana members roast some of Houston's finest. Each year, proceeds help support local charities, and the Diana Awards serve as one of

Houston's most celebrated traditions. The newly published book gives an account of Diana Awards shows from 1953 through 2018.

"The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History" is presented as a 156 page coffee table styled book. Full of pictures and stories from the very first gathering of Diana members in 1953 through the completion of its 65th anniversary, readers will be transported through time. For over six decades, Diana members –members of the Houston gay community –have made significant contributions shaping one of the most vibrant and philanthropic cities in the country.

Author Brandon Wolf offers, "Telling the story of the Dianas is to tell the story of gay life in Houston. The history of the Dianas is a labor of love, inspired by the wit and spirit of the people who began the organization and those who continue it. When I think about it, the history is just fascinating. It is an inspirational tribute to the human spirit in general and to the determination of gay people in particular. The story of the Dianas is the story of emotional survival amidst oppression – the utter resolve to change the world we live in – and the determination to have a good time in the process. This book is thus dedicated to the spirit of the Dianas, and every individual who gave life to that spirit."

Over 4,000 photographs and 500 documents were reviewed, and 100 interviews were conducted to piece together the written history of The Diana Foundation. To produce the book, thousands of photographs were digitized and will be shared with The Diana Foundation's Historic Archive housed at the University of Houston Library's LGBT Collection. In addition, many historic artifacts were uncovered and will also be added to the archive.

"The Diana Archive at the University of Houston provides the Dianas with a permanent home to share its history with the world," said Williams. "The purpose of telling the story of the Dianas is to provide real stories about gay life in the United States and give researchers something truly special to reference. Whereas a lot of our collective history may have been lost, our book gives a detailed account of how an Oscars watch party in 1953 grew to become a powerful organization helping thousands of people for more than 65 years."

Forty-one historical institutions featuring an LGTBQ collection have already been identified to receive a copy of the book and include ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archive, Stonewall National Museum & Archives, the Library of Congress, University of Houston Libraries, and the Texas A&M LGBTQ Archive. Ten international collections selected include the Australian Lesbian & Gay Archives, Hatter Society & Archive in Hungary, Irish Queer Archive in Ireland, Schwules Museum in Germany, IHLIA LGBT Heritage in the Netherlands, and five collections throughout Canada. Additional collections and archives will be reviewed with a total of 175 books being donated throughout the world.

A limited number of books are available for sale online at www.DianaHistoryBook.com. The book website also provides a free download in PDF format. The Book Project Committee plans to launch its eBook through popular vendors in June. Thanks to the generous support of Book Project donors, the eBook version of "The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History" will also be available for free download.

Los Angeles has the Oscars. New York has the Tonys. Houston will forever have the Dianas.

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"The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History"

ABOUT OUR STORY

The Diana Foundation has been a leading organization uniting Houston's gay community for more than 65 years. Through social and philanthropic activities the Dianas have helped raise substantial funds for local charities, and have provided the seed money to start some of today's largest health and AIDS services organizations in the city. The annual Diana Awards has always provided a stage for people to freely express their talents, and the awards are a time for Houston to look at itself, laugh at itself, but most of all, to have a gay time.

This book is dedicated to the men and women who have made The Diana Foundation America's oldest continuously active gay organization. It's time for the dish, it's time for the dirt, and it is time for "The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History."

Los Angeles has the Oscars. New York has the Tonys. Houston will forever have the Dianas.

ONLINE RESOURCES

BOOK WEBSITE: www.DianaHistoryBook.com

THE DIANA FOUNDATION: www.TheDianaFoundation.org

FACEBOOK PAGE: www.fb.com/TheDianaFDN

Our Facebook page contains details about our written history and an archive of photographs.

"The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History"

LIBRARIES, HISTORICAL ARCHIVES, AND MUSEUMS

As part of The Diana Foundation Book Project Committee, our goal is share free copies of our book, "The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History," with libraries, historical archives, and museums featuring LGBTQ collections. Institutions around the world will be reviewed and selected.

INAUGURAL SELECTION: 41 INSTITUTIONS AND/OR COLLECTIONS

Australian Lesbian & Gay Archives [Australia]
B.C. Gay and Lesbian Archives [Canada]
Center on Halsted
Chris Gonzalez Library & Archives
Free Library of Philadelphia
Gerber/Hart Library and Archives
GLBT Historical Society
Hatter Society & Archive [Hungary]
Houston Hatch Youth – The Montrose Center
Houston Public Library – Houston Metropolitan Research Center
IHLIA LGBT Heritage [Netherlands]
Irish Queer Archive [Ireland]
J.D. Doyle LGBTQ Archive
James C. Hormel LGBTQIA Center at the San Francisco Public Library
June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives
Lambda Archives of San Diego
Leather Archives and Museum
Lesbian History Archives
LGBT Community Center National History Archive
LGBTQ Center at Brown University
Library of Congress
Los Angeles LGBT Center
ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archive
Pride Library at the D.B. Weldon Library [Canada]
Q Hall of Fame [Canada]
Quebec Gay Archives [Canada]
Schwules Museum [Germany]
Sexual Minorities Archives
Stonewall National Museum & Archives
Texas A&M LGBTQ Archive
The ArQuives [Canada]
The Jean-Nickolaus Tretter Collection in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Studies
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Truman State University
Tucson Gay Museum
University of Houston LGBT History Research Collection
University of Houston LGBTQ Resource Center
Women's & Gender Studies at the University of North Texas
Women & LGBT Center at the Southern Methodist University
Woodson Research Center Special Collections & Archives at Rice University
Dalton DeHart Photographic Foundation

(*) unless noted, the institution or collection is located in the USA

"The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History"

THE DIANA FOUNDATION BOOK PROJECT TIMELINE

"The Diana Foundation: 65 Years of History" has been a 10-year project encountering many starts and stops. This project has always been a volunteer-led project of a few dedicated Diana members and 100 percent financed through generous donations. Thank you to everyone who has helped along the way, including our friends at *OutSmart* magazine.

OUR JOURNEY

January 2009 – Brandon Wolf receives assignment from *OutSmart* magazine to write a 1,500 word article promoting the 56th Diana Awards.

March 1, 2010 – Brandon Wolf creates a Facebook page chronicling the history of The Diana Foundation based on his research for an upcoming two-part article feature for *OutSmart* magazine.

March & April 2010 – Houston's *OutSmart* magazine publishes Parts I & II of a featured article describing The Diana Foundation's 57-year history.

March 27, 2010 – Diana President John Heinzerling creates the Book Project Committee.

June 17, 2012 – Diana members contract Brandon Wolf to produce a manuscript of 30,000 words of the written history of The Diana Foundation from its beginning up to the 60th Diana Awards show.

October 1, 2012 – Brandon Wolf provides The Diana Foundation with a rough draft of a manuscript. There is controversy among the Book Project Committee regarding the details.

July 2013 – Momentum for the book project subsides.

October 2014 – The Facebook page created by Brandon Wolf in 2010 becomes the official Facebook page of The Diana Foundation.

June 2017 – The Diana Foundation approves plans to establish an official historical archive at the University of Houston.

June 2017 – Tanner Williams concludes his third year as president and joins John Heinzerling to expedite the book project.

July 2017 – Tanner Williams and John Heinzerling visit Harry Guyton at his ranch in east Texas to create a new timeline to complete the book project.

August 2017 – Fundraising efforts proceed to publish Brandon Wolf's manuscript while adding a 5-year epilogue to create a full 65-year history.

March 10, 2018 – A group photo of current members of The Diana Foundation is taken at the 65th Diana Awards. This is to be the last featured photo in the book.

March 2019 – Final book edits are approved and printing begins.

May 5, 2019 – A book celebration and distribution event is held at the Westin Memorial City Hotel in Houston, TX. All book resource materials are donated to The Diana Foundation Archive at the University of Houston to complete the book project.