

Tulsa Oklahomans for Human Rights (TOHR) Staff Initiative Case Statement

Tulsa Oklahomans for Human Rights (TOHR) is the oldest and largest organization serving gay and lesbian persons in Tulsa. TOHR was established in 1980.

TOHR is presently embarking on a special fundraising initiative to hire its first Executive Director. The goal of the staff initiative is to raise \$45,000, which would provide a reserve fund for one year of salary and benefits for an executive director.

The mission of TOHR is to secure legal equality and social acceptance for the gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans-gendered, and allied community in northeast Oklahoma through advocacy, education, leadership, and unity.

TOHR operates the Tulsa GLBT Community Center, a safe and affirming meeting place for Tulsa's gay and lesbian citizens. More than 4,000 people of all ages visit the Community Center each year.

The Community Center features three meeting rooms (one large and two small rooms); a Cyber Cafe offering public computers with free Internet access; Tulsa's only retail Pride Store, with proceeds benefiting TOHR; and the administrative offices of TOHR. More than a dozen community and support groups meet at the Community Center each week.

TOHR also operates Tulsa's only GLBT Information Hotline, providing support for GLBT persons and referrals to gay-friendly health care services, attorneys, businesses, churches, and other services. More than 4,000 people call the Information Hotline each year.

In addition, TOHR organizes informative and educational events for the local GLBT community, such as lectures and workshops, and coordinates the annual Tulsa Diversity Celebration each summer.

Currently, TOHR is in the second year of the Pyramid Project, a capital fundraising campaign to secure a permanent home for the Tulsa GLBT Community Center. The goal of the capital campaign is \$1 million, which will be used to purchase a new location for the Community Center and provide an endowment to ensure its operation for years to come. As of March 2003, the Pyramid Project has raised approximately \$250,000 toward its goal. A substantial amount of the funds raised through the Pyramid Project is held in trust by the Tulsa Community Foundation.

The annual operating budget of TOHR is approximately \$100,000, most of which is provided by members and contributing individuals. Corporate and foundation donors include the Williams Companies and the Shusterman Foundation. A recent audit report, current financial statements, and other organizational materials are available upon request.

The purpose of the TOHR Staff Initiative is to increase the level of the TOHR operating fund, allowing the organization to hire its first Executive Director. Our goal is to establish a reserve of \$45,000 that will provide one year of salary and benefits.

Why does TOHR need an Executive Director?

An Executive Director will significantly raise the visibility of our community, helping to advance equality for all GLBT persons in Tulsa.

An Executive Director will secure important grant funding from foundations and corporations, locally and nationally, attracting much-needed support from outside the local GLBT community.

The presence of an Executive Director will allow the TOHR Pyramid Project Capital Campaign to obtain grants from foundations and corporations for a permanent home for the Tulsa GLBT Community Center. (Foundations and corporations require paid staff to manage an organization before agreeing to financial support.)

Qualifications required of the Executive Director include a bachelor's degree in business administration, public relations, or liberal arts (master's preferred) with two to seven years of experience in non-profit management, fundraising, volunteer training and management, and community relations.

The Executive Director will provide a critical link between the organizational goals and daily operations of TOHR, the Tulsa GLBT Community Center, and the TOHR Pyramid Project Capital Campaign. She or he will increase the operational efficiency, effectiveness, and professionalism of TOHR.

With your help to hire our first Executive Director, we can make a significant "leap forward" – increasing the visibility of the GLBT community in Tulsa, improving the efficiency of Tulsa's oldest and largest GLBT organization, and obtaining vital grant funding for TOHR and its Pyramid Project capital campaign. Now is the time for all of us to come together to ensure that the GLBT community has a safe, permanent home in Tulsa for the next generation.