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**FROM THE VEGAS STAGE
TO THE AMAZING RACE
MARK ROMAIN & BRETT HAMBY'S
ULTIMATE ADVENTURE**



Photo: Sonja Flemming/CBS

Whether you're a local or tourist, we always feature our favorite spots along with all the new and exciting things our city has to offer.

Vegas performers Mark Romain and Brett Hamby take their talents from the stage to 'The Amazing Race' Season 37. As an openly gay married couple, they embrace the adventure, representing LGBTQ+ visibility while testing their teamwork, endurance, and resilience in a global, high-stakes competition.

Kumei, the 16-year-old founder of Tofu Tees, shares how she integrates diversity, equity, and inclusion into her brand, hiring practices, and designs, empowering young creatives and promoting representation in fashion.

QVegas is proudly bringing back restaurant reviews, highlighting Las Vegas' top dining experiences with in-depth insights, bold flavors, and must-visit hotspots. Read all about our latest experience at Chica inside The Venetian.



Russ White & Garrett Pattiani
Publishers, QVegas & QLife Media



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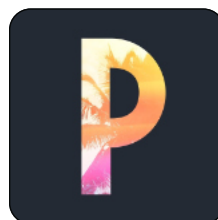
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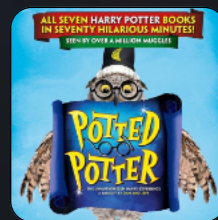
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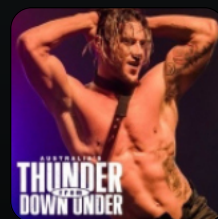
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A Culinary Celebration at Chica: Bold Latin Flavors at The Venetian

By Russ White and Ward Billeisen for QVegas Magazine

Las Vegas is a city known for its extravagance, entertainment, and exceptional dining, and among the many culinary hotspots along the Strip, Chica at The Venetian Resort Las Vegas stands out as a vibrant celebration of Latin flavors and culture. Developed by 50 Eggs Hospitality Group, the restaurant fuses traditional Latin American cuisine with contemporary techniques, offering a menu that is both adventurous and sophisticated.

From the moment you step inside, Chica immerses you in an atmosphere of warmth, color, and lively energy. The space, which recently underwent renovations, now features a stunning blend of modern elegance with Latin-inspired art—including graffiti-style murals that symbolize the fusion of various cultures and flavors found on the menu. Whether you're visiting for a shareable dining experience, a decadent weekend brunch, or the high-energy Chica Nights, the restaurant delivers on all fronts.

We had the pleasure of dining at Chica alongside , exploring an array of signature dishes, cocktails, and unforgettable flavors. Here's a deep dive into our experience.

A Journey Through Chica's Flavors: The Appetizers That Set the Tone

Chica's menu is crafted with bold, dynamic flavors, and the small bites and appetizers provide the perfect introduction.

Mini Wonton Tacos – A Bite of Perfection

We started with the Mini Wonton Tacos, an innovative take on traditional tacos featuring crispy wonton shells filled with a choice of tuna, salmon, short rib, or veggie. We opted for the tuna tacos, which delivered a delicate balance of crunch and freshness. The wonton shell provided a light, crisp texture, allowing the tender tuna and its tangy glaze to shine. It was a playful yet refined way to begin the meal, and with multiple filling options, this is a dish we'll definitely return for.

Hamachi Tiradito – A Delicate Balance of Heat and Citrus

Next up was the Hamachi Tiradito, a dish that beautifully showcased the restaurant's ability to blend raw seafood with vibrant flavors. The chili lime ponzu provided a subtle heat that enhanced the delicate richness of the hamachi, while the salsa fresca added a refreshing contrast. This dish had the perfect balance of acidity and umami, making it an ideal choice for those who love raw fish but prefer a departure from traditional ceviche.

Quesa Birria Empanadas – Comfort in Every Bite

Empanadas are a staple in Latin cuisine, and Chica elevates them with their Quesa Birria Empanadas, served with a rich guajillo consommé for dipping. The braised short rib filling was deeply flavorful, with a

smoky essence and melt-in-your-mouth tenderness. The crispy pastry shell had the perfect cheese-to-meat ratio, ensuring each bite was both comforting and indulgent. Dipping the empanadas into the consommé added an extra depth of flavor, making this a standout starter.

Tuna Tartare – Freshness Redefined

The Tuna Tartare was another fresh and flavorful dish. Featuring confit shiitake, avocado, and kaffir lime, it was served with crispy blue corn tortillas that added an earthy crunch. The lime brightened the dish, while the shiitake contributed a subtle umami depth, creating a dish that was both refined and satisfying.

The Main Course: A Feast of Smoke, Spice, and Succulence

Baby Back Ribs "Al Pastor" – The Smoke Show

When our Baby Back Ribs "Al Pastor" arrived at the table, the presentation alone was a spectacle. The dish, fittingly nicknamed "The Smoke Show," was served under a glass dome filled with aromatic smoke, which was dramatically lifted at the table to release an intoxicating, woodsy aroma. The ribs were perfectly cooked, fall-off-the-bone tender, and coated in a pineapple glaze that offered the ideal balance of sweetness and tang. The grilled pineapple underneath provided an extra





layer of caramelized richness, making this dish a clear highlight of the evening.

Oaxacan Rotisserie Chicken – A Latin Comfort Classic

Another standout was the Oaxacan Rotisserie Chicken, known as "Pollo a la Brasa". The half chicken was slow-roasted to juicy perfection, with chipotle crema and a creamy avocado aji sauce that added smoky and citrusy undertones. The flavors were comforting yet complex, making it a perfect dish for those who love classic Latin flavors with a modern twist.

Fire-Roasted Salmon – A Perfectly Executed Seafood Dish

The Fire-Roasted Salmon was another impressive offering. The fish was cooked to a buttery, medium-rare perfection, allowing its natural richness to shine. Accompanied by crispy Brussels sprouts, Nikkei glaze, and a ginger chili sauce, the dish offered a mix of crunch, heat, and umami depth. The glaze added just the right amount of sweetness, balancing the bold flavors.

Lobster with Lentil Salad – Unexpected but Perfect

While lobster is always a showstopper, what truly elevated this dish was the lentil salad underneath. The lobster was succulent and sweet, but the surprise element was the combination of lentils, squash, and chorizo, creating a smoky,

earthy, and slightly spicy contrast. The textures and flavors worked harmoniously, making this one of the most unexpectedly delightful dishes of the night.

Cocktails: Artistry in a Glass

No meal at Chica is complete without exploring its expertly crafted mixology program.

The Tequila Old Fashioned – A Bold, Smoky Sip

For lovers of classic cocktails, the Tequila Old Fashioned offered a sophisticated twist on the original. Made with mezcal and reposado tequila, the drink had a smooth, smoky complexity with just the right amount of sweetness.

Living My Best Life – A Floral Delight

For something lighter and floral, the Living My Best Life cocktail, featuring Saint Germain (elderflower liqueur) and fresh citrus, was bright, refreshing, and delicately sweet.

Each cocktail was thoughtfully curated to complement the bold flavors of the food, making the drink experience just as memorable as the meal.

Sweet Surprises: A Playful Ending to the Meal

Chica's desserts are just as creative as their main courses. Since we were celebrating a birthday, the restaurant brought out a one-

of-a-kind birthday surprise: a corn cob cake.

At first glance, we thought it was a mistake—until we dug in. The "corn cob" was actually a beautifully constructed dessert with a strawberry flavor profile, crunchy graham cracker crumbs, and a perfectly caramelized exterior. This unexpected yet delicious creation left us laughing, surprised, and utterly satisfied.

The Verdict: A Must-Visit for Latin-Inspired Dining in Las Vegas

From start to finish, Chica at The Venetian delivers an outstanding dining experience. The flavors are bold yet balanced, the presentation is both elegant and theatrical, and the service is impeccable—with every team member ensuring an elevated, yet welcoming atmosphere.

Whether you're looking for a lively dinner, a luxurious brunch, or a high-energy night out during Chica Nights, this restaurant is a must-visit for anyone who appreciates Latin cuisine with a modern, upscale twist.

With its vibrant menu, stunning presentation, and immersive ambiance, Chica remains a standout in the ever-evolving Las Vegas dining scene.

Visit chicarestaurant.com or follow @ChicaRestaurants on Facebook and Instagram for more information.





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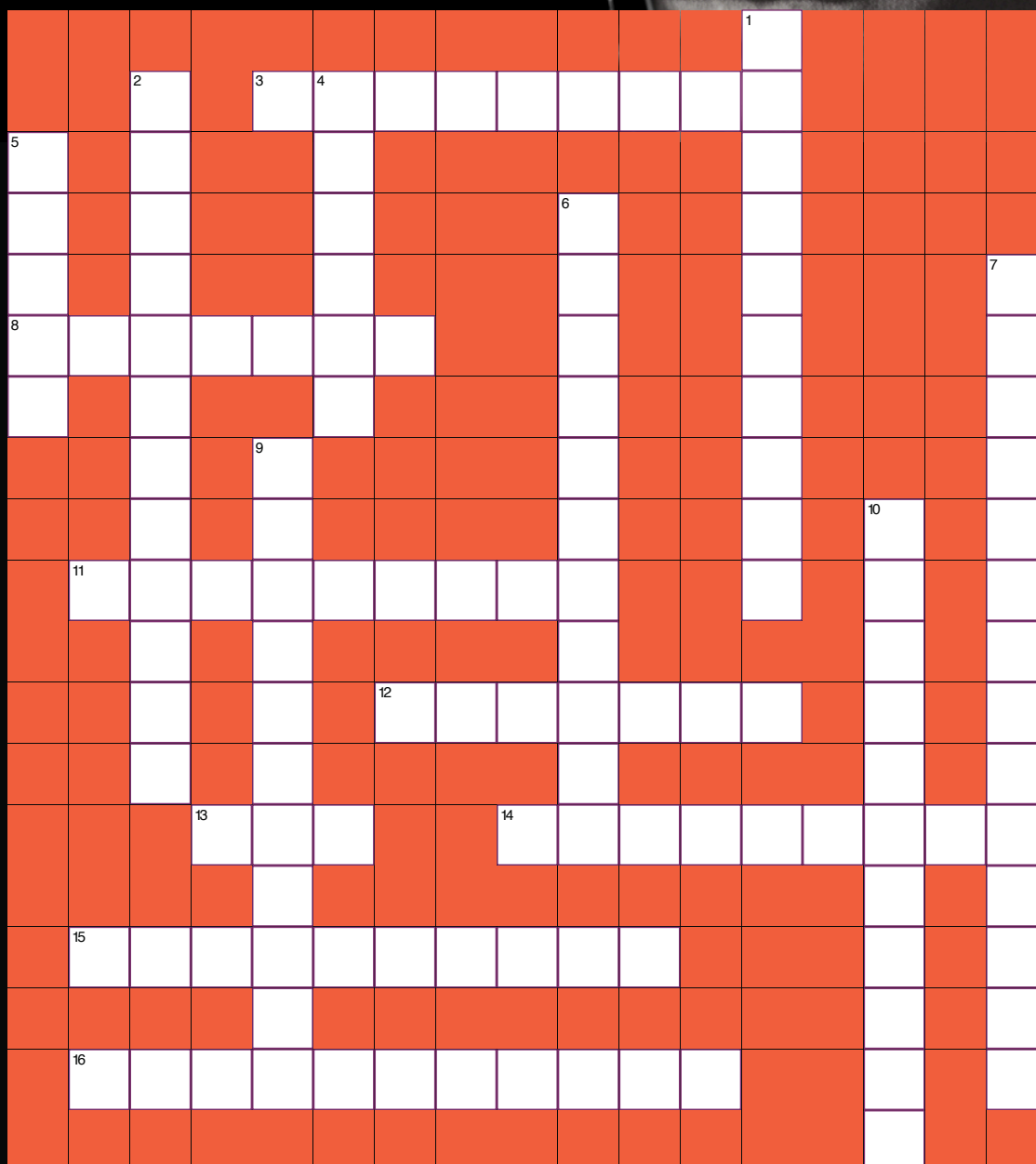
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Across

- 3 Her 2009 hit featuring Beyoncé
- 8 Gaga's debut album
- 11 Gaga's breakout hit from 2008
- 12 The pop icon who inspired Gaga's early fashion
- 13 The country where she performed at the halftime Super Bowl show in 2017
- 14 The outfit she wore at the 2010 VMAs
- 15 Gaga's 2020 album featuring "Rain on Me"
- 16 A song dedicated to LGBTQ+ empowerment

Down

- 1 Lady Gaga's birth name
- 2 A movie where she played Patrizia Reggiani
- 4 Her Las Vegas residency show
- 5 The color of the piano she played at the 2016 Oscars
- 6 Her alter ego from You and I
- 7 A nickname for Gaga's devoted fanbase
- 9 2018 film where she starred with Bradley Cooper
- 10 The name of her jazz collaborator



Vegas Stars Take on The Amazing Race

By Garrett Pattiani & Russ White

Las Vegas is a city of performers, where talent shines as bright as the neon lights on the Strip. Among the dazzling array of entertainers, Mark Romain and Brett Hamby stand out as a powerhouse couple who have conquered some of the biggest stages in the world. Mark, a dancer known for his work in Magic Mike Live, RuPaul's Drag Race Live, and This Is Us, and Brett, an elite acrobat from Le Rêve - The Dream and other Cirque du Soleil productions, have built a life together rooted in love, passion, and an unwavering drive to push their limits. Now, they are taking on a new challenge: racing around the world on The Amazing Race Season 37.

The two performers, who have been together for 11 years, are embarking on an adventure that will test their physical endurance, mental agility, and teamwork in ways they never imagined. As an openly gay married couple, they are also part of the most LGBTQ+ inclusive cast in the history of the show, a milestone that both recognize as an incredible privilege. We sat down with Mark and Brett to discuss their journey, their experience on the show, and what it means to represent the LGBTQ+ community on such a grand stage.

A Love Story Built on Movement and Adventure

Mark and Brett's love story began in a way that feels almost cinematic. Their paths had unknowingly crossed multiple times before they officially met—both attended the same college at the same time, but somehow never encountered one another.

Fate finally stepped in through Mark's twin brother, whom Brett knew from performing in Hong Kong. One night, when Mark walked into an apartment where his brother and Brett were hanging out, their eyes locked, and the connection was immediate.

"I excused myself to take a breath because I could tell it was something special," Mark recalls. That night, they went out dancing, a passion they continue to share. Their first official date was a hike, where they made a pact that still defines their relationship today: to try everything at least once and to always support each other without judgment.

That philosophy became the backbone of their relationship, strengthening their bond over the years. It also made the decision to audition for The Amazing Race an easy one.

The Journey to The Amazing Race

For over a decade, Mark and Brett have dreamed of competing on The Amazing Race, a show they have both been watching since the very first season. The idea of traveling the world, completing high-stakes challenges, and proving their strength as a team was always in the back of their minds. While they had considered auditioning for previous seasons, they never felt the timing was right—until now.

"We made an audition video for Season 36, but we didn't submit it. It just didn't feel like the right time," Brett says. "But when we filmed our video for this season, everything

just clicked. It felt like the right moment, and we were so ready."

Their audition video captured not just their physical skills and competitive spirit, but also the unique dynamic of their relationship. They highlighted their strengths, their playful energy, and the challenges they had already overcome as a couple. More importantly, they showed up as their authentic selves—two driven, passionate performers who are deeply in love.

The Ultimate Test of Teamwork

Competing on The Amazing Race is more than just a travel competition—it's an emotional and mental endurance test, especially for couples. While Mark and Brett have spent years navigating the pressures of live performances, the race presented an entirely new kind of challenge.

"We had to confront our biggest weaknesses going into the race," Mark admits. "I like to be in control, and I knew that would be a challenge for us."

To prepare, they created strategies for keeping their cool under pressure. They even considered adopting a "safe word" to remind each other to take a breath and refocus when things got intense. "We've been together long enough to know what triggers stress in our relationship, and we worked hard to stay mindful of that," Brett adds.

As performers, they also had a competitive edge. Their ability to quickly learn





Sonia Flemming/CBS

choreography, stay physically agile, and remain adaptable under pressure proved to be a major asset. In the first leg alone, Brett's acrobatic skills shone as he scaled a massive tower with ease, while Mark's dance background helped them master the traditional lion dance challenge in Hong Kong.

"Performers live a million different lives. One day you're dancing, the next day you're learning to sword fight, the next you're doing aerial acrobatics. You never know what's coming, so you have to adapt on the spot," Brett explains. "That skill set translated perfectly to the race."

The Power of LGBTQ+ Representation

Reality television has come a long way in representing LGBTQ+ relationships, and Mark and Brett are proud to be part of that progress. As competitors on *The Amazing Race*, they are not just running for themselves—they are representing a community that hasn't always been widely visible on mainstream television.

"I don't remember seeing a lot of gay people on the show when we first started watching," Mark says. "Now, we get to compete as an openly married couple, in a season with the most queer racers in the history of the show. That's incredible."



Sonia Flemming/CBS

They are also grateful that the show allowed every LGBTQ+ contestant to show up exactly as they are. "There was no pressure to be 'less gay' or to fit into any kind of mold," Brett adds. "We were just competitors—smart, strong, and determined to win."

Of course, with visibility comes scrutiny, and they have already encountered some online negativity. However, they are choosing to focus on the overwhelming love and support they've received. "For every negative comment, there are dozens of messages from people saying how much our representation means to them," Mark says. "That's what matters."

Dreaming Beyond the Race

When asked how they would spend the \$1 million prize if they won, their answers were refreshingly simple: a well-deserved spa day. "Maybe a whole spa week," Brett laughs. "We've put our bodies through a lot, and we deserve it!"

Regardless of the outcome, the experience has already changed their perspective on life. While they will return to their performance careers in Las Vegas, they are also eager to explore new opportunities. "The race reminded us that there are so many incredible things we can do," Mark

says. "We want to take that spirit into whatever comes next."

For now, they are enjoying the ride, embracing every moment, and staying grateful for the opportunity to represent their city and their community on a global platform.

A Celebration of Love, Strength, and Adventure

As the season unfolds, Mark and Brett's journey on *The Amazing Race* will be one to watch. Their story is not just about competition—it's about love, resilience, and the power of pushing beyond limits.

And, of course, we'll be celebrating them right here in Las Vegas. "Whenever you want to have a party to celebrate, let us know," we told them. "Gipsy, Piranha, and the whole QVegas family have your back!"

To follow Mark and Brett's journey, catch *The Amazing Race Season 37* on CBS and streaming on Paramount+. Let's cheer them on and show them the love and support they deserve!



Photos Courtesy CBS



KUMEI

Owner and designer of Tofu Tees

At just 16 years old, Kumei Norwood is redefining what it means to be an entrepreneur. As the founder of Tofu Tees, a socially conscious apparel brand based in downtown Las Vegas, she is more than just a young business owner—she is a voice for inclusion, empowerment, and community engagement. With a firm commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), Kumei's journey is an inspiring testament to the power of youth-driven change.

A Business Born from a Childhood Idea

Kumei's entrepreneurial journey began almost by accident. At the age of six, she jotted down the phrase "Why are people so sensitive?" in her childhood notebook. Years later, while cleaning her room, her mother rediscovered the note, which was scrawled in Kumei's young handwriting and filled with misspellings. Amused and inspired, they decided to print the phrase on a T-shirt. Little did they know that this small, personal project would launch a full-fledged business.

"I started wearing the shirt, and people wanted to buy it from me," Kumei recalls. Encouraged by the interest, she was invited to sell at Market in the Alley, a local marketplace showcasing independent businesses and creatives. It was there that

she first experienced what it meant to sell her products and build a brand.

The name Tofu Tees stems from Kumei's lifelong vegetarian lifestyle and her original focus on T-shirt designs. Over the years, her brand has expanded in both meaning and product offerings, but the heart of her mission remains the same: to create apparel that inspires confidence, activism, and community engagement.

The Meaning Behind the Designs

For Kumei, Tofu Tees is more than just fashion; it's a platform for self-expression. "When people wear my designs, I want them to feel empowered and passionate about the message," she explains. Some of her designs carry deeper political and social messages, while others are more playful, always offering a blend of meaning and aesthetics. The goal, she says, is to spark conversation and encourage people to embrace their individuality.

Her brand is deeply rooted in the principles of DEI, which is why she was a natural choice for QVegas Magazine's ongoing series, DEI and the Road Ahead. We asked Kumei to break down what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean to her.

Diversity: A Way of Life

For Kumei, diversity is not just an abstract

concept—it's a fundamental part of daily life. "Diversity is just living to me because it's everywhere. Everybody in the world is different, and diversity is about embracing that."

She sees this reflected in her community and her customer base. Her goal is to ensure that people of all backgrounds feel seen and represented in her designs.

Equity: Ensuring a Voice for Everyone

Equity, Kumei explains, is about ensuring that everyone has a fair opportunity to express themselves and advocate for their beliefs. "It's about always having a voice to express yourself and your values." Through her brand and community events, she fosters spaces where people can share their thoughts and experiences openly.

Inclusion: Building Safe and Welcoming Spaces

Inclusion is at the heart of everything Kumei does. "It's about bringing everybody together, making them feel safe and welcome," she says. "That's what I want to do with my brand."

She actively creates inclusive spaces not just through her designs but also through the events she hosts, where individuals from different walks of life can come together to connect and share experiences.

Creating a Community Beyond Fashion

Beyond selling apparel, Kumei is passionate about using her platform to build a community. She frequently organizes local events to engage with people and offer support. Some of these include bracelet-making sessions, where attendees can sit together and simply talk, fostering a sense of belonging and understanding.

She also collaborates with other young entrepreneurs, providing them with opportunities to showcase their products in her store. "I don't have employees yet, but I do let other businesses pop up in my shop and sell their products alongside mine," she shares. Her goal is to ensure that others have the same opportunities she did when starting out.

Challenges as a Young Entrepreneur

Being a young business owner in the fashion industry—especially one who incorporates political and social themes into her designs—comes with challenges. "Some people think that just because my designs focus on social issues, that's all my fashion is about," she says. "But I also love to express myself through the clothes I wear."

Despite this, she remains committed to her mission, standing firm in her beliefs while continuing to evolve as an entrepreneur. Balancing school and business is another

challenge, but with the help of her mother—who works in the store when Kumei is in class—she's able to keep things running smoothly.

Looking ahead, she plans to expand her team, especially as she considers college. "Maybe when I go off to college, I'll look for someone to manage the store for me," she says, acknowledging the exciting yet uncertain road ahead.

Mentorship and Inspiration

Kumei credits much of her growth to the mentors who have guided her along the way. Two figures, in particular, have played a significant role in shaping her business mindset: Melissa, who works with Future Makers, an organization dedicated to helping young entrepreneurs, and Jen Taler, the creator of Ferguson's Downtown and the organizer behind Market in the Alley. "Melissa helped me hone in on my brand and messaging," Kumei explains. "And Jenaller gave me my first big opportunities, including opening a store at just 12 years old."

Now celebrating her fourth year in business, Kumei is eager to continue expanding her impact and learning from those who have paved the way before her.

The Future of Tofu Tees

While she intends to keep most of her designs true to her original vision, Kumei has dabbled in collaborations, including one with Zappos. She is open to selective partnerships that align with her mission and values. "If I could collaborate with anyone, I'd love to work with Bobby Hundreds," she says, referring to the renowned streetwear designer and activist. "He stands for a lot of the same issues I do, and he's in the streetwear realm, so it would be an awesome collab."

Giving Back to the Community

One of the most rewarding aspects of Kumei's work is her ability to give back. She frequently organizes community service initiatives, including food drives and sandwich-making events for the Solidarity Fridge, a 24/7 food pantry in Las Vegas. "A lot of my events are focused on meeting people who share your beliefs or just people you vibe with," she says. "Downtown Las Vegas is all about community, and I want to be a part of that."

Final Thoughts

As Kumei Norwood continues to grow her business and her influence, she remains steadfast in her commitment to self-expression, inclusivity, and activism. Her journey is a reminder that age is no barrier to impact. Through Tofu Tees, she is proving that young people can drive meaningful change in both business and society. Visit tofuteeslv.com for more info.

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AN EXCLUSIVE SERIES
BY QVEGAS

DEI and the Road Ahead is a new editorial series that will spotlight influential leaders across the Las Vegas community, exploring the evolving impact of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in their industries and lives. Through these conversations, we will highlight how these changemakers have championed DEI initiatives, the challenges they've faced, and why they remain committed to fostering inclusive spaces. From corporate executives and nonprofit advocates to entertainers and policymakers, this series will shed light on the lasting importance of DEI in shaping the future of Las Vegas—ensuring that progress isn't just a trend but a sustained movement.

Trump Administration Takes Aim at LGBTQ+ Rights and DEI Initiatives

Over the past two weeks, President Donald Trump has made several key moves that could significantly impact LGBTQ+ rights and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives across the United States. From his speech to Congress to changes at the Kennedy Center and a looming Supreme Court case, his administration has doubled down on efforts to roll back progressive policies that had expanded protections for marginalized communities.

Trump's Address to Congress Targets DEI and LGBTQ+ Protections

On March 5, 2025, President Trump delivered his first joint address to Congress since returning to office. During the speech, he reaffirmed his administration's intent to dismantle DEI programs and curtail transgender rights. He criticized past policies that provided protections and resources for LGBTQ+ individuals, calling them part of a "radical gender ideology" that he pledged to eliminate from educational institutions, federal agencies, and corporate America.

Trump also hinted at new executive actions aimed at banning trans-inclusive policies in schools and sports while reaffirming his support for religious exemptions that allow businesses and organizations to deny services based on religious beliefs. This stance has drawn strong opposition from LGBTQ+ advocates and civil rights organizations, who see it as an effort to erode hard-won protections.

Kennedy Center Shake-Up Sparks Controversy

In a less publicized but significant move, Trump's administration reshuffled the leadership of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on March 7, 2025. The new appointees are known for their alignment with the administration's conservative stance, leading to

immediate programming changes. Notably, the upcoming run of *Hamilton* was abruptly canceled, and longtime supporters of diverse artistic representation, including Shonda Rhimes, resigned in protest.

The changes at the Kennedy Center signal a broader cultural shift in how the administration plans to reshape federal arts funding. Reports suggest that funding from the National Endowment for the Arts will now prioritize projects that promote "patriotic" themes over those focused on social justice, diversity, or LGBTQ+ representation.

Supreme Court to Weigh in on Conversion Therapy Bans

In another alarming development, the U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear a case challenging state and local bans on conversion therapy for LGBTQ+ minors. The case, originating in Colorado, could have nationwide implications if the court rules against the bans.

Conversion therapy, widely discredited by medical professionals, has been outlawed in many states due to its harmful effects on LGBTQ+ youth. However, conservative groups have pushed back, arguing that such bans infringe on free speech and religious freedoms. Trump's Supreme Court appointees could play a decisive role in determining the outcome, which could overturn existing protections and allow the harmful practice to continue.

The Road Ahead

As these policies unfold, LGBTQ+ organizations and advocacy groups are mobilizing to challenge the administration's efforts. From legal battles to grassroots activism, the fight for equality continues. The next few months could prove pivotal in determining the direction of LGBTQ+ rights in the U.S.



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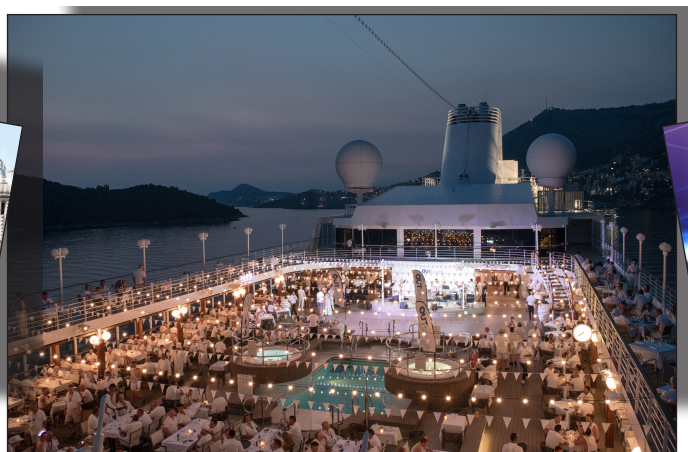


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The It Gets Better Project has long been a beacon of hope and empowerment for LGBTQ+ youth. With its latest initiative, **It Gets Better: Changemakers**, the organization is taking another significant step in fostering youth leadership and community impact. This newly expanded grant program provides financial resources to LGBTQ+ youth, enabling them to spearhead meaningful projects that positively affect their schools, communities, and beyond.

Empowering LGBTQ+ Youth Through Grants

The Changemakers initiative is specifically designed to support young LGBTQ+ individuals between the ages of 13 and 18. These grants, which range from \$500 to \$10,000, are intended to fund youth-led projects in collaboration with schools, community organizations, and youth groups across the United States, including Washington D.C. and U.S. territories. By prioritizing grassroots efforts, the program ensures that LGBTQ+ youth have the tools and resources necessary to create lasting change in their own communities.

This expansion builds on the success of It Gets Better's previous grant programs, reinforcing the organization's commitment to uplifting young leaders who are passionate about advocacy, inclusivity, and social change. With an emphasis on youth activation, community-specific needs, and measurable impact, the initiative aims to support projects that make spaces safer, more accepting, and more empowering for LGBTQ+ individuals.

Application Process and Program Timeline

The Changemakers program officially opened its application process on March 3, 2025, and will accept submissions until May 5, 2025. Over the summer, a review process will determine the grant recipients, with final decisions and funds being distributed in the fall of 2025. LGBTQ+ youth interested in applying must work closely with a partner organization, such as a school or community group, to develop their project proposals.

Projects selected for funding will align with the program's core mission of creating

supportive and affirming spaces for LGBTQ+ individuals. While the grant amounts will vary depending on the scope and potential impact of each project, every funded initiative will focus on tangible community benefits and the empowerment of LGBTQ+ youth as leaders and change agents.

What Makes a Successful Grant Proposal?

It Gets Better has outlined several key factors that contribute to a strong grant application. First and foremost, projects must be youth-led, ensuring that young LGBTQ+ individuals are at the forefront of planning and execution. While partner organizations will provide support, the initiative must be driven by the creativity, passion, and vision of young leaders.

Another critical component is community specificity. Every LGBTQ+ community faces unique challenges, and successful proposals will identify local needs and tailor their projects accordingly. Whether addressing issues related to mental health, inclusivity in education, or access to resources, applicants should clearly define how their initiative will make a meaningful difference in their particular setting.

Equally important is the ability to measure impact. Projects should include plans for tracking success, whether through surveys, participation metrics, or direct feedback from those involved. The Changemakers program aims to fund initiatives that not only create immediate change but also lay the groundwork for long-term improvements in LGBTQ+ inclusivity and well-being.

Priority will be given to proposals that support LGBTQ+ youth of color, trans and nonbinary youth, and LGBTQ+ youth with disabilities. By focusing on these communities, the program seeks to address systemic inequalities and provide resources where they are most needed.

Types of Projects the Program Supports

The Changemakers initiative encourages a wide range of project ideas, reflecting the diverse needs of LGBTQ+ youth across different communities. Some examples of fundable initiatives include expanding school or public library collections to

include more works by LGBTQ+ authors, creating local support groups for trans and nonbinary youth, or organizing inclusive events like queer proms or pride celebrations.

Each project is expected to foster a sense of belonging, provide educational or emotional support, and build stronger, more inclusive environments. Whether through arts and culture, advocacy, education, or direct community engagement, the goal is to fund initiatives that inspire and empower LGBTQ+ youth to take active roles in shaping their own futures.

Supporting the Changemakers Initiative

The It Gets Better Project invites individuals, businesses, and organizations to support the Changemakers program through donations. Contributions help fund these life-changing grants, as well as provide digital resources, leadership training, and advocacy efforts. Donors can opt for one-time or recurring contributions, allowing them to invest in the future of LGBTQ+ youth and the transformative work they are doing within their communities.

Additionally, businesses and community leaders can collaborate with the It Gets Better Project to provide mentorship opportunities, sponsorships, and additional resources to further enhance the reach and impact of the initiative.

The launch of It Gets Better: Changemakers represents a powerful step toward equipping LGBTQ+ youth with the resources and support they need to enact change in their own communities. By offering grants for youth-led initiatives, the program not only uplifts young leaders but also fosters safer, more inclusive environments where LGBTQ+ individuals can thrive.

As applications are now open, the It Gets Better Project encourages eligible LGBTQ+ youth to submit their proposals and take advantage of this opportunity to make a real difference. With the support of donors, partner organizations, and dedicated young leaders, the Changemakers initiative will undoubtedly create lasting and meaningful change in schools, communities, and beyond.



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ACLU
aclunv.org

ADL
lasvegas.adl.org

ALCOHOLICS TOGETHER
alcoholicstogetherlasvegas.com

BEARS LAS VEGAS
bears.lv.org

COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER OF SOUTHERN NEVADA
cccfsn.org

HENDERSON PRIDE
hhendersonpride.org

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN
hrc.org

IMPERIAL ROYALE SOVEREIGN COURT OF THE DESERT EMPIRE
irscdei.org

LAMBDA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
lambdalv.com

LAS VEGAS MEN'S CHORUS
lvmenschorus.org

LAS VEGAS PRIME TIMERS
lasvegasprimetimers.com

LEATHER UNIFORM CLUB OF LAS VEGAS (LUC OF LV)
lucoflv.com

LEGACY COUNSELING
legacycounselingandworkforceconnections.com

MAMA DRAGONS
mamadragons.org

NEVADA GAY RODEO ASSOCIATION
ngra.com

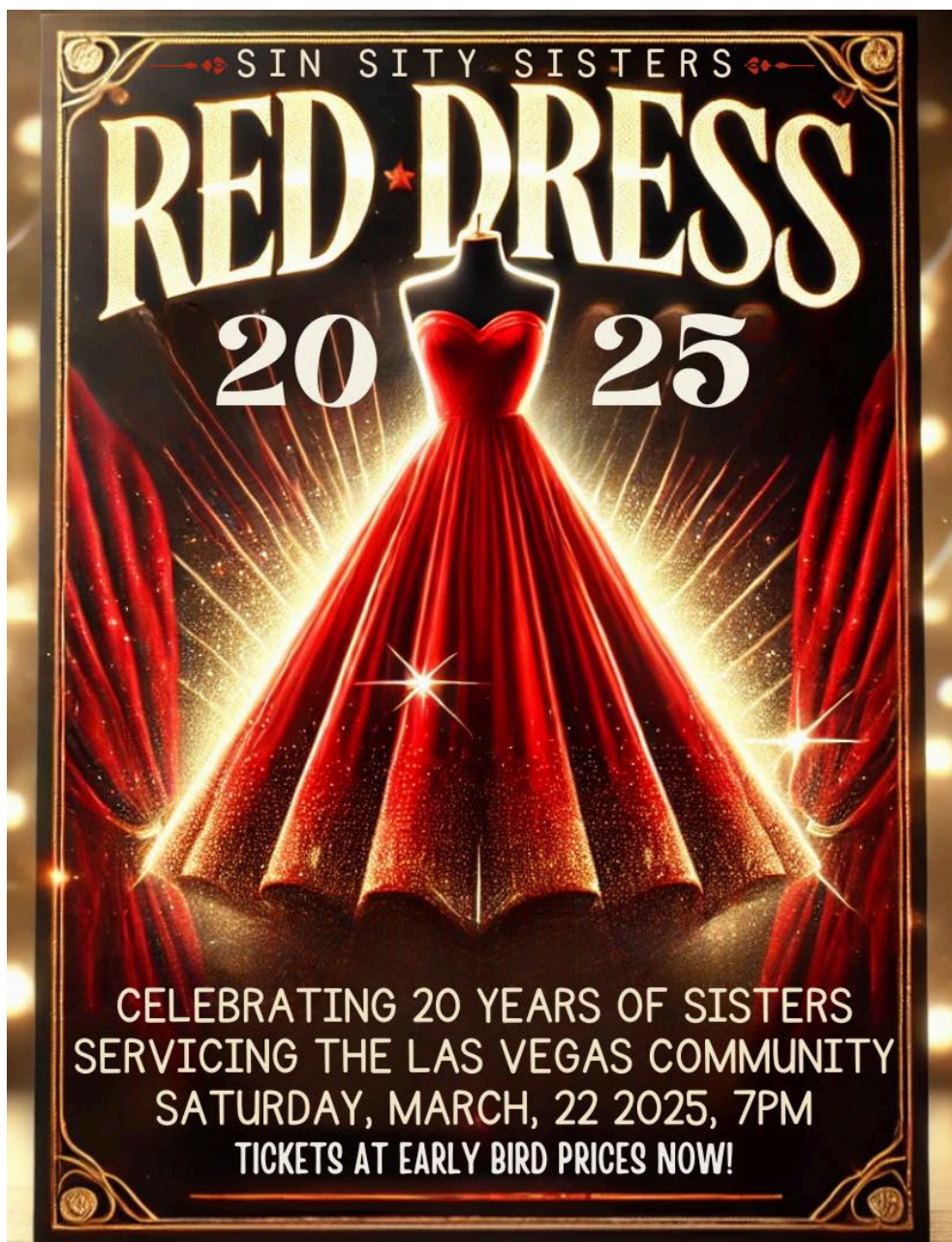
THE PRIDE TREE
thepridetree.lv.com

SILVER STATE EQUALITY
silverstateequality.org

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snapiqs.org

YOUNG: EQUAL
youngequal.org

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HIV Resources

AID FOR AIDS OF NEVADA (AFAN)
afanlv.org

AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (AHF)
aidshealth.org

FARABI WELLNESS CENTER
hpvlv.com

GOLDEN RAINBOW
goldenrainbow.org

HORIZON RIDGE WELLNESS CLINIC
hrc.lv.org

SIN CITY SISTERS OF PERPETUAL INDULGENCE
sinsitysisters.org



STI Testing

THE ARLENE COOPER COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
thecenterlv.org

AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (AHF)
aidshealth.org

HUNTRIDGE FAMILY CLINIC
huntridgefamilyclinic.org

SOUTHERN NEVADA HEALTH DISTRICT
southernnevadahealthdistrict.org

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