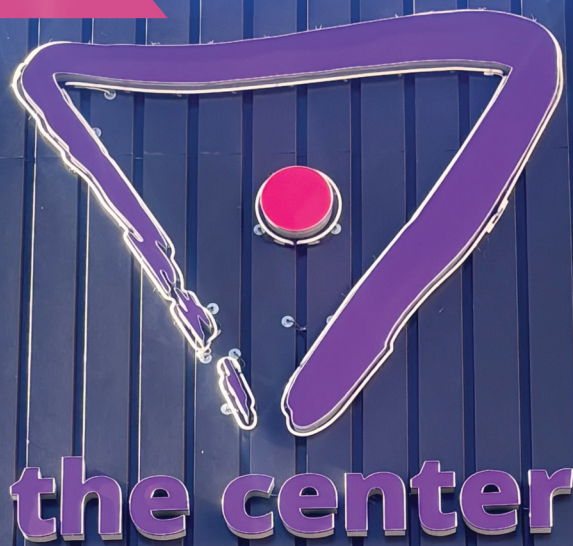


AMPLIFYING LGBTQ+ VOICES SINCE 1978

OCTOBER
1-7, 2025

VEGAS

SPECIAL EDITION



OCTOBER 3 RIBBON CUTTING

GAVIN J. GOORJIAN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER



Photo: James Smith/TheActivity

With a proud publishing legacy that dates back to 1978, QVegas has been at the heart of Las Vegas' LGBTQ+ community for over four decades. What began as a grassroots newsletter has evolved into a dynamic weekly publication that informs, celebrates, and amplifies queer voices across Southern Nevada. QVegas is available in print at over 30 LGBTQ+ establishments, community nonprofits, and partner advertiser locations, making it a vital part of the local scene.

Beyond the printed page, QVegas connects with readers through a robust digital presence—on the web, across all major social media platforms, in our dedicated iOS app, and through weekly email blasts that keep the community in the know. Our coverage spans nightlife, entertainment, politics, health, advocacy, and the everyday stories that make up the diverse LGBTQ+ experience in Las Vegas.

As an advertiser-supported publication, QVegas is the most effective way to reach LGBTQ+ locals and visitors alike—offering unparalleled access to one of the city's most loyal and engaged audiences. In an era where equality rights are under attack nationwide, QVegas stands as a strong and unwavering community partner, committed to visibility, representation, and celebrating the power of queer voices.



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Together for Las Vegas Health: QVegas Honors The Center's Lifesaving Work

For more than two decades, QVegas has had the privilege of standing shoulder-to-shoulder with The Center—showing up at events, rallies, vigils, health fairs, galas, as we amplify community messages, and celebrating the everyday wins that keep our community thriving. This week, as we mark the ribbon cutting of the Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center, that partnership feels more meaningful than ever.

From the earliest days of HIV testing and peer support to today's integrated model of primary care, sexual health, HIV treatment and prevention, and gender-affirming services, The Center has never wavered from a simple promise: everyone deserves compassionate, culturally competent care. That promise is now embodied on the second floor at 921 S. Las Vegas Blvd., where a welcoming clinic meets people where they are—whether they're seeking PrEP, managing chronic conditions, or simply ready for a checkup with a provider who understands them.

Partnership, to us, has always meant more than sharing logos. It means sharing responsibility. It means lending our pages, our microphones, and our effort to the work of saving lives and expanding access. It means celebrating leaders—like the clinicians, coordinators, and operations teams whose names may never make headlines, but whose dedication turns a

good idea into a daily reality for thousands of Nevadans.

We're proud to help tell this story because it's our story too. Our readers are your patients and volunteers, your donors and advocates, your neighbors and friends. We've grown together, learned together, and pushed together for a city where inclusive care is the default—not the exception.

To every staff member, provider, volunteer, donor, and patient who helped bring this health center to life: thank you. Thank you for your courage, your steadfast optimism, and your relentless insistence that dignity is non-negotiable. QVegas is honored to keep showing up—covering the breakthroughs, spotlighting the unsung heroes, and making sure that anyone who picks up this magazine knows exactly where to turn for affirming care.

Here's to the next twenty years—and to a healthier, kinder, more connected Las Vegas.



Russ White & Garrett Pattiani
Publishers, QVegas & QLife Media



View this week's horoscopes at qvegas.com/horoscopes-are-a-drag.

LIBRA

OCTOBER 2025

Hello, darlings! Gather 'round and let me tell you a little tale in my fabulous flair! Imagine a world where your inner sparkle ignites every room you sashay into. Gorgeous gowns and dazzling jewels—your armor. Laughter and love, your weapons of choice. Honey, you're not just living life; you're owning it, with every fierce strut and playful wink. So go ahead, embrace your fabulous self, and remember, the world is your stage, baby!



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5 PM

5:00 PM | GIPSY PRE-SHOW with MIKALAH GORDON & ESTEVAN VELASCO

6:30 PM | RUSSELL NIELSON

6:45 PM | RIBBON CUTTING

7 PM

7:00 PM | ESTEVAN VELASCO & THE SHOW KIDS

7:10 PM | DJ MIKE SKLARZ

7:40 PM | LAS VEGAS MEN'S CHORUS

7:55 PM | SOPHIA KENNEDY & LEXUS CHANDELIER

8 PM

8:10 PM | BEARONCÉ BEAR

8:20 PM | SUNSHINE

8:30 PM | DEREK DANIELS & THE ATMOSFIERCE ENTERTAINERS

8:45 PM | NICKY SATURN

9 PM

9:00 PM | PALOMA MAKARY

9:10 PM | THE MEN OF PIRANHA

9:20 PM | FANTASIA ROYALE GAGA

9:30 PM | ONE MAGICAL WKND/BEAR JAMBOREE TICKET GIVEAWAY

9:45 PM | YARA SOFIA

10 PM

10:00 PM | MIRAGE

10:15 PM | THE CAST OF PIRANHA

10:30 PM | ALEXIS MATEO

10:40 PM | WILLAM

10:50 PM | BROOKE LYNN HYTES

11 PM

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Born in our bars and theaters, raised by our nonprofits and night crews, **QVegas** is the hometown publication for Las Vegas' LGBTQ+ community. We celebrate neighborhood legends, new stages, and the everyday wins that make this city feel like home.

Beginning in October, QVegas will move to a bi-weekly production schedule: the same great stories, the same distribution, and even more local flair, now with a two-week shelf life for each issue.

Landing at Harry Reid's baggage claim and select city spots,

QVegas Arrivals is your first friendly guide to LGBTQ+ Las Vegas—shows, dining, nightlife, and community picks curated by the people who live here.



QVegas Arrivals is a tourism-forward publication debuting at Harry Reid International Airport (Terminal 1 baggage claim information kiosks) and select locations across the city. Both editions will be available online, on social media, via email, and in the QVegas iOS and Vision Pro apps.

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A close-up photograph of two men kissing. The man on the left has a beard and is wearing a white shirt. The man on the right is shirtless. They are both looking down and smiling. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

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Welcome to the Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center!



YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Welcome to this special issue of QVegas, dedicated to the Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center—a new home for care, dignity, and possibility in Southern Nevada. This center embodies what our community does best: we look out for one another, we innovate, and we make space where everyone is seen and served.

From primary care and HIV prevention/treatment to mental health support and compassionate services for aging LGBTQ+ adults, the Goorjian Center stands as a one-stop hub that meets people where they are. It's a place built by neighbors for neighbors—clinicians, advocates, and volunteers who believe health is not a privilege, but a promise.

In these pages, you'll meet the leaders and caregivers shaping that promise every day. You'll read how evidence-based medicine meets radical empathy; how long-acting prevention expands choice; how culturally competent care lowers barriers; and how small, consistent acts of kindness change outcomes—and lives.

We dedicate this issue to the patients who trust, the providers who show up, and the partners who make it possible. May the Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center remind us that the strongest pulse of Las Vegas isn't on the Strip—it's in the people who choose to care. Welcome.



CLASSROOM



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LOBBY



RAINBOW HALLWAY



FIRST FLOOR LOBBY

Gavin Jacob Goorjian (October 14, 1983 – May 16, 2022) was a Las Vegas-born advocate, philanthropist, and community connector whose legacy now anchors life-changing services for Southern Nevada's LGBTQ+ community. Remembered for his generosity and energy, Gavin served on the board of The LGBTQ+ Center of Southern Nevada and championed programs that paired dignity with access—healthcare, prevention, mental-health support, and everyday resources delivered with respect. After his passing in 2022, The Center honored his impact by naming its second healthcare site the Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center, expanding inclusive primary care, gender-affirming care, and HIV treatment in downtown Las Vegas.

Gavin believed visibility should be matched by tangible help. That continues through his estate gifts, which have powered local care and national advocacy. In 2024, The Center announced a major donation from Gavin's estate tied to the launch of the health center that bears his name—support that helped accelerate operations and outreach to those most in need. In parallel, the Human Rights Campaign celebrated a historic bequest—one of the largest of its kind—dedicated to advancing the rights and dignity of LGBTQ+ people nationwide. That gift established a future-facing fund to strengthen organizing, protections, and inclusion across the country.

Rooted in multigenerational Las Vegas families, Gavin's life reflected deep loyalty to community and service. Friends and family remember a charismatic spirit with "old-soul" warmth—someone who showed up, listened, and moved projects from idea to impact. Those personal qualities, noted in memorial tributes, continue to echo in the programs his philanthropy sustains.

Today, the health center that bears his name welcomes patients regardless of background or identity, offering primary and gynecological care, pharmacy access, and walk-in support—practical, affirming care that embodies Gavin's convictions. The momentum has been amplified by local partners who helped The Center expand reach and double visitors in the months after opening. Together, they demonstrate how one person's vision can mobilize institutions to meet the moment.

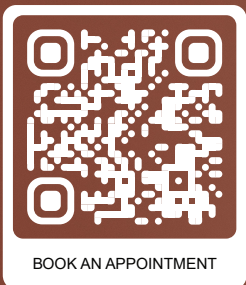
Gavin J. Goorjian's story is ultimately about love put to work—about turning compassion into infrastructure, and memory into a mandate. His legacy lives in every appointment booked, every barrier lowered, and every neighbor who finds care close to home.

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A WALK IN THE PARCS



“Our goal is simple: reduce every barrier between a person and their care.”

“If You Walk In the Door, You Get Seen”: Dr. Jerry Cade on Four Decades of Care, Courage, and Community

Jerry Cade laughs when he calls himself “the chief healthcare informatics officer, but nobody knows what that is.” Titles aside, he is the medical director at the Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center, and for more than four decades he has been one of Southern Nevada’s most steadfast clinicians and advocates. His Las Vegas story began almost by accident—an obligation that turned into a calling.

“I owed the Public Health Service two years for medical school,” he remembers. “They paid for the last two years, and the quid pro quo was you’ll go to an underserved area. In my mind, that was going to be some middle-of-nowhere place.” Instead, in 1981, he flew to Nevada for the first time and signed a contract to work in North Las Vegas at a clinic serving primarily Latino patients. “They needed a bilingual physician by October 1, 1981, or the clinic would close,” he says. “I speak Spanish. So I came in September to sign the contract.”

The urgency was real. “Just to put it in perspective,” he adds, “the new president, Ronald Reagan, cut the Public Health Service budget in half.” Cade finished his two-year commitment, completed another internship at UMC, opened a private practice in 1984, and fully expected to return to Los Angeles—a city he loved. But history intervened.

The HIV Awakening

“In 1984, we started seeing the smoldering of HIV cases,” Cade says. “August 29, 1985 is when we began the HIV program at UMC. We hit the 40-year mark this past August.” That milestone—forty years—frames much of his perspective. “Nobody was doing it,” he says of HIV care at the time. “And to the credit of Southern Nevada, our community did a better job than almost anywhere I looked at taking

care of people with HIV.”

He credits local media and civic leadership with helping Las Vegas respond with compassion rather than panic. “Gary Waddell and Paula Francis did this little thing on the news, and we looked at it intellectually instead of from this big emotional place,” he recalls. “The county commissioners supported the HIV program. We did not go through that horrible thing that a lot of other places did.”

Was Las Vegas’ response shaped by its entertainment workforce? “Perhaps,” he allows. “My first three patients with HIV were all people from the Strip. That may be why there was increased sensitivity or commitment to making sure our community was well taken care of.”

Mentors, Memory, and the Making of a Physician-Advocate

When asked about early mentors, Cade pauses over the name of a friend whose life and death still guide him. “Jack Rutledge, an MD-JD from Duke, brilliant guy, president of the medical student association,” Cade says. “He died of AIDS in 1987. We only knew each other ten years, but I learned more from him than from anyone else. I still think about him every day.”

It’s not nostalgia; it’s compass. That decade of shared activism helped shape Cade’s insistence on turning outrage into outcomes, systems into solutions, and policies into the kind of practical care that meets people where they are.

What the AIDS Era Still Teaches

“The early days of HIV taught me that if you’re doing the right thing and taking care of the healthcare needs of human beings, eventually most people are really nice,” Cade says. He’s quick to note that the noise

of extremes—“senators like Jesse Helms or the Reverend Jerry Falwell saying HIV was God’s curse,” on one side, and the righteous fury of ACT UP on the other—drew headlines. “But most people fall way in the middle,” he insists.

That conviction informs how he talks to and about today’s transgender community. “Having lived through the AIDS crisis, I tell my wonderful transgender friends and patients: this too will pass,” he says. “It’s just a matter of time and generations before everybody realizes it’s silly to try to make somebody be something they don’t want to be, or keep somebody from being who they are. That’s the point of this country—freedom means you can make choices, even if others think they’re bad. It’s still your choice.”

In characteristic Cade fashion, he drops a history nugget with a grin. “We’re coming up on the sesquicentennial of the Declaration of Independence—250 years next July,” he says, savoring the word. “I like that word. Sesquicentennial.”

Why This Health Center, Why Now

The Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center exists because access to respectful, affirming, comprehensive care remains uneven, especially for LGBTQIA+ people and low-income Nevadans. “We solved several problems,” Cade says, “but the overarching one is access. We see people regardless of ability to pay. You walk in our front door, we figure out a way to see you.”

He’s blunt about the broader truth. “Despite your cultural beliefs or who you are, the big deal is being poor. The overarching prejudice is being poor,” he says. “We have insurance specialists who work to get you on Medicaid. We have grant funding to help get you on HIV therapy. We don’t turn anyone away.”

Care here is also culturally competent and unflinchingly practical. Cade notes, with a mix of humor and exasperation, how often patients’ lived realities went unaddressed elsewhere. “I can’t tell you the number of gay men with rectal problems whose doctor never wanted to address it,” he says. “We saw that with HIV, too. Here, we talk about what needs talking about.”

And his delight in working with transgender patients is unmistakable. “Not to offend my other patients, but my transgender patients have become some of my favorites,” he says, laughing. “They’re very entertaining. They keep me laughing all day long, and that helps me.”

What’s on Site—and How to Choose a Clinic

The Las Vegas Boulevard clinic is a full-service, primary care hub. “This is internal-medicine-oriented primary care,” Cade explains. “One of our nurse practitioners specializes in women’s health, so we have a reproductive health clinic. We all do that work, but she’s incredibly good. And of course, we offer HIV services. We work with

Ryan White to ensure you get your medications.”

The Center’s Marilyn Parkway site remains the sexual health specialist. “We still have the clinic on Marilyn Parkway—Arlene Cooper—and that focus is where it’s always been: STIs and sexual health,” he says. “You can meet your sexual health needs at Las Vegas Boulevard as well, but the Marilyn Parkway clinic is designed for that specialty care.”

So which clinic should you choose? “Las Vegas Boulevard is all-inclusive,” Cade says. “Marilyn Parkway is intentionally focused on sexual health. But you’ll be taken care of in either place.”

Care That Comes to You: The Mobile Clinic

One of the Center’s most exciting expansions is on wheels. “We bought a van,” Cade says, delighted. “We now have a mobile clinic. Our goal is to reduce any barrier to healthcare. There are people who are never going to come to our clinic—rural Nevadans, the unhoused population, people living in the tunnels. So we will go to them.”

This isn’t a pop-up table under a tent. “It’s a nice van,” he says. “You can draw blood. It’s got an exam room. You’ve got privacy—pull a curtain, it’s you and the provider. Then you get your blood drawn. We’re getting a dispensing license, so you can get medications. It’s a one-stop shop, basically, except for X-rays.”

What’s Next: Expanding Services

The October 3 ribbon cutting marks a public celebration of a clinic that’s already humming. “We had a soft opening July 3 of last year,” Cade says. “We have four nurse practitioners and me, and we’re seeing 700 patients a month. We haven’t even begun to advertise.”

Some expansions are already underway. “We started our behavioral health and addiction program a few months ago; that’s growing,” he says. “The Chris Ingle Set has bought a mammogram unit. We’re adding a DEXA scan. We’ll eventually have basic dental care. For our unhoused patients, we have lockers so belongings don’t get stolen, and showers. A lot of these are almost there—but not quite.”

He’s candid about one challenge: parking. “The one downside here is the parking,” he admits. “So rather than a huge grand opening, we’re doing a ribbon cutting with RSVP, showing you the clinic, making sure everyone can actually park.”

Telehealth, Hours, and the Real Life of Access

Telehealth is already woven into the clinic’s fabric. “We have scheduled telehealth visits—mostly done by our nurse practitioners,” Cade says. After-hours access is a near-term frontier. “It’s still on the back burner,” he acknowledges. “We’re open a bunch of hours now—Marilyn Parkway is 8 to 6 Monday through Friday,

and 8 to 4 on Saturday. The intention is to expand those hours so ‘after hours’ isn’t much of a thing.”

In other words, the plan is simple: make it easy to be seen.

The Patient Experience: “The Happiest Clinic I’ve Ever Been In”

Cade’s favorite review came from a friend who dreads doctors’ visits. “He came in, and then told all our friends: ‘That’s the happiest clinic I’ve ever been in,’” Cade says, smiling. “Tell that to a nervous first-timer. Most people feel pretty comfortable because all of us like to talk. We are genuinely happy that you come in. It’s still exciting for us to have people walk through the door.”

When asked how this clinic is different for people who’ve had bad experiences elsewhere, Cade doesn’t hesitate. “More times than not, bad experiences happen because people didn’t get listened to,” he says. “If you listen carefully, you can pick up what somebody really needs. We will not ignore you.”

Health Equity, Defined by the Doorway

“What does health equity mean to me? It’s what we do,” Cade says. “If you walk in the door, you get seen.” He knows the list of communities historically shortchanged by healthcare is long—women included. He also knows the Center’s patient mix reflects the city as it is. “We have a lot of white men too,” he says with a chuckle. “Whoever you are, you walk in, you get seen.”

He points to social determinants of health as both a current focus and an old lesson. “I want to write a book about how HIV predicted the social determinants of health,” he says. “We didn’t talk about it in the early days, but we lived it. Gay men and injection drug users lost their families. Healthcare often depends on that support system, so we had to recreate family. One of the early drugs had to be refrigerated—if you’re unhoused, that’s a problem. All those issues people now pay attention to? We had no choice but to address them then.”

Nevada’s Gaps—and Why the Clinic Is Busy

Cade is pragmatic about policy. “There’s a lack of funding in Nevada,” he says. “I just saw a ranking that put Nevada at 45 out of 51 (including D.C.) in quality of healthcare. We’ve done Medicaid expansion, but we’re still 45. That tells you there are a lot of gaps—especially rural healthcare.”

That reality helps explain why the clinic is bustling even before advertising. “I think we’re awesome and people love to see us,” he says, “but I also think there’s just not enough healthcare. If you live 70 miles from Las Vegas, transportation alone is a barrier. That’s why the mobile clinic matters.”

He’s mindful that public funding—particularly federal grants—can be volatile. “Federal grants are under attack,” he says. “That would hurt us, but it wouldn’t destroy

us, because we have other funding, including private grants and clinic revenue. Diversifying support is part of our resilience.”

Busting Myths About LGBTQ Healthcare

“The myth to retire? That LGBTQ healthcare is somehow exotic,” Cade says. “It’s healthcare. You just have to be willing to explore a few more options and ask the questions that need asking. That’s it.”

It’s the same ethos that shaped the early HIV response: curiosity over judgment, listening over assumptions, and an insistence on seeing the person in front of you.

The Staff, the Spark, and the Long Game

Cade is plainly proud of his team. “We have an enthusiastic, inspired staff,” he says. “My question is how do we make sure they stay inspired? All of us can get inspired about something new, like a new partner in the first year. Then it becomes routine. We need to figure out how to get beyond that.”

Even in that challenge, he sounds content in the best possible way. “What’s the moment I’ll know we did this right?” he repeats. “I’m already pretty happy. Not that we’re going to stop working harder, but we’re seeing 700 patients a month on a soft opening. That’s pretty good.”

A Doctor of the Community

“I love seeing patients. Patients keep me going. They’re entertaining. I hear cool stories all day, and it never gets old to walk in, sit down, and ask, ‘What’s going on?’”

As the Center prepares for its ribbon cutting on October 3, 2025, Cade’s invitation is clear and personal. “Please come join us,” he says. “If we’re not doing what you expect, let us know. We want your feedback. And I like the line my friend said—I want it to be the happiest clinic you’ve ever been at.”

The Promise Behind the Ribbon

The Goorjian Community Health Center represents the intersection of memory and momentum: the lessons of the AIDS era, the realities of today’s Nevada, and a future built around simple, radical commitments. “If you walk in the door, you get seen,” Cade says. The rest—telehealth, mobile care, expanded services, hours that meet people’s lives—flows from there.

It’s the kind of promise you can feel when you step into a space where clinicians love to talk, patients feel welcome, and a doctor who meant to be here for two years is still showing up, forty years later, with a grin, a story, and a seat pulled out for you.



“We don’t want you to just stay alive. We want you to thrive.”

“Empathy Lives Here”: Dr. Leana Ramirez on Building Care Without Barriers at the Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center

The first thing you notice when you step into the new Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center isn’t a stethoscope or a clipboard. It’s warmth. The lobby feels like a neighborhood café—sunlit, welcoming, a place where people linger, charge their phones, and exhale. That’s not an accident; it’s a clinical strategy. “Dignity is clinical care,” says Dr. Leana Ramirez, the Center’s Chief Clinical Officer. “We want a beautiful space for our community. Not cracked chairs and clutter. When you feel seen the moment you arrive, the healing starts earlier.”

Ramirez is a pharmacist by training and a 14-year veteran of HIV care who rose to leadership the way so many great stories start in Las Vegas—by showing up when the lights were dimming. During COVID, when much of the world went remote, she went the other direction. “I’m not a work-from-home kind of girl,” she says with a laugh. “The Center was one of the only clinics still open offering HIV testing. I started volunteering, helped stand up the PrEP protocols, and it just snowballed. I fell in love with the culture and the mission.” Today, alongside CEO John Waldron and a team she calls “fearless, fun, and absolutely obsessed with meeting people where they’re at,” Ramirez is reshaping what accessible, stigma-free healthcare looks like in Southern Nevada.

> “We don’t provide barriers—we provide access,” she says. “That’s the whole point.”

From Volunteer to Vision

The engine of her work is not a policy so much as a posture. It’s the inclination to slide a box of tissues across the desk at exactly the right time. That tiny act, she confesses, came from her own painful afternoon. “Not long ago I was at a doctor’s office, sobbing while trying to schedule a

follow-up, and the person on the other side of the counter was just... clinical. If they had handed me a tissue, it would’ve changed everything. So we made that part of our standard here. The small things matter.”

Her path from volunteer to chief clinical officer reads like improvisational jazz performed during a power outage. The problems were immediate—pandemic protocols, testing infrastructure, medication access—and the solutions required speed and creativity. “We built as we went and focused on what the community needed that day,” she says. “And then the next day. And the next.” What kept her going was the joy of the work. “I love people. I love community. We get the chance every single day to change someone’s life.” She pauses, then adds, “And yes, we have a lot of fun doing it. It’s a loving place to work.”

A Las Vegas Lens

Las Vegas sharpens every clinical edge. The city’s brutal heat, housing instability, transportation hurdles, and historically poor health outcomes make access fragile. Ramirez doesn’t waste time sugarcoating it. “Our healthcare numbers are terrible,” she says bluntly. “So my job—and John’s job—is to make sure patients don’t have to think about money or red tape. Insured or not, you get care. We go find the funds. We solve for access.”

That clarity shows up in the design of services and the choreography of the patient journey, where compassion is engineered at every step. Front-desk staff greet patients by name. Providers pull their chairs closer. Clinicians translate options into plain language. “We want people to feel like they’re visiting a relative,” Ramirez says. “Stop by the café bar, look out the window, plug in your phone. We’re building an extension of home.”

Lessons from the Early HIV Era

Ramirez came of age professionally when HIV treatment often meant hard bargains. “We had to choose which side effects we could live with because we didn’t have options,” she recalls. “Those regimens kept us alive but didn’t let us live.” That memory is a compass. “Now I love being able to tell a patient, ‘You don’t even have to take a pill every day if that’s not right for you.’ We’re not making people settle anymore.”

She never forgets the debt owed to those who went first. “We were our own guinea pigs. We learned together. So when I talk with patients, I focus on education and agency. The goal is to help you become your own healthcare advocate. We don’t want you to just stay alive—we want you to thrive.”

Credentials with a Purpose

Ramirez wears an alphabet of credentials—AAHIVP through the American Academy of HIV Medicine and CSP as a Certified Specialty Pharmacist—but she treats them as tools, not trophies. “It’s not about letters; it’s about leverage,” she says. “It means I understand the meds that aren’t at every corner pharmacy. It means I know how to navigate assistance programs, adherence challenges, and side effects. Those are daily wins for our patients.”

Her pharmacist’s mindset also drives a signature policy: pharmacist-led PrEP. “I’m proud we’ve trained pharmacists statewide to prescribe and manage PrEP,” she says. “More qualified touchpoints means more protected people. It’s simple math that saves lives.”

Building the Goorjian Center

The Goorjian Center didn’t spring from nowhere; it grew out of the Arlene Cooper Wellness Center, a proof-of-concept that quickly became a lifeline. “From January to December, we logged over 2,700 encounters in just six months,” Ramirez recalls. “That number is humbling. It told us exactly how much need was out there.”

What the Goorjian Center adds is scale and depth. The model is straightforward: one door, whole-person care. Primary care sits alongside gender-affirming services and an on-site pharmacy. Showers and laundry are available. Behavioral health is integrated. Diagnostic capacity expands with mammography and DEXA scanning. “I’m particularly excited about DEXA,” Ramirez says. “In HIV care, everyone talks about bone density. Now we’ll baseline it, track it, and publish what we learn. In five years, I want to share real data on what improves outcomes.”

Transformational philanthropy made the dream concrete. A \$3.5 million bequest from Gavin J. Goorjian enabled the purchase of the building; a \$2.2 million grant from the Helmsley Charitable Trust equipped it. Ramirez puts it plainly: “Goorjian let us buy it; Helmsley let us outfit it. Now we’re back even—and ready to



MOBILE MEDICAL CLINIC

Healthcare for All

The new mobile health clinic will play a crucial role in filling care gaps and addressing persistent disparities at a moment when federal funding for HIV prevention, affirming care, and LGBTQ+ mental health resources is under attack. Nearly 90% of Nevada's new HIV diagnoses occur in Clark County, disproportionately impacting Black and Latino gay and bi men, and nearly half of LGBTQ+ youth in the state report seriously considering suicide while struggling to access affirming care.

scale care."

Quality, Safety, and the Discipline of 100 Percent

If the Goorjian Center's heart is empathy, its spine is rigor. "We might be building the airplane in the air," Ramirez says with a grin, "but safety and customer service are non-negotiable." The Center runs continuous internal audits, invests in staff training, and treats every error as a systems-level opportunity to improve. The discipline shows up in the receipts: three straight years of external audits with 100 percent compliance and zero findings.

"That's how you earn the right to innovate—by proving the basics," she explains. "Small, measurable changes that stick. That's how excellence is built."

Training is exhaustive by design. Staff don't touch a chart—or a patient—without what Ramirez jokingly calls "five million trainings," from HIPAA and blood-borne pathogens to deep cultural competence. "Pronouns, preferred names, LGBTQ+ clinical nuances—it's not a checkbox," she says. "It has to live in the body. If you're 99 percent right in that room, you failed one person, and that's one too many."

Why an LGBTQ+-Focused Clinic—Here and Now

The case for an LGBTQ+-focused clinic in 2025 isn't rhetorical; it's epidemiological. "The data are clear: our community faces unique barriers in healthcare," Ramirez says. "We are The Center. We are the community. If we can't deliver excellence in LGBTQ+ care, who will?" Representation in the exam room matters, and so does relevance. "I don't need a pregnancy test if I don't have sex with men," she offers, matter-of-factly. "Care has to fit lives as they are."

The built environment carries the same intentionality. "I wanted the lobby to feel like a coffee shop where you could sit next to a neighbor, or stare out the window and catch your breath," she says. "These are not decorative choices. They are clinical interventions against stigma and anxiety."

Prepared for the Next Emergency

The pandemic left scars—and a blueprint. The Center now maintains on-site pharmacy capacity, stocks basics like masks and gloves, and operates telehealth crisis booths to stabilize patients who arrive in acute distress. "If someone is in crisis and we can't manage it entirely on site, we can put them in a safe space immediately and connect them to the care they need," Ramirez explains. "Speed, safety, dignity. That's the order."

Security is handled with the same seriousness. "We're a health center. No one is getting into medical records, period," she says. On-site safety protocols cover both Goorjian and Cooper locations. "People need to feel safe when they arrive, and they need to be safe while they're here."

Culture, in One Word: Loving

Asked to distill the clinic's culture into a single word, Ramirez doesn't reach for jargon. "Loving," she says simply. "Empathy lives here." You can hear it in the way she describes the front desk remembering your name, or a provider moving a chair closer so you don't feel alone, or a pharmacist lingering to answer one last question. "These are little things that add up to big things. We want people to feel like this is home."

Mentors, in her telling, include everyone from the CEO to the patient receiving a routine injection. "I'm influenced by leaders and by the person sitting across from me who's doing something brave for the first time," she says. "It's a shared and caring environment. That's the goal."

Metrics That Matter

If there is a dashboard light Ramirez wants glowing green, it's customer service. "If 100 percent is possible, I want 200 percent," she says without irony. Access to care is its twin obsession. "We will refer you elsewhere if that's what you need. We will help you navigate the system. As long as you know we're here, you'll never go without options."

That extends to the most vulnerable moments. "Sometimes the most clinical

thing you can do is pull up a chair and listen," she says. "Sometimes it's handing over a tissue. We build those moments into our training because they are healthcare."

What She Wants the Nervous First-Timer to Hear

Ramirez aims her final message directly to the person who is hesitating. "Just come in," she says, warm and direct. "I promise you won't regret it."

She knows that walking through the door is often the hardest step. That's why the door is so deliberately easy to find—and so intentionally kind to cross. "We don't want you to feel like a problem to be solved," she says. "We want you to feel like a person who belongs."

The Work Ahead

The Goorjian Center opens with a clear mandate: turn access into outcomes. Over the next five years, Ramirez plans to publish data on bone health, adherence, and preventive care across populations that have been sidelined by the traditional system. "We're going to put numbers behind the things we know in our bones," she says—no pun intended. "Then we'll teach others how to replicate it."

There's an audacity in that ambition, the kind of audacity Las Vegas understands. Build the airplane in the air, but keep the rivets tight. Scale love without diluting it. Measure what matters, then measure it again. "We're not trying to reinvent healthcare just to be clever," Ramirez says. "We're doing it because people deserve better."

What began with a volunteer shift in a dark season has become a blueprint for brighter days. The lights at the Goorjian Center are fully on now, and the room is filling. Ramirez looks around and sees more than a clinic. She sees a promise being kept.

As the ribbon is cut on October 3, the message is simple and profound: empathy lives here. And for a city that knows a thing or two about making people feel welcome, that may be the most Vegas medicine of all.



“I want people to feel empowered, in control of their health and their destiny.”

“You’re safe with me.” : Nurse Practitioner Thomas McNeil Puts Older LGBTQ+ Adults at the Center of Care

When nurse practitioner Thomas McNeil talks about his work at the LGBTQ Center of Southern Nevada, the first thing you hear is gratitude. “I joined the Center in October 2023, and it’s honestly been a dream ever since,” he says. After nearly a decade in healthcare—much of it in the intensity of the ICU—McNeil stepped into primary care with a purpose: to offer affirming, comprehensive medicine to adults, with a special commitment to older LGBTQ+ patients. “I knew I wanted to work with adults, and I really wanted to focus on the aging population,” he explains. “All too often, they’re overlooked.”

That focus isn’t just an abstract mission statement. It’s a daily practice of listening, careful screening, and building trust. “Every patient is safe with me,” McNeil says. “Nothing leaves the four walls. I want people to feel empowered, in control of their health and their destiny.”

Why Gerontology Matters—Especially Here

For many LGBTQ+ people, aging carries a unique set of challenges. “One of the experiences too many older LGBTQ adults face is loneliness,” McNeil notes. “We ask, what happens when we get older if we don’t have kids? Who is our support?” He’s candid about the consequences of that isolation—delayed care, missed screenings, and the quiet normalization of pain or fear. His response is to widen the circle, clinically and culturally. “We need to meet the needs of the community at all ages—not just pediatrics or young adults, but truly across the lifespan.”

McNeil chose adult-gerontology because he understands how identity, history, and health intersect. “Our dynamics and lifestyles are a little different as we get older,” he says. “Comprehensive care

means acknowledging that difference and planning for it.”

Sexual Health Over 50: Still Here, Still Vital

If there’s a topic McNeil wants to put squarely on the table, it’s sexual health for older adults. “People still have sex. People still want to enjoy themselves,” he says with a warm smile. “It’s a conversation that too many providers overlook.” He emphasizes HIV awareness, safer sex practices, and newer tools like PrEP and doxycycline post-exposure prophylaxis. “A lot of these resources weren’t discussed or accessible for prior generations,” he explains. “There’s still stigma—and there’s tremendous opportunity for education.”

That education is practical. “I talk to everyone about sexual health,” he says. “How to have fun and also be safe. It’s not judgment; it’s empowerment.”

The Screenings That Save Lives

At the Center’s new clinic, sexual health services are robust and integrated. “We can address sexual health in both clinics, but the newer location gives us more resources for comprehensive testing and, in some cases, treatment,” McNeil says. For patients with prostates, he highlights evolving guidelines. “It’s less about the digital rectal exam now and more about PSA as an important marker,” he explains.

He’s equally direct about colorectal and anal health. “HPV is a big topic for us,” he says. “Historically, screening wasn’t comprehensive across all populations, and guidelines have changed many times.” Today, the clinic routinely screens for anal HPV, especially for those at higher risk. “If you’re positive, annual screening is key. For the general public, I tell folks—get screened at least once so you know your status and risk factors.” He underscores the

rising rates of colorectal and anal cancers in midlife and beyond, noting that high-risk HPV variants can increase those risks.

Beyond sexual health, McNeil advocates a full panel approach to primary care: cholesterol, thyroid, A1C, and hormone checks when indicated. He orders PSA tests, facilitates gastroenterology referrals or Cologuard based on patient preference, and screens for lung cancer where appropriate. “If you’ve smoked a pack a day for 15 years and you’re 50 or older, you should be getting an annual chest CT,” he says. All of this sits within a broader risk assessment. “I’m calculating cardiovascular risk scores and thinking across systems,” he adds. “Health is dynamic, and we treat the whole person.”

A First Visit Without Fear

Asked what he’d say to a 68-year-old who hasn’t seen a clinician in years, McNeil doesn’t hesitate. “Hello—and there’s no better time than the present,” he says. “Thank you for coming in. Thank you for trusting me with your health.” He understands why people delay care—stigma, fear of judgment, discomfort discussing private matters with someone outside the community. “My appointments should never be scary,” he says. “You are cared for. You are safe. I’ve seen it all, and I’m here to help.”

Dispelling the Biggest Myth

For McNeil, one persistent myth keeps people away: the idea that providers won’t understand LGBTQ+ experiences. “There’s fear—of not being understood, of asking the wrong question, of being judged,” he says. “Let’s eliminate that fear. I want people to feel empowered to take charge of their health. Let me help facilitate what your success looks like.”

An Open Invitation

McNeil beams when he talks about his colleagues. “Come down and meet us,” he says. “We have amazing providers—Sarah, Chastity, Emily—and of course the legendary Dr. K.” The invitation is simple and sincere: “If you need care, direction, or just have questions about sex, HIV, or what it means to be healthy, let us help you unpack that. The Center is a safe place to go and feel supported—in your personal life and in your health.”

As the Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center opens its doors, McNeil’s message lands with clarity and heart: aging with pride requires care that listens, screens, educates, and welcomes—without judgment, and with unwavering respect. “You’re in control of your health and your destiny,” he says. “I’m here to make sure you have everything you need to thrive.”



“Every single time, anxiety and depression decrease when patients feel affirmed and see themselves in the mirror.”

“Be Seen, Be Heard, Be Human”: Aryanna Lincoln on Front-Desk Dignity and Long-Acting HIV Care

As a kid riding past The Center with her mom on the way to pick up shifts at Sunrise, Aryanna Lincoln made herself a promise. “As a young lesbian, I’d see the building and tell myself, I’m going to work there one day,” she says with a smile. Today, she’s the Clinical Support Coordinator in the primary care clinic at the newly expanded Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center, a role that touches nearly every patient who walks through the door. “I have a few roles,” she explains. “I manage our long-acting injectables—Cabenuva for HIV treatment and Apretude for HIV prevention—and most recently ‘Yes to Go,’ another long-acting PrEP option. We have over 150 patients on injectables now. I also handle prior authorizations and referrals. I try to do it all.”

Lincoln began in healthcare just two years ago at a different clinic’s front desk, working alongside a provider who now practices at The Center. When openings appeared during the Center’s expansion, she transferred to front desk—and kept growing from there. “It’s ever-expanding,” she says. “I’m really excited.”

First Impressions, Lasting Dignity

For Lincoln, what happens at check-in can make or break a patient’s entire experience. “First impressions are so incredibly important,” she emphasizes. “We’re the first faces people see. If the front desk is cold or frustrated, it doesn’t make you feel good about getting your care there.” That’s why the clinic’s lobby is designed to feel less clinical and more communal—chairs are grouped so people face each other, the front desk is open (no sliding windows), and the team’s camaraderie is audible. “You’ll hear laughing and goofing off,” she says. “It mitigates that waiting-room

anxiety.”

The stakes are especially high in HIV and LGBTQ+ care, where stigma can shadow every step of the journey. “I wasn’t super aware of HIV care before I started,” Lincoln says, “but the comments we get—Thank you for treating me like I’m human—are powerful. It’s really important to make people feel seen and respected the second they arrive.”

Designing an Affirming First Visit

The ideal first visit starts up front. “We collect medications, pharmacy preferences, pronouns, sexual history, and do PrEP assessments,” Lincoln explains. “That way, when medical assistants bring patients back, we already know, for example, who’s interested in starting PrEP.” With the grand opening, the clinic’s “all-in-one” model becomes real: in-house lab work, imaging, an on-site pharmacy—everything under one roof. “Ideally, patients get their blood work, imaging, and medications in the same visit,” she says. “We’re becoming a fully rounded clinic.”

When Names and Systems Clash

Affirming care doesn’t stop at the intake screen—it’s encoded in the way the clinic handles names. “We always use the patient’s preferred name,” Lincoln says. “But for insurance, we have to use the legal name on the card. We explain how it will appear in our system and on certain paperwork, and we educate about the ‘why.’” The clinic goes further, partnering with attorney Heidi for legal name changes. “If someone mentions they haven’t changed it yet, we can get them help,” Lincoln adds.

Low Literacy Isn’t a Barrier Here

Lincoln trains staff to ditch the jargon. “You can’t just toss out acronyms and expect people to know their ‘subscriber number,’”

she says. “Some folks have never used insurance. Some don’t know they’re eligible. We approach it with patience. It’s everyone’s first time living.”

Fighting for “Yes” in a World of “Denied”

Prior authorizations are Lincoln’s battlefield. “That’s a rough part of the job,” she admits. “A lot of times the first answer is ‘denied.’ I call and make them explain why. If we meet criteria and it’s still denied, I appeal and schedule peer-to-peer reviews with our providers.” She laughs at her own relentlessness. “What’s my secret weapon? Call them up. I really bother them. Be aggressive.”

When insurance won’t budge, the clinic shields the patient. “We work with our in-house pharmacist, Bobby, on cash pricing,” she says. “And we use samples to bridge gaps—two-week supplies while we push authorizations through. There’s a lot of assistance in the HIV and PrEP world—copay cards and savings programs—and we leverage all of it.”

No One Turned Away

If a patient is uninsured or underinsured, the front desk routes them to support the same day. “We have a Medicaid liaison on site, and many people leave with coverage,” Lincoln says. “If they’re just over the Medicaid threshold, our insurance navigator Katie helps them find plans. We also have agreements that make labs more affordable. A full HRT panel that might cost \$1,000 elsewhere could be around \$100 with us.” For people newly diagnosed or returning to HIV care, the clinic’s Ryan White case manager, Cynthia, ensures continuity and follow-up. “Same-day starts and continuation of care are huge for us,” Lincoln says. “Ending stigma is just as important as ending gaps in treatment.”

What’s Next: “Instant” Mental Health

The expansion includes a full behavioral health floor. “We’ll have therapists, groups, and mental health casework downstairs,” Lincoln says. “It’s not something you commonly see at a primary care clinic— instant mental health.”

Why She Stays

Lincoln answers without hesitation: “We’re trying to be a safe haven for people who don’t feel accepted elsewhere. You’re safe here.” She also wants to normalize what affirmation looks like at the front desk. “If I could standardize one practice across every clinic in Las Vegas? Ask for pronouns—openly and unashamed. Hi, I’m Aryanna; she/her. What are yours?”

And as for the feeling she hopes patients carry out the door? She finishes the sentence the way she always does in training: “Patients should leave our clinic feeling validated.”



“When you walk in, you should feel safe, seen, and uniquely yourself—right down to your name and pronouns.”

“Be Uniquely Yourself”: Veronica Arana on Building a One-Stop LGBTQ+ Clinic for Las Vegas

Veronica Arana didn't begin her career in health care. “Originally I'm from Chicago,” she says. “I moved out here with my family and actually was in food and beverage for a very long time.” Banking followed—along with the promise of big paychecks. “I thought I was gonna be a millionaire... but I found it so unfulfilling. I needed something more, something that really drove my passion.” That “something” turned out to be HIV services, first at a local clinic and now at the Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center, where Arana serves as Director of Clinical Operations. “I'm of the community, I'm a lesbian,” she adds. “It was so important for me to be part of my community and serve my community.”

What began as a career shift became a mission grounded in dignity and precision. “I fell in love with folks who are HIV positive,” she says. “Every service we can possibly give to them drives me to do more. Our mission and vision are instilled in me: it's all about being uniquely yourself.”

What Clinical Operations Looks Like— Human First, Systems Tight

Arana's job centers on making the entire clinic run smoothly. “Every day when I wake up, I know we're going to change a life,” she says. “I don't just talk the talk—I walk the walk.” That shows up in the details patients notice: warm introductions, swift intake, and visible respect for identity. “If someone is going through HRT, we use their pronouns and write them on the bed. If their preferred name is Jason, ‘Jason’ is written there so they feel welcomed.”

Her feedback loop is constant. “I go through surveys to find out how we can better our relationship with patients,” she explains. “Whether something needs to be updated or something new needs to be done, my goal is that people feel safe,

seen, and unique when they walk in.”

The Problem Solved on Day One

Asked to describe the new center's purpose in one sentence, Arana doesn't hesitate: “We are going to be a one-stop shop for our community.”

Why a Dedicated LGBTQ+ Clinic in 2025

For Arana, the need is urgent and practical. “When folks come into a regular primary care where they don't have specifics for our community, it's almost like a specialty,” she says. Misgendering, incorrect pronouns, and a lack of affirmation can erode trust. “When people aren't acknowledged by who they are, it's a disservice. Being LGBTQ-friendly—and welcoming everyone—reduces stigma for all.”

The Ideal First Visit: Seamless, Affirming, Complete

Patients can book by phone or through the website. “Paperwork is sent via text—patients click the link, fill it out, and upload their insurance card and ID,” Arana explains. “When they arrive, they're welcomed, and within five minutes they're with a medical assistant.” Vitals and a needs-based assessment follow—sexual health, mental health, or both—before the provider spends “20 to 30 minutes” on history, assessment, and plans. “Labs get drawn on site, the pharmacy fills medications the same day, and follow-ups are set in two weeks and again in a month,” she says. The point is to simplify care. “People get lost in the system—referrals fall through. Our hope is they can go downstairs for imaging the same day, and we'll have results within hours. It's faster and more efficient.”

What's Under One Roof

The center's footprint spans mental health, primary care, and prevention to diagnostics and pharmacy. “Downstairs we'll have

individual and group therapy,” Arana says. “On the first level, a full pharmacy for the community, dental screenings, aesthetics like laser hair removal and cool sculpting, mammogram, DEXA scan, ultrasound, and a large lab so we can do clinical trials—starting with HIV.” Upstairs, primary care covers chronic conditions, reproductive health, and HRT. “It's a lot of services in one building.”

Language Access That Matches the Valley

Hiring mirrors the community. “We want bilingual staff,” Arana says, but the support doesn't end there. “We use an iPad with MARTI Translation services—including ASL. I don't know the exact number of languages, but we haven't had one person we couldn't translate for.”

Caring for Caregivers: Boundaries, Breathing, and a Zen Room

Burnout is real, and Arana addresses it head-on. “I'm a workaholic,” she admits, “but we have support.” A wellness coach meets with staff, offering practical tools—“taking a deep breath, walking away from the desk.” There's also a Zen Room: greenery, a couch, ambient lighting, crystals. “Sometimes we have to deliver difficult diagnoses,” she says. “I don't want people to take that home. If someone needs a break, they take a break. If they need to go home, I'll tell them: go. Self-care matters.”

Access, Insurance, and Urgent Needs

“We take most insurances,” Arana says. Patients can search for primary care with providers experienced in HRT or HIV care. “Insurances will often call us directly to schedule,” she notes. While not an urgent care, the center holds same-day slots for urgent needs. “We'll never turn anybody away for condition or inability to pay,” she says. “If we can't handle it, we'll stabilize, call an ambulance if needed, and get you where you need to go.”

Community Partnerships that Close Gaps

“Our partnerships are strong,” she says. “UMC has a nurse line—we can get people treated quickly for things like COVID or syphilis. We have a great relationship with the Southern Nevada Health District, too. We know who to call.”

The Metric that Matters Most

For Arana, the north star is responsiveness. “Communication with our patients,” she says. “If you message the portal, call, or email, someone gets back to you as soon as possible—within 24 hours, if not sooner. If it comes down to emailing me directly, I'm happy with that.”

An Open Invitation

“Come see us. Give us a try,” Arana says. “When you enter and go up to the second floor, you know this is a different place—welcoming, not clinical. We're here to help, not judge. We think we're going to blow your mind.”



“Every single time, anxiety and depression decrease when patients feel affirmed and see themselves in the mirror.”

“Affirmed, Validated, Seen”: Nurse Practitioner Emily Browand on Building Care That Meets People Where They Are

“I’ve always been into health,” says nurse practitioner Emily Browand, reflecting on more than twenty years in clinical practice. **“I knew that I wanted to take care of people. I also knew that the marginalized, the underserved communities were where the biggest need is—and that’s been my focus my whole career path.”** For Browand, who practices at The LGBTQ+ Center of Southern Nevada’s new Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center, the journey into LGBTQ+ and HIV care is personal as much as professional. Growing up in the 1980s, her best friend identified as transgender, and the two of them encountered a healthcare world that was **“very challenging, if not impossible altogether”** to navigate. **“I really had a passion for helping others who couldn’t help themselves,”** she says. The memory of doors closed and questions deflected became a promise: **to build the kind of clinic where people are welcomed—fully and immediately—for who they are.**

Why a Dedicated Clinic Matters in 2025

In an era when more clinicians are learning to ask pronouns and discuss sexual health, Browand believes a dedicated center still makes a profound difference. **“There are doctors all over who will know what to say,”** she acknowledges. **“But they’re serving a whole other population as well.”** Here, visibility is the point and the promise. **“What’s really important is having a space where we say this is who we primarily serve. We are visible, so people know they don’t have to fear being misgendered or deadnamed,”** she explains. The experience begins at the door: bright colors, rainbows, and staff trained to welcome, not gatekeep. **“This is a deserving community. We are a deserving community.”**

Making Complex Terms Human-Sized

From PrEP to U=U to newer tools like doxy-PEP, sexual health vocabulary can feel like a maze. Browand’s approach is disarmingly simple: let the patient set the pace. **“If we’re really nervous and don’t know anything about sexual health, let’s navigate that together. Baby steps,”** she says. If a patient arrives with deeper knowledge, she meets them there and builds. The goal is curiosity without overwhelm: **“I encourage and challenge patients to come in with questions. Write them down. Let’s work through them. And if it’s too much for one visit, we table it and pick it up next time.”** She’s still surprised by how many people haven’t heard of interventions like doxy-PEP even after several years. **“That tells me the education gap is real—and fixable.”**

Intake, Reframed: Start with “How Can I Help You Today?”

Browand’s first visit follows a ritual of respect. **“I introduce myself—I’m Emily, she/her pronouns. What’s your name, your pronouns? How can I help you today?”** From there, the assessment is comprehensive, but the tone remains patient-driven. She isn’t interested in delivering a script; she’s building a relationship. **“The intake for me is, ‘How can I help you today?’”** That question, asked earnestly, unlocks candor and choice. It also lays the groundwork for accountability: **“I want patients to understand their labs, why we ordered them, how lifestyle affects them. People often tell me no one’s ever explained labs before. That has to change.”**

Rebuilding Trust After Harm

For patients burned by other systems, Browand leads with validation. **“I never minimize it because that person’s lived experience is their lived experience,”** she says. **“I recognize that you might not trust**

this right now—and I value that.” Her promise is modest and powerful: show up, follow up, and keep the focus on what patients need to make informed choices. **“Let’s create a relationship and build trust because that trust has been broken in the past.”**

The Measurable Power of Affirming Care

If you want proof that affirming care changes outcomes, Browand points to her adolescent patients receiving gender-affirming treatment. She prepares families for the emotional complexity of a “second puberty,” including the possibility of heightened feelings early on. **“But truthfully,”** she says, **“100% of the time when I follow up, anxiety and depression have decreased. They’re finally feeling affirmed. They’re finally seeing the person in the mirror they always knew was there.”** The result still gives her chills. **“Every single time, it is diminished—which is incredible.”**

What She’s Determined to Retire—and What She’s Determined to Raise

Browand wants to bury the myth that LGBTQ+ health belongs in the shadows. **“It’s not a secret, dirty lifestyle where you have to go into dark corners to love who you love or be who you are,”** she says. On the flip side, she’s laser-focused on raising the bar for care in Las Vegas. **“On a small scale, the quality of healthcare in Las Vegas is pretty garbage across the board,”** she says candidly. **“I strive every day to show up and follow up. I want to improve the quality of each individual’s care, give them options, educate them, and make sure they leave understanding what we did and why.”**

Meeting People Where They Are—Every Time

Whether she’s caring for youth, trans and nonbinary folks, people of color, immigrants, sex workers, or people experiencing homelessness, the approach is constant: meet people where they are. **“I’m not going to lose a teenager in jargon. I’ll use language and ideas they understand,”** she says. **“For every patient, from any background, I’m asking, ‘What can I do for you?’ Then we build the plan together.”**

As the Gavin J. Goorjian Community Health Center opens its doors and the ribbon falls on October 3, 2025, Browand’s wish for every patient is simple and precise. **“Patients should leave our clinic feeling affirmed, validated—like the incredible individuals they are.”**

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LGBTQ+ Resources

THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY CENTER OF SOUTHERN NEVADA
thecenterlv.org

ACLU
aclunv.org

ADL
lasvegas.adl.org

ALCOHOLICS TOGETHER
alcoholicstogetherlasvegas.com

BEARS LAS VEGAS
bearslv.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
thepridetreevl.com

SILVER STATE EQUALITY
silverstateequality.org

SOUTHERN NEVADA ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER QUEER SOCIETY
snapiqs.org

YOUNG: EQUAL
youngequal.org



HIV Resources

AID FOR AIDS OF NEVADA (AFAN)
afanlv.org

AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (AHF)
aidshealth.org

CAN COMMUNITY HEALTH
cancommunityhealth.org/las-vegas

FARABI WELLNESS CENTER
hpvlv.com

GOLDEN RAINBOW
goldenrainbow.org

HORIZON RIDGE WELLNESS CLINIC
hrc.org

SIN SITY SISTERS OF PERPETUAL INDULGENCE
sinsitysisters.org

COMMUNITY EVENTS



National Coming Out Day Block Party Returns to the Historic Fruit Loop

Las Vegas' Historic Fruit Loop will glow even brighter on Saturday, Oct. 11, when the National Coming Out Day Block Party runs from 6 p.m. to midnight across Piranha and Gipsy Nightclub. The celebration marks the first block party since the Nevada Legislature recognized the Fruit Loop as a historic LGBTQ+ landmark in May 2025, honoring the district's decades-long role as a cultural anchor and safe space.

The evening begins with a ceremonial ribbon cutting featuring legislators and community partners. The moment underscores what longtime patrons already know: the Fruit Loop is not just a nightlife destination but a living archive of Las Vegas LGBTQ+ history, where generations have built connection, joy, and safety.

Onstage, the entertainment lineup centers queer excellence. RuPaul's Drag Race standouts Alexis Mateo, Mirage, and Luxx Noir London headline alongside the casts of Gipsy and Piranha, the Las Vegas Men's Chorus, and guest DJs and entertainers from across the Strip. Expect high-camp pageantry, powerhouse vocals, and the kind of dance-floor energy that has defined the district for years.

Beyond the stage, Gipsy Nightclub hosts a community resource fair with nonprofit partners, local vendors, and food trucks—turning the Fruit Loop into a full-spectrum festival of culture, services, and support. The addition reinforces the neighborhood's identity as a place where nightlife and community care coexist, and where coming out is both a personal milestone and a collective affirmation.

Observed annually on Oct. 11 since 1988, National Coming Out Day encourages LGBTQ+ people to live authentically while inviting allies to learn and support. Situating the city's signature celebration along East Naples Drive between Paradise Road and University Center Drive feels fitting. The Fruit Loop has welcomed generations of locals and visitors, and it continues to evolve with new businesses, inclusive programming, and year-round gatherings that reflect the community's diversity.

Admission to the block party is free, with RSVPs encouraged at gipsylasvegas.com. Guests must be 21 or older. For updates and artist announcements, follow @gipsylasvegas and @piranhavegas on Instagram. Whether attending for the first time or returning to a familiar neighborhood, attendees will find a celebration built on visibility, resilience, and joy—qualities that have long defined the Fruit Loop and continue to guide its future.

Email info@qvegas.com to add your organization to our directory.



STI Testing

THE ARLENE COOPER COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
thecenterlv.org

AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (AHF)
aidshealth.org

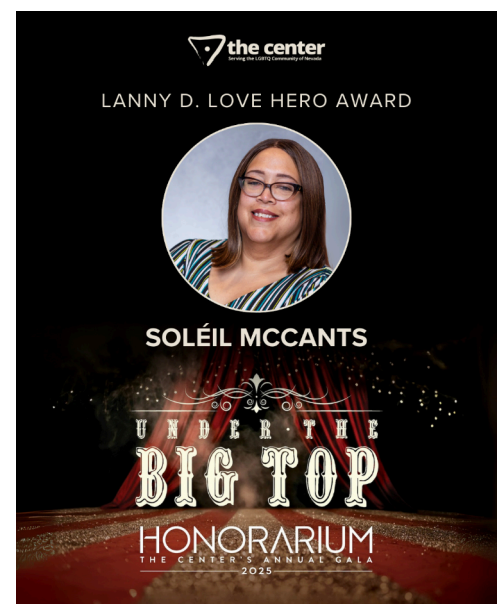
CAN COMMUNITY HEALTH
cancommunityhealth.org/las-vegas

FARABI WELLNESS CENTER
hpvlv.com

HUNTRIDGE FAMILY CLINIC
huntridgefamilyclinic.org

SOUTHERN NEVADA HEALTH DISTRICT
southernnevadahealthdistrict.org

UMC
umcsn.com





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THE CENTER'S ANNUAL GALA

2025

10.25.25



LAFITE BALLROOM



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ARTS
DISTRICT

Winchester



SAT OCT 11 **GIpsy** **Piranha**
NIGHTCLUB
PRESENTS
Pride **NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY** **FRUIT LOOP**
ON PARADISE **BLOCK PARTY** Las Vegas

BROOKE LYNN HYTES | WILLAM
DJ SET BY **LUXX NOIR LONDON | MIRAGE | YARA SOFIA**
ALEXIS MATEO | FANTASIA ROYALE GAGA
PALOMA MAKARY | BEARONCÉ BEAR
ESTEVAN VELASCO & THE SHOW KIDS | ASIA KING ADOR
LACHERRY WILD | SAGE O'HARA ANDREWS
ROMAN TAJORE | QUEEN BEE | PRINCESS PROZAC
DEMI 007 | SCARLETT BUSINESS | DJ MIKE SKLARZ
LAS VEGAS MEN'S CHORUS | DEREK DANIELS & THE ATMOSPHERE ENTERTAINERS
SUNSHINE | SOPHIA KENNEDY | LEXUS CHANDELIER | RUSSELL NIELSON | NICKY SATURN

HOSTED BY THE CAST OF **PIRANHA**
PRE-SHOW WITH MIKALAH GORDON & ESTEVAN VELASCO 5 PM GIPSY
FREE RSVP GIPSYLASVEGAS.COM | 21+
STARTING AT 8 PM
@GIPSYLASVEGAS | @PIRANHALASVEGAS | @GIPSYLASVEGAS.COM | 4605 PARADISE RD, LAS VEGAS, NV 89169



The Historic LGBTQ+ Landmark

The Fruit Loop

GET BOOKED

4640 Paradise Rd Unit 15

GIPSY NIGHTCLUB

4605 Paradise Rd

PIRANHA NIGHTCLUB

4633 Paradise Rd

QUADZ

4640 Paradise Rd

BADLANDS

BENT INN

1108 E Ogden Ave

DUST

855 E Twain Ave, Unit 114

FLEX COCKTAIL LOUNGE

501 E Twain Ave

FUN HOG RANCH

THE GARAGE

1487 E Flamingo Rd

HAMBURGER MARY'S

1700 E Flamingo Rd

THE PHOENIX

4213 W Sahara Ave



LAS VEGAS NCOD & PRIDE WEEKEND

Piranha
NIGHTCLUB
AND
GIPSY

**FRIDAY
OCT 10**

WELCOME

**Pride on
PARADISE**

WITH
PLANE JANE LUXX NOIR LONDON
MIRAGE ALEXIS MATEO
& PALOMA MAKARY
HOSTED BY SHANNEL

Piranha
NIGHTCLUB
AND
GIPSY

**SATURDAY
OCT 11**

WELCOME

**Pride on
PARADISE**

WITH
BROOKE LYNN HYTES WILLAM
MIRAGE ALEXIS MATEO
FANTASIA ROYALE GAGA
PALOMA MAKARY
+ THE CAST OF PIRANHA

SAT OCT 11

GIPSY + Piranha
NIGHTCLUB
PRESENTS

Pride
ON PARADISE

NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY

BLOCK PARTY

THE HISTORIC LGBTQ+ LANDMARK
FRUIT LOOP
Las Vegas

**STARTING
AT 6 PM**
21+

BROOKE LYNN HYTES | WILLAM | DJ SET BY LUXX NOIR LONDON | MIRAGE | YARA SOFIA
ALEXIS MATEO | FANTASIA ROYALE GAGA | PALOMA MAKARY | BEARONCÉ BEAR
ESTEVAN VELASCO & THE SHOW KIDS | ASIA KING ADOUR | LACHERRY WILD | SAGE O'HARA ANDREWS
ROMAN TAJORE | QUEEN BEE | PRINCESS PROZAC | DEMI 007 | SCARLETT BUSINESS | DJ MIKE SKLARZ
LAS VEGAS MEN'S CHORUS | DEREK DANIELS & THE ATMOSPHERE ENTERTAINERS | SUNSHINE | SOPHIA KENNEDY | LEXUS CHANDELIER | RUSSELL NIELSON | NICKY SATURN
HOSTED BY THE CAST OF PIRANHA | PRE-SHOW WITH MIKALAH GORDON & ESTEVAN VELASCO 5 PM GIPSY