2018 LGBT COMMUNITY CENTER SURVEY REPORT:
DAVID BOHNETT CYBERCENTER PROGRAM

September 2018

CENTERLINK
THE COMMUNITY OF LGBT CENTERS

MAP
movement advancement project

This report was authored by:

CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
CenterLink develops strong, sustainable community centers that provide LGBTQ people of all ages with the building blocks of well-being that we all need to thrive, such as healthy social connections, safe places to live and work, support to do well in school and prepare for careers, enriching cultural experiences, and timely health and mental health services. Serving over 200 LGBTQ community centers across the country in 45 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, as well as centers in Canada, China, and Australia, CenterLink assists newly forming community centers and helps strengthen existing centers, through networking opportunities for center leaders, peer-based technical assistance and training, and a variety of capacity building services. Our efforts are based on the belief that LGBTQ community centers lay the foundation for a national movement working to ensure that all LGBTQ people have the opportunity to live happy and healthy lives in communities that honor and support them.

Movement Advancement Project
The Movement Advancement Project (MAP) is an independent think tank that provides rigorous research, insight, and analysis that help speed equality for LGBT people. MAP works collaboratively with LGBT organizations, advocates, and funders, providing information, analysis, and resources that help coordinate and strengthen efforts for maximum impact. MAP's policy research informs the public and policymakers about the legal and policy needs of LGBT people and their families.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this report reflect the best judgment of CenterLink and MAP based on analysis of data collected from participating LGBT community centers. These opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of our funders, CenterLink members, or other organizations.

INTRODUCTION

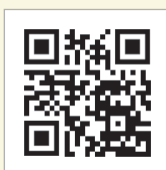This is a companion report to the *2018 Community Center Survey Report*, coauthored by the Movement Advancement Project and CenterLink. The report is based on the responses from 128 participating centers, although all centers did not respond to all questions. When relevant, the report separately examines centers with budgets equal to or less than $150,000 per year ("small centers") and centers with budgets greater than $150,000 per year ("large centers"). The David Bohnett Foundation's CyberCenter program provides funding for computer equipment at 58 LGBT community centers and college campuses nationwide. This report is designed to assist the David Bohnett Foundation, MAP, and CenterLink to evaluate the CyberCenter program's impact on community center patrons.
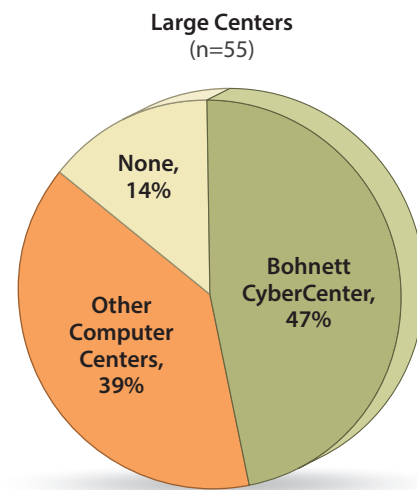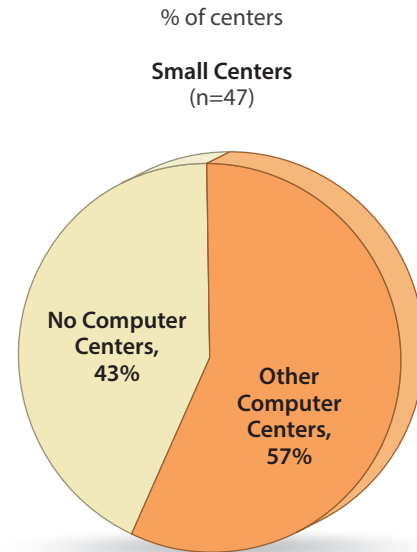
OVERVIEW

In total, 113 LGBT community centers answered questions about computer resources and whether they have centers or spaces where patrons can use computers. Of these responding centers, 74% provide computer resources for their patrons, for a total of 27 small centers and 57 large centers providing computer services to their clients.

As shown in *Figure 1*, the vast majority of large centers (86%) offers computer services; nearly half of these (31 centers, or 47% of large centers) do so through the Bohnett CyberCenter Program (referred to as "CyberCenters" for the rest of the report).[1] Fifty-seven percent of small responding centers offer computer services, though no small centers reported being part of the Bohnett CyberCenter program.

The next two sections examine centers' computer resources and compare CyberCenters to centers that are not part of the Bohnett CyberCenter program but that still provide computer resources (referred to as "other centers").

Figure 1: Centers Offering Computing Services
% of centers

Small Centers
(n=47)

No Computer Centers, 43%

Other Computer Centers, 57%

Large Centers
(n=55)

None, 14%

Other Computer Centers, 39%

Bohnett CyberCenter, 47%

Note: May not total 100% due to rounding.

[1] The David Bohnett Foundation's CyberCenter program provides funding for computer equipment at 68 LGBT community centers and college campuses nationwide. The foundation asked MAP and CenterLink to include survey questions specifically related to this program to help evaluate its impact on community center patrons.

Types of Computer Resources

As *Table 1* shows, CyberCenters have, on average, one more computer than other centers, and the computers at CyberCenters are, on average, one year newer. Both CyberCenters and other centers offer programs from the Microsoft Office software suite such as Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. Several CyberCenters and other centers mentioned they also have Adobe programs such as Photoshop, browsers like Chrome and Firefox, and communication software like Skype.

Four in five (81%) participating community centers with CyberCenters do not charge for use of their computers, while 18% charge a nominal fee. Six CyberCenters charge for printing. None of the other centers charge patrons for computer services.

Computer resources at CyberCenters are used more frequently than computer resources at other centers (see *Figure 2*); 77% of CyberCenters reported their computers are being used more than 40% of the time; 59% of other centers reported this level of computer use. CyberCenters were less likely to report that patrons frequently have to wait to use the computers; 83% of CyberCenters reported there is rarely a wait, compared to 66% of other centers.
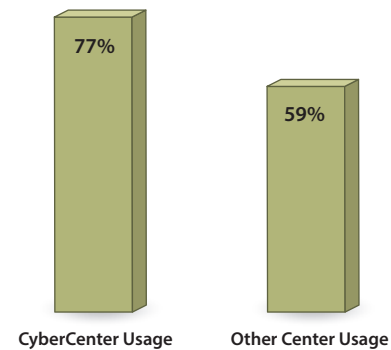
As *Figure 3* shows, CyberCenters are more likely to offer various computer training programs compared to other centers, including general software training, online job search training, and general Internet training. Few centers of either type offer graphic design or SAGEWorks training.[2] Nearly all CyberCenters have someone on staff who is able to provide competent training and technical assistance to patrons using computer resources (see *Figure 4* on the next page), compared to three in four other centers. Note that the majority of CyberCenters are large centers with budgets over $150,000, and they are more likely overall to have paid staff.

Table 1: Numbers and Ages of Computer Equipment		
Averages for centers with computer centers	CyberCenters n=31	Other Community Centers n=53
No. of computers	7	6
Age of computers	3 years	4 years
No. of printers	1	2
Age of printers	2 years	4 years
Average # of monthly users	183	33

Figure 2: Computer Center Usage
Percent of Centers Reporting High Levels of Computer Use

77%   59%

CyberCenter Usage   Other Center Usage

Figure 3: Types of Computer Training Offered
Percent of Centers Offering...

Online Job Search   39%   19%
General Software   29%   6%
Internet Training   29%   8%
SAGEWorks   10%   0%

☐ Bohnett CyberCenters (n=20) ☐ Other Centers (n=27)
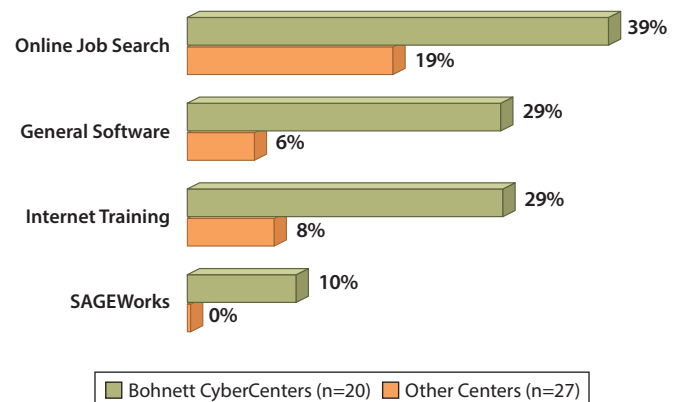
2 SAGEWorks is a national employment support program for LGBT people age 40 and older that expands participants' job hunting skills and career options, and connects employers to diverse high-caliber candidates.

Use of Computer Centers

The average CyberCenter serves 183 patrons each month, compared to an average of 33 patrons served by other centers (see *Figure 5*). Centers with computer resources report that their patrons use these resources for a variety of reasons. Conducting job searches, keeping in touch with family and friends, and entertainment were the top three activities of computer center users at both CyberCenters and other centers.

Approximately one in three centers (32%)—regardless of the type—indicated that demand for computer services had increased over the past year. As demand for computer resources increases, LGBT community centers report challenges in providing adequate services. Very few CyberCenters identified challenges in the context of their computer centers, with only three citing financial resources to afford equipment and high-speed internet access and three citing lack of staff time. Meanwhile, many more other centers indicated challenges in these areas, as well as a lack of staff training.

CONCLUSION

Bohnett CyberCenters help LGBT community centers serve their patrons along a number of spectrums: technology competence, job hunting and training, and staying in touch with family and community. Offering free computer services allows centers to serve a deep need in their patrons' lives: connection with others. Community computer services are especially important to those who do not have access to these tools elsewhere, include people with low income and people experiencing homelessness. Unfortunately, centers are already stretched thin with few resources and few trained staff, and many lack the funds to update aging technology. The David Bohnett CyberCenter program can help fill those gaps by providing hardware and technical assistance to centers and thus to LGBT community centers visitors around the country.

Figure 4: Nearly all CyberCenters Have Staff Available for Support
Percent of Centers with Staff Member Available to Provide Technical Support

97% CyberCenters
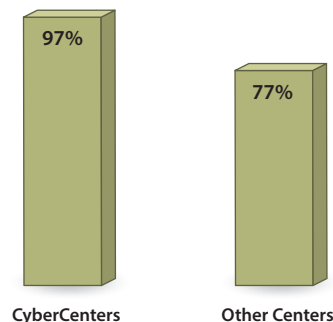
77% Other Centers

Figure 5: Average Number of Patrons Served Each Month
Average Number of Monthly Patrons Per Center
(n=31 Cybercenters, n=53 Other Centers)

183 CyberCenters

33 Other Centers

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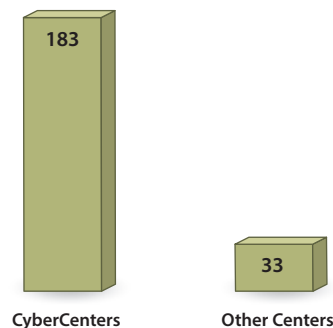
PO Box 24490 • Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307
954-765-6024
www.lgbtcenters.org

MAP
movement advancement project ▶

3020 Carbon Place, Suite 202 • Boulder, CO 80301
1-844-MAP-8800
www.lgbtmap.org