



**GRASS ROOTS
GAY RIGHTS**
FOUNDATION

Funder Spotlight: REAL BAD

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2017

*“Grass Roots” refers to how the GRGR Foundation raises resources, which is primarily from the work of volunteers who organize their events and from the ‘Circle of Friends’ who host, buy tickets and attend events. Grass Roots also refer to what they look for in beneficiaries, meaning the ability to create measurable local positive social impact for the diverse populations that make up San Francisco’s LGBT community. **Questions in bold** were asked by Positive Resource Center to Gilead Sciences, their answers follow each question.*

1. **REAL BAD and the GRGR Foundation have a longstanding history of bringing together the GLBT community. For how many years has it been going on? And, how do you try to keep long-standing traditions alive?**

REAL BAD began as a house party thrown by a group of friends in 1989 and has been an annual event ever since. In 1991 it transformed into a fundraising dance party which continued to expand its circles of friends and began its long history of benefiting a community in need while coming together in celebration. The REAL BAD party is not a static event. Each year we strive to surprise and delight our friends with new DJ’s, new looks, new lights, new features, but at the core we stay true to the reason we are there: BE BAD... DO GOOD!

The Grass Roots Gay Rights Foundation was established in 2004 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to ensure our longevity and expand our capacity to do more for our community.

2. **What, in particular, do you have planned for this year’s events that might be new or different from years past?**

Each year the Event Chair chooses a theme ... the vision at the heart of the year's season of events. Eric Holmgren's theme for this year is **Radiance**, evoking the light, joy and heat of our events and also the positive impact on the community from the generosity that makes this all possible. Our Events Committee has enthusiastically brought it to life. For the first time we built that giving back element into our first event as guests contributed clothes, hygiene items and other essentials to Project Homeless Connect at the Kick-Off Margarita Party. The buoyant mixed- and multi-gender locker room vibe of our REACH Pride T-Dance captured the spirit of inclusion and playfulness seen in this year's colorful posters. For REAL BAD XXIX, you will see it in the care that goes into transforming the different spaces of our Club 1015 home. Every year we take the same elements (music, lights, visuals) to create an experience that is familiar as REAL BAD yet carefully crafted to be distinctive and memorable. Expect to be transported by **Radiance** in many forms... and we have some surprises waiting for you, too.

3. This year, you have chosen Positive Resource Center to be a Major Beneficiary. Who are your other beneficiaries? What is your process for choosing which agencies will benefit?

Our Beneficiary Committee takes nominations from our Hosts and other community members each year. That team reaches out to nominees and evaluates the materials from those organizations that choose to submit applications. A group of finalists is formed and the Board and Events Committee come together to meet face to face with their representatives and come to a consensus. Selecting is hard! Every group we meet has a powerful story to tell and they each do great work in the world.

This year we are proudly supporting a total of 6 organizations:

- Positive Resource Center
- Dolores Street Community Services
- St. James Infirmary
- LGBTQ Connection
- Maitri
- Southern Poverty Law Center

4. How much money have you given away to date, and how did you get there?

Our Hosts & Sponsors generously fund the costs of throwing our events, therefore we guarantee that 100% of GA Ticket receipts are passed on to our Beneficiaries each year. In 2016 our all-volunteer team gave over \$215,000 to the Beneficiaries. Over the lifetime of REAL BAD, it has distributed over \$2.5 million to the community we serve.



5. Your Host Committee structure must take a lot of work to maintain. Who maintains it and how? Also, how can people get tickets to REAL BAD if they don't know a Host?

We are so fortunate to have a loyal core of friends who pour their souls into all of the committees that it takes to make this happen year after year. The Events Committee led this year by Eric Holmgren makes sure that our entire year of parties and gatherings come off without a hitch. Josh Cox leads our Host Committee to keep those relationships strong. The Production Committee led by Billy Ho takes care of the million details that make the party a spectacular (and safe!) event for everybody.

There are three ways to get tickets for REAL BAD

- 1) **Our Hosts.** Yes, they have the majority of the tickets that are sold each year. We lists our hosts on REALBAD.ORG. It's a big list, so if you don't know anyone there you

might need to get out more. There is plenty of ticket swapping going on in Facebook and other social media so keep your eye out and network.

2) **Retail Outlets.** The week before the party we release a limited number of tickets to retail outlets. These tend to go quickly so we recommend that you show up early the day they go on sale. This year's outlets include: a. Nasty Pig, NY - Friday, September 15 b. Mr-S-Leather, SF - Saturday, September 23 c. P.O. Plus, SF - Saturday, September 23

3) **At The Door.** REAL BAD often has a small number of tickets available at the door and these go on sale 1 hour before the start of the party. Invariably, the door tickets sell out nearly immediately, so we recommend you queue up a little early to get these.

You can always find complete ticket information at www.realbad.org/tickets.



- 6. We understand that you are encouraging your Hosts, Board members and others involved with the production of your parties to get more involved in community projects and activities. How did this decision come about, and what are you taking on in your first year?**

We have launched a pilot for expanding the opportunities for our stakeholders to engage with supporting the organizations that we currently or have previously funded. We are starting with adding a social impact component to some of our current events. For example, at our recent Season Kick Off Party, we encouraged hosts and guests to bring in hygiene and clothing items to support our grantee partner Project Homeless Connect, and we collected 400 hygiene items and 60 articles of clothing at that one event. A PHC staff member was also present at the event to talk to hosts about PHC's work and impact. We are looking at other social events, house parties, skilled and unskilled volunteering opportunities and group outings for our hosts and event attendees to increase awareness of our grantee partners and how to further engage with our grantee partners and the communities they support.

- 7. How can community members get involved and make a difference?**

As our pilot stakeholder engagement work scales beyond opportunities for our hosts, friends of the Foundation and our current grantee partners, we hope to offer other grassroots opportunities to the wider SF community members to engage with and alongside us to better understand the social challenges we face and how to make a difference in solving them.

- 8. If there's just one thing that you'd like to let the community know, what is that?**

Grass Roots is the core of who we are and what we do. We provide individuals in our community means by which to give back and hopefully the inspiration to do so.