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## Brett Andrews Reflects on His Decades of Service at PRC Following the Announcement of His Retirement

By Donna Sachet—



PRC's Brett Andrews with Mayor London Breed at the annual Pride Brunch hosted by Donna Sachet and Gary Virginia. (2019)

Positive Resource Center (PRC) has evolved from years of dedicated volunteers and professionals, trying to address some of the problems that still confront our LGBTQ+ Community and City. From its earliest days as AIDS Benefits Counselors, through its merger with the AIDS Emergency Fund, PRC has served a vital role for those facing an AIDS diagnosis and needing to navigate the complex disability programs available.

More recently it has branched out to address the whole spectrum of challenges within homelessness, mental health, and/or drug addiction. Leading that organization has been the familiar and welcoming face of **Brett Andrews**, CEO for decades, who can often be seen at City Hall and wherever important decisions are being made that affect our LGBTQ+ Community, People of Color, and other important social causes. Brett just announced his retirement, so we posed some questions, asking him to reflect on his years of service at PRC and to share lessons learned along the way.

**Donna Sachet: What are your memories of your first years at PRC?**

**Brett Andrews:** In the first years of PRC, some of my fondest memories were attending the many grassroots fundraisers like the Bare Chest Calendar semi-finals at Powerhouse bar, Pride Brunch at Hotel Whitcomb, Dore Alley/Folsom Street Fair, and the Big Basket contest at the Edge. Yes, of course, there was often a sexy and titillating dynamic to the event, but it was embedded in a shared commitment to raise money for PRC and many other deserving nonprofits. I had never experienced anything like it, and likely never will. I'm glad to have made those memories. A more difficult memory was based on my terrible sense of

direction. Not only was I new to PRC, but I was new to San Francisco, as well. I was late for many-a-meeting around town. I apologize to all those I kept waiting. I've gotten demonstrably better (which still may not be saying much).

**Donna Sachet: As you grew in this job, who were your mentors or guides along the way?**

**Brett Andrews:** As for many, my mentors are a blend of those who have been in my life for as long as I can remember like my mom and my high school teacher, **Ms. Underwood**, who went the extra mile in pushing me to sign up for her British Literature class because she thought I would enjoy it, and I did. I learned to challenge myself to do something outside of my comfort zone. Along the way, at PRC, I had the opportunity to meet individuals like **Robert Sass** and the late Ambassador **James C. Hormel**. Over the years, they have served as mentors and real inspirations in my life. To me, they are shining examples of decent human beings and kindhearted gentleman.

**Donna Sachet: What do you consider your finest accomplishments in these 20 years?**

**Brett Andrews:** I would first have to say any of PRC's accomplishments over that past 20 years are not mine—that would be quite an incomplete and inaccurate story. I can say that together, with a dedicated staff, committed board, and longstanding funders and volunteers, we have much in which to be proud. On a most fundamental level, we are still here—through recessions, pandemics, shifting political winds—consistently serving individuals who are most in need. We successfully expanded our mission to serve those with mental health and substance use disorders, and we headed straight into the policy discussion and community action to address Black/African American injustice, racism, and discrimination. With intention, throughout all levels of the agency we have committed ourselves to the values of honesty, mutual respect, diversity, accountability, and transparency. I invite all of us to celebrate and share in those successes.



Brett Andrews with Jim Hormel at the St. Francis Hotel for the annual Pride Brunch benefiting PRC. (2019)



Singers Sheryl Lee Ralph (left) and Mary Wilson (right) with Brett Andrews at the REAF (Richmond/Emmet Aid Foundation) Home for the Holidays After Party at Hotel Rex. (2011)

**Donna Sachet: Where do you see PRC in 10 years from now? Unfinished business?**

**Brett Andrews:** On many levels, in 10 years, I see PRC exactly where it is right now; positioned as one of the established, important anchor organizations in San Francisco. PRC's storied history tells a tale of what a group of committed individuals can do when they come together around a common cause. We understand there is critical work to do as we take a hard look at restructuring our programs, with an eye towards long-term agency sustainability. I am confident in the success of that work because we have been here before and came out the other side stronger and more resolved. Our durable mission is to provide clients with resources and guidance so they can address their issues, acquire the essential skills they need, and move further along the path to rebuilding their lives, claiming the opportunities due to them, and realizing their full potential.

**Donna Sachet: Do you plan to stay in San Francisco?**

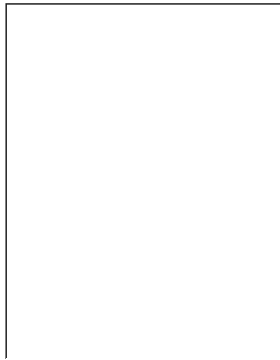




PHOTO BY PAUL MARGOLIS

Donna Sachet with Brett Andrews at the Grand Opening ceremony for PRC's new facility

**Brett Andrews:** Beyond the work of leading PRC, over the years I have had the opportunity to be involved with other community initiatives that are very important to me like combatting the social and economic issues that face Black/African Americans and helping to preserve the Castro Theater/District. So, for now, I'm staying put, but there is something to be said for the rolling green hills and hot summers of Pennsylvania, or the seemingly endless vineyards of Sonoma.  
<https://prcsf.org/>

*Donna Sachet is a celebrated performer, fundraiser, activist, and philanthropist who has dedicated over two decades to the LGBTQ Community in San Francisco. Contact her at [empsachet@gmail.com](mailto:empsachet@gmail.com)*