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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAGE Metro Portland Wins “Honoring our Elders” Award

Portland, OR – SAGE Metro Portland was awarded Portland Monthly’s Annual *Light A Fire* award in the category of “Honoring Our Elders.” Friendly House’s SAGE Metro Portland works with and for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community, 60 or better, across Multnomah County. The 12-year old program (previously known as Gay & Grey until its 2011 affiliation with the national non-profit [SAGE](#)) trains service providers in LGBT-specific issues while advocating for inclusive and fair housing. SAGE Metro Portland also builds community for LGBT seniors through social and networking events such as the upcoming [5th Annual Gay & Grey Expo](#) on October 26th at The Colony in St. Johns.

“We hear stories of people who have been activists their whole life, then have to go back in the closet when they move to an assisted-living facility,” says Lauren Fontanarosa, SAGE Metro Portland’s coordinator. “Seniors need - and deserve - more attention.” The 17 member SAGE Metro Portland speakers’ bureau truly provides an impact in the community with 27 trainings that reached a total of 858 individuals last year. These trainings not only increase awareness and understanding, but have a ripple effect in the community as attendees are spurred into action.

In Portland, there are an estimated 10,000 LGBT older adults, a number that is growing as baby boomers reach retirement age. An estimated 12 LGBT adults in Oregon will turn 65 each day (more than 4,000 per year) for the next 18 years. LGBT older adults face challenges that their heterosexual counterparts do not, including: unequal treatment under laws, programs and services, effects of historical and present-day social stigma and prejudice, and an increased reliance on informal “families of choice” for social connection, care and support. These challenges make it more difficult for LGBT older adults to achieve key components of healthy aging; financial security, quality health care, community support and engagement. SAGE Metro Portland contributes to the key components of healthy aging of LGBT older adults by advocating at the national, state and local level for fair and just treatment.

SAGE Metro Portland will be honored on Tuesday, November 12 at Portland Monthly’s Ninth Annual *Light a Fire* awards event at the Portland Art Museum’s Grand Ballroom. Tickets can be purchased online at www.portlandmonthlymag.com/lightafire2013.

For information about SAGE Metro Portland, visit [Friendly House’s SAGE Metro Portland program](#). For media inquiries, contact Vaune Albanese at valbanese@friendlyhouseinc.org or call (503) 228-4391.

About Friendly House

[Friendly House](#) is a non-profit neighborhood center and social service agency, founded in 1930. Its programs and services are provided at no charge or on a sliding fee scale to ensure access to all members of the community. Friendly House provides a continuum of services in three program areas: Children’s Programs, Community Recreation and Education, and Community Services.

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