**LGBT Life Center Launches Women OUT Front, a Social and Speaker Series for Women in Hampton Roads**

**Norfolk, VA** – At a time when queer women’s social spaces are dwindling in Hampton Roads, LGBT Life Center is proud to present **Women OUT Front**, a new LGBTQ women’s social gathering and speaker series.

Women OUT Front brings female, female-identifying, gender non-conforming and all gender allies together once a quarter (every 3 months) to connect, inspire and empower Hampton Roads’ women leaders and emerging leaders. We welcome individuals from every background, discipline and culture to join us in creating a connected, stronger Hampton Roads.

“I look across Hampton Roads and see so many women doing incredible work; starting companies, running organizations, holding political office, earning degrees, being caretakers and so much more. Women OUT Front will draw from our tremendous talent pool and work to strengthen women, bolster careers, form mentorships and elevate role models in Hampton Roads,” said Stacie Walls, CEO of LGBT Life Center, a majority woman lead organization.

With the loss of one of the areas only women forward social spaces, we're losing places for women to connect and gather. Women OUT Front will give women, female-identifying, gender non-conforming and all gender allies a place to come together and support one another.

The inaugural event will take place on March 26th at the Slover Library (Floor 6, Community Engagement Room). The program will start at 6:15PM with a cocktail and social hour for women to meet one another and connect. At 7:30PM the event will feature a keynote speaker, Professor Cathleen Rhodes, a history professor at Old Dominion University and founder of Tidewater Queer History Project, a Hampton Roads LGBTQ archive. Professor Rhodes will speak on “Lesbians Front and Center: A History of Queer Women’s Activism and Culture in Hampton Roads.”

Women OUT Front will host an event every 3 months and culminate the year with an annual gala.

For more information please call us at 757-640-0929.

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ABOUT LGBT LIFE CENTER: LGBT Life Center was formerly known as CANDII House, Full Circle CANDII, and ACCESS AIDS Care/LGBT Center of Hampton Roads until June of 2017 when it expanded its mission and rebranded as LGBT Life Center. LGBT Life Center is a trusted leader that empowers the LGBTQ communities and all people affected by HIV through improving health and wellness, strengthening families and communities and providing transformative education and advocacy.

ABOUT PROFESSOR CATHLEEN RHODES: Cathleen Rhodes is a senior lecturer in the Department of Women's Studies at Old Dominion University. In 2010, she developed the first queer studies course at ODU, and in 2017 she worked with students to create the region's first student-led queer walking tour of Norfolk, a service-learning project that is building Tidewater's largest digital archive of LGBTQ historical information and material. Professor Rhodes is also founder and director of the Tidewater Queer History Project, an organization that works to preserve, collect, and celebrate local queer history. As part of that work she has trained ODU students in oral history collection and has herself conducted many interviews with LGBTQ community members in Hampton Roads in order to build a digital repository of local queer history and a physical collection of materials donated by members of the community. Professor Rhodes also serves as the president of Gay Cultural Studies at ODU, an initiative that supports LGBTQ scholarship among students and faculty. In addition to her academic work and community activism, Rhodes provides LGBTQ consulting services and training sessions for businesses and organizations in the Hampton Roads area in an effort to create more inclusive and welcoming environments for LGBTQ citizens.