2014 showed unparalleled momentum, as if to provide an example of Moore’s Law proving that the impact of change can indeed double every two years. We have witnessed more progress for the LGBT community than most of us could have imagined.

This past year was another banner year starting with the announcement at the Plexus Annual Meeting by Mayor Frank Jackson about the launch of the City of Cleveland’s LGBT business registry for Northeast Ohio. Plexus is working with the city to increase visibility and access for LGBT owned businesses. We have made some progress, but need to add to our outreach to see more growth.

While the registry is an important step for Cleveland and our region, Ohio lags in providing equality and protections for LGBT individuals. We are proud to partner with Equality Ohio, Trans Ohio, Why Marriage Matters Ohio and other organizations to make the case that strong antidiscrimination laws and marriage equality are required to cultivate greater economic development in the state.

We were honored to be a Lead Community Partner for the 2014 Gay Games focusing on several areas, including outreach to the business community. In addition, we facilitated a memorandum of understanding between GG9 and the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce to be the first Games to actively recruit LGBT businesses into the supply chain. Plexus Foundation and Chamber members were part of the team that developed the cultural competency training offered by the Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio which boosted LGBT awareness, creating a welcoming environment for Games week and beyond. Plexus is actively working with other Games’ Partners to find ways to continue collaborations and build on the success of GG9.

As part of our mission to increase the visibility of LGBT businesses, we revamped our Annual Supplier Diversity Summit into a series of sessions for both LGBT entrepreneurs and corporate supplier diversity professionals. These small group seminars were focused on certification, Tier 2 relationships and supply chain introductions. We ended 2014 with 19 LGBT Certified businesses, a 72% increase from last year. Plexus continued to convene and support LGBT Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and promote best practices. One such company, Westfield Insurance, announced the addition of sexual orientation and gender identity to their non-discrimination policies as part of their LGBT ERG launch. Many ERGs and their companies were strong supporters of the Games which resulted in more LGBT visibility.

Plexus was able to invest in our infrastructure again in 2014 with the help of COSE and the Greater Cleveland Partnership’s Economic Growth Fund (EGF). The Cleveland Foundation provided support to the EGF for a partnership with Plexus to engage in outreach, education, and collaboration with an emphasis on workplace equality, inclusion awareness, and supplier diversity. This allowed us to hire a Strategic Initiatives Director for 12 months and make an investment in our technology to better manage members and provide more resources.

As we celebrate the New Year, we are excited about the future and thank the community for your support and input regarding the programs that the Chamber and Foundation will undertake in 2015.
Plexus regularly hosts networking nights throughout the year that are open to the LGBT & allied business communities. These events, hosted at unique venues, provide an opportunity for attendees to expand their professional network and gain insight from decision makers in Northeast Ohio.

2014 HIGHLIGHTS:

**January » The Van Sweringen Arcade » Downtown**
Plexus started the year at its annual meeting hosted in a historic location but with an innovative new format. We showcased key collaborators with Plexus for 2014: The City Of Cleveland, 2014 Gay Games and Equality Ohio.

**February » Burntwood Tavern » Rocky River**
This event was a perfect opportunity to shake off the cold of winter and warm up with new friends and Plexus supporters at a west side location.

**May » The Jump Start Offices » Mid Town**
This location underscored the importance of entrepreneurs in developing our NEO economy and about the resources available to them through Jumpstart and other organizations.

**June » Voinovich Park » Downtown**
Plexus celebrated the parade and festival along with the LGBT community and allies while promoting participation and volunteering for the 2014 Gay Games.

**August » Shula’s 2 » Independence**
Our annual social is a chance to toast the end of summer. This year, we likewise cheered the success of the Gay Games and the many new attendees engaged with Plexus.

**October » Urban Farmer » Downtown**
Members and guests gathered at one of the newest hot-spots in downtown to experience firsthand what people have been raving about since the restaurant and hotel opened earlier in the year.

**December » Music Box Supper Club » The Flats**
Always popular, this ERG-hosted event is a fun kick off to the holiday season each year. Music Box is another example of the amazing spaces and views we have in our region which enhance networking opportunities.
SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

Plexus was pleased to offer the 6th Annual Supplier Diversity Summit. In 2014, we changed our format to host smaller sessions that allowed for more discussion and dialogue from the participants. The Summit Series was comprised of three separate sessions:

Session 1
Focused on the power and importance of certification, we heard from a local LGBT-owned firm, Full Color Printings, about their success. That insight was coupled with information from Sam McClure of the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) about the national landscape and the impact of supplier diversity to the bottom line.

Session 2
A how-to on the best way to get noticed in the supply chain which allowed us to get advice from procurement and supplier diversity corporate officers from University Hospitals, Nationwide, The City of Cleveland, and Rockwell Automation. Plexus compiled a toolkit for diverse business owners of 20+ corporate contacts with steps and tips of getting into their specific supply chains.

Session 3
Offered through COSE and the U.S. Small Business Administration, this corporate matchmaker event included over 50 reps who met with diverse suppliers to broker new business. This event, with its nine-year history, provided the perfect opportunity for Plexus to showcase LGBT-certified businesses and collaborate with COSE. What’s more, Plexus was able to offer free registration to any LGBT-BEs who participated.

SPECIAL THANKS

Presenting Sponsor Summit Series: Rockwell Automation

Event Hosts: InterContinental Suites Cleveland University Hospitals

SUPPLIER DIVERSITY:
A program that encourages contracting with businesses that are owned by individuals belonging to groups that have been historically disadvantaged in the competitive procurement marketplace.

Plexus is proud to showcase its members who held LGBT certification in 2014:

925 Hire, LLC
Affordable Working Websites
Call Management Resources
David Phillips & Associates
Felty and Lembright, LPA
FIT Technologies
Forward Thought
Full Color Printings, LLC
Gray’s Auctioneers
Greenrock Lighting
Leverage Technologies, Inc.
Linear Creative
Nightsweats & T-Cells
Outsmart Office Solutions, Inc.
Professional Business Associates
Ray LaVoie Photography
Reddy or Knot Design
Witherspoon Enterprises
PLEXUS
BY THE NUMBERS

MEMBERS

73% LGBT
27% Allies

59% Small Business
26% Corp Professionals
12% Non-Profit
3% Government

55% Male
45% Female

100+
New people attended Plexus Events in 2014

6
New venues hosted Plexus Events in 2014

MEMBERSHIP

15%
Growth in total membership

72%
Increase in LGBT-BEs in NEO in 2014

56%
Renewals
44%
New Members

CERTIFIED LGBT-BE:

A Certified LGBT Business Enterprise (LGBT-BE) is a business that is 51% owned, operated, and managed by LGBT individuals and certified by NGLCC. LGBT-owned businesses visit mynglcc.org or contact president@thinkplexus.org for more info.
GAY GAMES 9
OVERVIEW

Plexus is honored to have served as a Lead Community Partner to the 2014 Gay Games. To see the successful execution of years of effort transform the region during the week was a true inspiration. Plexus is committed to collaborate with the many partners who endorsed GG9’s celebration of diversity and human rights. We continue to work toward economic equality, workplace inclusion and fairness, and supplier diversity in NEO.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

» $52.1 million PLUS an additional $20.6 million in job income

» The 2014 Gay Games balanced budget resulted in:
  › $107,000+ donation to LGBT Legacy Fund at Cleveland Foundation
  › $26,000+ donation to Gay Community Endowment Fund of Akron Community Foundation

$52.1 Million + $20.6 Million

BUDGET

» $6.8 million budget with revenue from:
  › $2.36 million from sponsors and donors
  › $2.64 million from registrations and civic support
  › $1.8 million reduced from the budget from in-kind contributions
  › $106,400 in scholarship funding provided for 271 Scholarship Recipients

$6.8 Million

EVENTS

37 sports » 1 Band Performance
1 Choral Performance » 1 Rodeo
110 Entertainment Events » 8 Official Parties
4 Academic Conferences
all in celebration of GG9!

PARTICIPANTS

» Nearly 8,000 Participants
» From 48 Countries and 48 States
8,000 Athletes

VOLUNTEERS

» 3,017 volunteers
  › Representing 15 countries
  › 5,640 shifts worked
  › 93% from Ohio
3,017 Volunteers

SOCIAL IMPACT

» 29 million people watched 773 stories on television news covering the Games
» 2,217 news stories posted online with 279 million page views

773 News Stories

COLLABORATIONS

» 121 Community Partners
  › 38 Arts Organizations
  › 43 Community Organizations
  › 22 Faith Organizations
  › 14 Neighborhood Organizations
  › 4 Lead Community Partners
121 Partners

SUSTAINABILITY

» 53% of waste at the Convention Center and Festival Village was recycled
» 85 pounds of fruit composted, 1,729 pounds of food donated

53% Recycled

GAY GAMES 2014
GOLD SPONSORS

CUSE
Rockwell Automation

SILVER SPONSORS

EY
fit
University Hospitals

BRONZE SPONSORS

AMERICAN GREETINGS
BUCKINGHAM Doolittle & Bubroughs, LLP
Attorneys & Counselors at Law
Cleveland Clinic
Forest City Enterprises
MetroHealth
SHERWIN WILLIAMS
Streat Burger Bistro Beer
WELLS FARGO ADVISORS

SPONSORS

Ambiance
consolidated solutions
KeyBank

INTERCONTINENTAL SUITES CLEVELAND
Nationwide

CHAMBER PARTNERS

COMMISSION on Economic Inclusion
noglcc
MSDC
Ohio Minority Supplier Development Council
Ohio River Valley Women's Business Council
ORV-WBC
Goldman Sacks
10,000 small businesses
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Plexus Chamber Board of Directors and Officers 2014-2015

Michelle Tomallo, President
» FIT Technologies

Todd Lloyd, Vice President
» Wells Fargo Advisors

Jim Simon, Vice President
» Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs, LLP

Thomas Hawn, Treasurer

Drew Small, Secretary
» OverDrive

Gina Dalessandro
» The Dalessandro Group

Ray Jasinski
» Linear Creative

Timothy McCue
» William J. and Dorothy K. O’Neill Foundation

Luz Pellot
» Xerox

David Phillips
» COSE

LaShawn Reed
» Ohio Minority Supplier Diversity Council

Ronda Toth
» The Legacy Group

Funded Staff Position 2014-2015

David Robinson, Strategic Initiatives Director
» Plexus LGBT and Allied Chamber of Commerce

Plexus Foundation Board of Directors 2014-2015

Thomas Hawn, President

John R. Corlett
» The Center for Community Solutions

Steven Licciardi
» Morgan Stanley

The Very Rev. Tracey Lind
» Trinity Episcopal Cathedral

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