



Rotarians in Service for Equality (RISE)'s mission statement is, "We exist to foster acceptance, inclusion, diversity and to RISE above by providing services, opportunities, and education to our members, the LGBTQIA+ community and the global community at large."

As part of RISE's mission we seek to educate and bring visibility to our fellow Rotarians and to the community at large relative to issues members of LGBTQIA+ have and continue to face.

Pride Month began with the Stonewall riots, a series of riots for gay liberation that took place in June, 1969 after a police raid at the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar located in New York City. The following year the first Pride marches began and these marches or "parades" now occur in almost every major metropolitan area in the United States and globally, typically in the month of June. Pride is an opportunity to celebrate the beautiful rainbow our community represents.

Pride is not only a time to celebrate our community, it is also a time to bring awareness to the ongoing disparities faced by LGBTQIA+ persons. Relevant to this year's focus on mental health, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), LGB adults are twice as likely to experience mental illness and Trans persons are four times as likely. LGBTQIA+ youth and young adults are at a 120% higher risk for homelessness due to family rejection and these youth are 4 times more likely to attempt suicide.

Central to RISE's mission is to address the needs of our community. To this end, we have partnered with the Mental Health and Wellness Club to explore ways we can directly and indirectly serve our community. We welcome partnerships across the District and RI.

We look forward to sharing more about our service projects in the weeks and months to come.

Meanwhile, Happy Pride, D5280!