

Southern Arizona's Lesbian,
Gay, Bisexual & Transgender
Community Center

New Address!
425 East 7th Street
Tucson Arizona 85705
Telephone 520-624-1779

wingspan.org

Volume XVII Number 3
Fall 2005



Shine at Wingspan's 8th Annual Benefit Dinner!



Last year's awards dinner drew a record crowd of Wingspan supporters

Wingspan's Annual Benefit Dinner on Saturday, September 24 promises once again to be an elegant evening of celebration of the many facets of Southern Arizona's LGBT community. The 8th Annual Dinner features a silent auction, an address by Mandy Carter, community awards, dining, and Latin-themed dancing. The yearly dinner regularly draws over 1,000 community members to raise money for Wingspan and celebrate the pride of the Southern Arizona LGBT community.

Sparkle. Glimmer. Shine. These are the words describing what to expect of this year's dinner. The keynote speaker for the evening, Mandy Carter, is the Director and co-founder of Southerners On New Ground (SONG). SONG is an organization inspired by black and white lesbians that focuses on building allies across race, class, culture, gender, and sexual identity. Mandy is a noted speaker and Stonewall Award winner who has traveled extensively, educating audiences about LGBT rights in the context of a broader social justice movement. Mandy has been described as "an articulate and non-confrontational doer— someone who get things accomplished by her motivational mentoring and exemplary and tireless activity."

Three community awards are also given at the dinner. The Godat Award, which recognizes an individual who has made extraordinary long-term contributions to the Southern Arizona LGBT community, will go to Mae Krueger, a leader within the Desert Voices LGBT chorus and numerous other community groups. The Community Ally Award goes to Detective Tim Rupel, Hate Crimes Detective for the Tucson Police Department, who has worked diligently to advocate for LGBT victims of hate crimes and prevent future crimes. Finally, the Steve Hall Award, which recognizes commitment and dedication

to advancing Wingspan's mission and values, goes to Kathy Altman. Kathy has served on the Wingspan Board of Directors for six years, including three years as Board President, and has devoted phenomenal amounts of leadership and energy to Wingspan and its endeavors.

John-Peter Wilhite, a primary organizer for this and previous years' dinners, says that the silent auction is going to be impressive. "There will be a little bit of everything – from hotel stays to paintings – and displayed as if you were actually in a store." There will also be a dance following the dinner, featuring Latin and Salsa music. John-Peter comments, "The dances have been a great transition from one set of the evening's events to another."

The dinner will be held in the Copper Ballroom of the Tucson Convention Center. Tickets go on sale at Wingspan on August 1 for \$85 per person or \$850 for a table of ten. **by Richard Whitmer**

Wingspan on the Move



The new facility offers more meeting and activity space

On July 11, Wingspan opened the doors of its new building at 425 E. Seventh Street. The building is just off of Fourth Avenue, one block east of Antigone Books. It is Wingspan's fourth home in its 17 years of service to the community.

The entire first floor of the new building, 2,800 square feet, is for the community itself – nearly twice the size of the community space in the old building. Office Manager Victor Ventura says, "One of the strongest things about the move is that we now have our annex groups back with us." Many groups had been meeting at spaces outside of the Wingspan offices for the past few years. Now, three private meeting rooms are available at Wingspan for use by a *(continued on page 4)*

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Wingspan Board of Directors

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Wingspan publishes *The Center* quarterly. Notices of events, news entries, and articles must include the name of the contact person or writer, telephone number and/or email address and may be sent to: Newsletter/Wingspan
 425 East 7th Street
 Tucson, Arizona 85705-8513
 or wingspan@wingspan.org
 Please email text as a Microsoft Word attachment.

Meth Forum 08/09/05

Methamphetamine has devastated some segments of the gay community, increasing the risk of HIV, STDs, and violence. Pulse, a program of the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF), presents a forum on meth at Wingspan (425 E. 7th Street) on Tuesday, August 9 from 6-8 pm. SAAF staff will talk about the meth scene here in Tucson, a health care provider will address medical issues, and a recovering meth addict will share his experiences.

Senior Pride Afternoon Tea 08/20/05



Senior Pride, Wingspan's social group for LGBT community members 55 and older and their friends and supporters, is hosting an Afternoon Tea on Saturday, August 20 from 1-4 pm in the Anzaldúa Room at Wingspan (425 E. 7th Street). Join Senior Pride for tea, coffee, finger sandwiches, and tea cookies. Check the Wingspan website or call Pat Woelke at 520-624-1779 x 22 for more information.

Lesbian Shorts II 09/02/05-09/11/05

The Bloody Unicorn Theater Company presents Lesbian Shorts II, its second annual festival of original lesbian-themed one-act plays, September 2-11 at the Temple of Music and Art, 330 S. Scott Avenue. This year's shows include "Paris" by Lyrallen Kaye, "A Lover's Quarrel, A Parent/Child Conflict, And A High Speed Car Chase All Neatly Resolved In Under Fifteen Minutes (Just Like In Real Life)," by Matthew Hanson, "Lemonade" by Ginger Lazarus, and several others. The shows run Fridays at 7:30 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30 pm and 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$14 and more information is available at www.bloodyunicorn.com.



Turnabout for TIHAN: Anthems/Show Stoppers 09/04/05



Tucson's annual showcase of its gay bars' staff in drag is always one of the wildest nights of the year. All proceeds benefit TIHAN (Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network). This year's Turnabout, themed "Anthems and Show Stoppers," takes place Sunday, September 4 (Labor Day weekend) at the InnSuites Hotel and Conference Center at St. Mary's & Granada. Tickets are \$12.50 in advance, or \$15 at the door.

Fusion and Anthem 9/17/05

Fusion fuses together the best of the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation's PLUS (Positive Living for Us) Weekends and the Men4Men Health Expos of the past into an energetic event for the whole community. Fusion 2005 runs 10 am to 4 pm on Saturday, September 17 at the Radisson Hotel City Center at 181 W. Broadway. Fusion is free and open to the public. The event features workshops, information booths, demonstrations, food, and health screenings. Workshops will include topics such as aging, sexual health, mental health, and sexuality. Another SAAF program, Pulse, holds its second annual Anthem rave-style party the same day and location, starting at 10 pm with a cash bar until 1:30 am, with after hours from 2 am to 5 am.



Free Lesbian Film & Video Series beginning late September



The Lesbian Looks Film & Video Series returns for another season of free screenings on the U of A campus in September/October. The series will include *Left Lane*, a new documentary which follows slam poet dynamo Alix Olson on tour. See the website for more details after September 1: <http://lgbcom.web.arizona.edu/lobbydoor.html>.

03

Celebrate LGBT pride with thousands of others at OUToberFEST >>

Smoke-free living, and first aid for your pet >>

8th Annual Wingspan Benefit Dinner & Dance 09/24/05

Sparkle, glimmer and shine at Wingspan's 8th Annual Dinner and Dance, taking place at 6 pm on Saturday, September 24 in the Copper Ballroom of the Tucson Convention Center. This is an evening celebrating Southern Arizona LGBT pride while raising funds for Wingspan. There will be an extensive silent auction, community awards, and dancing to Latin and Salsa music. The keynote speaker is Mandy Carter, director of Southerners On New Ground (SONG). Tickets are \$85 individually or \$850 for a table of ten and are on sale at Wingspan. See front page story for more.

OUToberFEST 10/08/05



Love is Love: that's the theme for this year's Pride events, including OUToberFEST, Tucson's largest annual lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Pride event. OUToberFEST is held this year on Saturday, October 8 from 10 am-8 pm in Reid Park. The celebration features music and entertainment by local, national and international performers on the main stage of the DeMeester Auditorium and at other venues throughout the park. OUToberFEST also includes a food court, vendors, information booths, youth and children's areas and more. Further information can be found at www.tucsonpride.com.

Pride... On Parade! 10/09/05

Pride... On Parade! will take place again this year on Sunday, October 9, continuing the Pride Week theme of "Love is Love." The parade will begin at 5 pm at 4th Avenue and 9th Street and head north up 4th Avenue to its conclusion at 4th Avenue and 5th Street, where there will be a block party with live entertainment. Information on the parade, entering a float or contingency, or sponsoring Pride... On Parade! is available at www.prideonparade.com.



LGBT Healthy Living & Healthy Relationships Fair 10/15/05

On Saturday, October 15, happy, healthy living for the LGBT community will take center stage at the Wingspan LGBT Health Fair, held at Wingspan. There will be workshops, info tables, and health screenings. Come learn more about topics such as smoke-free living, first aid for your pet, alternative cancer treatments, and shopping for easy and nutritious meals. Also, in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Wingspan Anti-Violence Project will present an in-depth workshop on healthy communication, identifying and addressing unhealthy behavior patterns, and positive tools for change in interpersonal relationships. For details, watch the Wingspan Weekly E-News, check the Wingspan website, or call Lauren McElroy-Herrera of the Wingspan Health and Wellness Program at 520-624-1779 x 23. For more information about the healthy relationships workshop, contact Lori Girshick at 520-624-1779 x 20.

AIDSWALK 2005: Remember. Support. Prevent 10/16/05



Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 16 and come to AIDSWALK 2005! Join thousands of friends, families, and community members walking to remember loved ones who have passed, support those who continue to battle HIV/AIDS, and educate the local community about HIV/AIDS prevention. Proceeds go to support the programs and services of the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation. For registration forms or additional information, please visit www.aidswalktucson.com or call 520-791-WALK(9255).

Senior Pride Halloween Costume Party 10/29/05

Senior Pride is gearing up for Halloween with a Costume Party on Saturday, October 29 at 1-4 pm in the Anzaldúa Room at Wingspan. Don your spookiest duds, or put on your prettiest, and spend the afternoon enjoying snacks and good company. Check the Wingspan website or contact Pat Woelke at 520-624-1779 x 22 for more information.



“The new building is really about having community space,” says Executive Director Kent Burbank. >>

Wingspan on the Move

(continued from page 1) myriad of grassroots LGBT organizations, ranging from AA to GLSEN to Buddhist Meditation. Victor says, “It provides a strong sense of community because we’re all under one roof again.”

An open community living space houses the Wingspan lending library and community bulletin boards and has couches and chairs for people to read, relax and socialize. The first floor is also home to a six-computer CyberCenter that is open to the public at no cost. Executive Director Kent Burbank says, “This is really about having community space, which we’ve been short on.”

The cornerstone of the downstairs area is the front desk which, since Wingspan’s inception, has been the source of information about all things LGBT in Tucson, from social groups to lawyers to local bars. The knowledgeable front desk volunteers continue to greet visitors, answer community members’ questions, and guide people toward appropriate resources and referrals.

In order to better serve the community and accommodate grassroots LGBT groups, Wingspan has expanded its hours. It is now open to the public 11 am-9 pm on weekdays and 10 am-4:30 pm on weekends. The first floor of the new building is entirely wheelchair accessible, and parking for people with disabilities is located at the front of the building. The back of the building has a full parking lot for other center visitors.



Staff and volunteers at the new center have more usable space

The new building has also helped meet the needs of Wingspan’s programs and staff. As Victor Ventura says, “It’s an official office building, as opposed to a makeshift. The old space was endearing, but this is much more functional.” Wingspan has 17 staff members, over 200 volunteers, and a budget of \$1 million. It is now one of the largest, most active community centers in the country. With this growth has come a tremendous expansion of services. Wingspan’s programs are housed on the second floor of the new building, also a 2,800 square foot space.

Cathy Busha, Director of Programs, expresses everyone’s pleasure with the move when she says, “We’re very excited about the increased space and capacity for the community, and we’re looking forward to volunteers bringing their ideas and energy for new endeavors.”

SAGA to Merge with Wingspan in August

The Southern Arizona Gender Alliance (SAGA) will merge with Wingspan in late August 2005, becoming a formal program of the community center. SAGA was conceived in January 1998 at a meeting of the Dezerz Boyz peer support group for female-to-male transsexuals. Welcoming all individuals on the transsexual, transgender, intersex, and gender-variant spectrums, SAGA organizes educational, support, and social programs. SAGA also provides education for service providers on how to work with transgender clients.



Michael Woodward (left) at the 2004 NTAC Lobby Days in Washington

From three founders, including current President Kevin Maxey, M.D., SAGA has grown to have over 200 regular participants with a monthly meeting attendance of 20-30. “The merger’s big advantage for Wingspan,” Kevin notes, “is in creating a more integrated community center.” Michael Woodward, SAGA’s Executive Director, adds, “This will give SAGA office space, a permanent home so that people will know where we are, and greater visibility. It will free my time to do more programming and fewer administrative tasks.”

SAGA has several ongoing programs. The Arizona Transgender Workplace (ATWORK) Project fosters open, inclusive, and safe work environments by educating managers and supervisors on transgender issues. The Goodrum Transgender Mental Health Project began after transgender activist Alexander John Goodrum committed suicide while under “watch” in a mental health facility. The Goodrum Project trains advocates to assist transgender consumers within the public mental health system, and educates mental health staff about transgender needs and rights. SAGA also has a very active Speakers Bureau. Dezerz Boyz continues to meet monthly with 10-15 attendees each time, and the newer Dezerz Girlz group has 10-15 participants each month as well. Both groups often have new attendees each month, and draw people from all over Arizona.

For more information visit www.wingspan.org and www.sagatucson.org, or call Michael at Wingspan, 520-624-1779. **by Joseph Heller**

Anti-Gay-Marriage Initiative

On April 18, the right-wing Center for Arizona Policy (CAP) announced a signature-gathering campaign to put a proposal for the following amendment to the Arizona Constitution on the November 2006 ballot: "To preserve and protect marriage in this state, only a union between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage by this state or its political subdivisions and no legal status for unmarried persons shall be created or recognized by this state or its political subdivisions that is similar to that of marriage." As Jess Knutsen, Wingspan's Coordinator of Advocacy and Public Policy, says, "This amendment takes away rights already granted by Tucson, Phoenix, Tempe, Scottsdale and Pima County. It takes away the right to provide for a loved one, and it takes away the right to see a loved one in the hospital or to make medical decisions for a loved one." She emphasizes, "This amendment goes further by not only taking away rights, but by denying the LGBT community the ability to gain rights in the future. Although the extremist right wants people to think this is only about marriage, it isn't – it is about basic civil and human rights."

What can you do: 1) Go to the website of Arizona Together, the statewide coalition fighting the proposed amendment, at www.aztogether.org, and sign up to be on the mailing list. 2) While you're on the website, make a donation. 3) Volunteer for the Southern Arizona efforts by contacting Jess Knutsen at 520-624-1779 x 21, or jknutson@wingspan.org. 4) Come out to everyone you know. Research has shown that the most important factor in countering anti-LGBT attitudes and votes is knowing an actual LGBT person. **by Joseph Heller**

LGBT Jewish Inclusion Grant

"It's a little bit hard sometimes to be bisexual and Jewish," says Julie Levitt-Guren. "I always felt a little bit out of place because I would look around synagogue and other Jewish events and see heterosexual families. I felt a little bit like an outsider because I didn't see any other examples or options." When she moved to Tucson several years ago, Julie was delighted to learn about the Gertrude Stein Salon, an informal social and discussion group for Tucson's LGBT Jews. "It gave me the opportunity to meet other people like me who *are* making it work," Julie says. Mike Steinberg, who served as the president of Dallas's LGBT synagogue, Congregation Beth El Binah, before moving to Tucson, agrees. He says, "My partner Alan and I were used to doing a lot with other GLBT Jews many days each week. Tucson isn't really big enough for a synagogue like that, but the Salon is helping to provide the same kind of opportunity for GLBT Jews to share both religious and social events together as a community. It's a good thing that will hopefully grow stronger and stronger in the future."

Now, with the help from a \$10,000 grant from the Jewish Federation, this informal group will indeed become stronger and have a more permanent presence. The new LGBT Jewish Inclusion Project will be hosted by the Jewish Community Center's Outreach Connection Program. The project has just hired a 10 hour/week staff person, Ed Leven, and will organize frequent events for LGBT Jews. Additionally, the project has a strong emphasis on working with leaders within the Jewish community to reach out to LGBT Jews and make synagogues more inclusive. Brenda Kazen comments, "My experience being gay and Jewish in the Tucson community is that we're *marginally* welcome in places. Now, the Jewish community is realizing that they're losing a lot of gay Jews, and they need to reach out. I appreciate it – it's great."



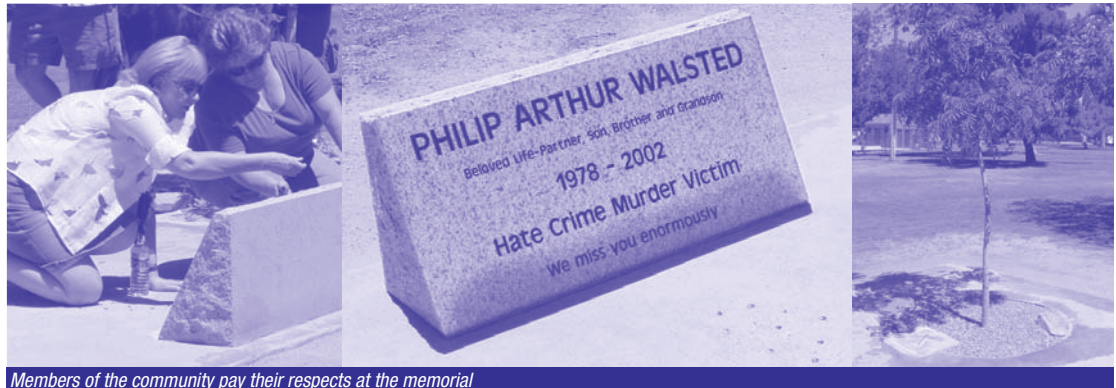
The festive Gertrude Stein Salon Chanukah party

The Gertrude Stein Salon has already taken steps in this direction, hosting a forum at the Stone Avenue Temple in May 2004 where rabbis and board presidents from local congregations addressed issues of inclusion. "I was so moved and so encouraged by that event," says Meredith Trauner, who founded the Gertrude Stein Salon in 2002. "Everyone who spoke was truly eager to make LGBT Jews feel welcome. All the congregations need now is some guidance on how to really make that happen. An inclusion statement posted on the wall, a membership policy that allows same-sex partners to join as a couple, sermons that use inclusive language and hopefully sometimes address LGBT issues explicitly – it doesn't take much, and I think that Tucson's congregations will get there in the next few years." To help them and other Jewish community groups along, the grant includes funds for several workshops by MOSAIC, a national group providing training on LGBT Jewish inclusion. Meredith adds, "I'm also grateful to Wingspan for being so supportive of Salon events and helping out with – actually, writing – the proposal for this new grant. I can't wait to see the results." For more information on the LGBT Jewish Inclusion Project, contact Ed Leven at 520-577-9393.

You can help in the battle for equal human rights >>

The LGBT Jewish Inclusion Project will work with leaders within the Jewish community to reach out to LGBT Jews and make synagogues more inclusive >>

Philip Walsted Memorial



Members of the community pay their respects at the memorial

On June 18, over fifty community members gathered at Catalina Park on Fourth Avenue to dedicate a memorial stone, bench and tree in memory of hate crime murder

victim Philip Walsted. The memorial was a collaboration between Wingspan, the City of Tucson, and Philip's partner, Jonathan.

Community Member Profile: Jim Thomas



Jim Thomas keeping TV real at Access Tucson

Jim Thomas was living in Pittsburgh with a comfortable job as a professor of media arts when he got a long-distance call from a friend. "Jimmie, you really should be in Tucson. They're about to open our dream access [television] station in Tucson! The equipment's gonna work, and the people that work there are gonna give a shit."

"My friends all gave me three months," Jim reflects. "I was too much of a big-city boy." That was in 1985, and Jim has been working at Access Tucson for twenty years now.

Community access television, Jim explains, provides anyone in the community with free access to production equipment and free television air time. "It's really the other voice," he says. "It really is. This is a way that on a first-come, first-served, uncensored basis, you can say whatever you want to say. It simply doesn't exist – it's unique." Tucson's access station is nationally known for both the quality of its facilities and the number and enthusiasm of the people who take advantage of them.

Jim also keeps up with local politics by moonlighting for Channel 12 as the cameraman and director for City Council meetings; he has covered ninety percent of those

meetings in recent years. He comments, "People will say, 'Wow, you must get bored,' but actually, I'm a little bit of a junkie for that kind of thing." Additionally, he has helped Wingspan out by volunteer directing the Access Tucson broadcast of the Wingspan Dinner. "I love it, the dinner is a beautiful production," he says. "It's got lots of eye candy."

However, Jim comments, "It's a disappointment right now that Access Tucson doesn't have any ongoing local LGBT programming. In 1984, when we first opened, we started with a program called *Arizona Gay* that was on for years." Access Tucson does broadcast LGBT programs produced elsewhere, including *Gay USA*. Jim strongly encourages anyone interested to get involved and start a local LGBT television series. Two free classes are all it takes to get started.

Jim lives near First and Grant with his partner of seven years, and is involved with the South Side Presbyterian Church. **by Meredith Trauner**

Senior Pride Line Dance



Seniors get into the swing of things at free line dance lessons

Jim Thomas has been behind the scenes at Access Tucson for 20 years >>

07

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Bring your pride to work this fall with Workplace Giving! Many employers give their employees the option of donating to the charity of their choice directly from a paycheck. These pre-tax gifts help the LGBT community in many ways. It's great to be out and proud as an LGBT or allied person to your employer. It may save you money and time on your taxes. And, best of all, it's a simple, convenient, don't-have-to-think-about-it way to support Wingspan's valuable programs all year long!

Amy Steele has been giving to Wingspan through her job with Pima County for years. "It's great because I don't have to remember to write a check, but every time I come to Wingspan, I know I'm helping to make it all happen," Amy says. "Also, it's a little reminder to my employer that LGBT issues are important to me and many other valuable employees."

Wingspan is a member of Community Shares of Southern Arizona. As a result, Wingspan receives a portion of any *undesignated* gift made to Community Shares. With all of the other campaigns, if Wingspan is not specifically designated, it receives nothing. Each workplace program typically assigns a specific code for each organization receiving gifts. Wingspan's codes are as follows:

4105 Combined Federal Campaign

9927 ECAP – City of Tucson and Pima County

0L652 IBM ECCC

620 State Employees Charitable Campaign

No agency code required – simply write in "Wingspan":

Community Shares of Southern Arizona

Raytheon Rays of Hope Campaign

United Way

University of Arizona

If you opt to make a workplace donation to Wingspan, please let Wingspan know, so that your generosity can be acknowledged right away.

All of these campaigns do take a percentage of each gift for handling fees. If you wish to avoid these handling fees, you may opt instead to make a monthly gift via credit card directly to Wingspan. **by Miriam Barnard**

Volunteer Profile



Karyn Prechtel

Karyn Prechtel, Wingspan's Library Committee chairperson, has lived in Tucson since she was three years old. She earned her undergraduate degree as well as her Master's in Library Science at the University of Arizona. She is currently a librarian supervisor for the Tucson-Pima Public Library.

Karyn started volunteering at Wingspan over three years ago, when as a bisexual woman she fell in love with a man, and feared losing connection with the LGBT community. But in fact, Karyn has not only stayed very involved in the community but has also recruited her partner Jonathan's help with the Wingspan Library.

Karyn's professional skills as a librarian have been invaluable to Wingspan's lending library, which is funded by community support and available to the public at no cost. She has volunteered with the Library for three and a half years, and has been the chair for one year. She has also volunteered with the Film Festival for the last three years, work that she really enjoys. "Especially last year," says Karyn. "Bringing Christine Vachon here and seeing all of that planning come to fruition was really exciting."

When asked about her hobbies, Karyn replies, "Well, naturally, I like to read." But in addition to her more quiet librarian-esque hobbies of reading, movies and gardening, Karyn is an ex-motorcycle-driving club DJ who loves rap music and driving her sports cars – fast! She loves Wingspan because "Wingspan is open and accepting of all kinds of people within the LGBT community." At Wingspan, "there is a place for everyone." What does Wingspan need? "New bookshelves," to house its growing lending and resource library. **by Kendall Tankersley**



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520-624-1779

www.wingspan.org

24-hour Anti-Violence Crisis Line:

520-624-0348 or 1-800-553-9387

Wingspan is looking for a long-term relationship! Sign on and offer your support every month of the year.

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Please do not include my name in Wingspan's donor recognition materials.

Wingspan is a not-for-profit organization. Your contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by the law. **Mail this form to Wingspan at 425 East 7th Street, Tucson, AZ 85705**