



Amy E. Bartell is an artist and activist who believes in the power of art as a tool for positive social change. Her work addresses issues of social justice and diversity and is distributed internationally through such venues as the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, California and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. Her commissioned works include: The National Organization for Women, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the Worcester Women's History Project, Vera House, The Q Center, SAGE and for the Freedom to Marry Campaign. She has also created over two dozen murals on college campuses and for non-profit organizations including: SUNY Oswego, Syracuse University, Carleton College, California State, Wells College, Towson University, Monmouth University, The Food Bank of CNY, AIDS Community Resources, University of Connecticut, University of New Hampshire and Washington State University. She is the recipient of the Unsung Heroine Award from the National Organization for Women and the Rubenstein Social Justice Award from Syracuse University. Amy teaches illustration and graphic design at SUNY Oswego. *"Love Wins." If I had a family crest, this would be it - if I flew a flag outside my house, my studio, my office, my car, this would be it. These are the two words I believe in most. This is what I hold to be true. Of course, there is so much evidence to the contrary. Holding strong to this conviction is a radical act. I*



live in the relentless pursuit of it.



Crystal Collette is a social worker who works for social justice in her personal and professional life. Crystal has lived in Lowville, NY in Lewis County with her husband and son since 2015. From 2002-2015, Crystal lived and worked in Syracuse. As a queer woman, Crystal has always worked to remain connected to the LGBTQ community and to build community in Lewis County. She worked as a social worker in Lewis and Jefferson Counties, and she began her current position as the Director of the Lewis County Office for the Aging in December of 2019. She has been a member of the COVID Emergency Operations Center for Lewis County throughout the pandemic, supporting the OFA to continue serving the community at full

capacity. In Syracuse, Crystal worked for Vera House and Planned Parenthood of the Rochester/Syracuse Region. She has built a career as a nonprofit leader with skills in administration, grant writing, staff development, and nonprofit monitoring. Crystal has also taught at LeMoyne College and is now teaching at Nazareth College in the Masters of Social Work Program. She has worked for Empire State College as an Adjunct for 8 years. Crystal has volunteered and served on the boards of many organizations, including the ACLU Central NY Chapter, the Citizens Review Board, and The Q Center. She currently serves on the board of Lewis County Opportunities. She is a founding member of Indivisible Lowville and was proud to support the community in organizing the first ever "Pride Picnic" in 2017. Crystal is passionate about services and supports for LGBTQ people as they age in rural communities.



Branwen Drew is an award-winning artist, community activist, progressive, and a published poet. She is a native New Yorker from Ithaca, NY. A Navy veteran, Branwen served during the Vietnam Era as an electronics technician and received an honorable discharge with the rank of E-5. She received her Bachelor of Science from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University in 1976 and her Masters of Science from Drexel University in 1985. Branwen was a college professor and librarian in the SUNY system for thirty years and a research librarian and government contractor for the US Air Force Research Lab

Information Directorate for 9 years. Branwen came out as a trans woman in 2018 and has been a member of SAGE since then and is active in the SAGE Upstate Transgender Alliance and in SAGE Vets. She is active in her community of Rome and Oneida County. She serves as a ward chair on the Rome City Democratic Committee and the Oneida County Democratic Committee. As an activist, Branwen is a member of Citizen Action of Central New York, Working Families Party, and Indivisible Mohawk Valley. She is an active member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Utica where she serves as a member of the Board of Trustees and in various lay leadership activities. She is a "proud 70-year-old trans woman."



Margaret Himley recently retired from Syracuse University as a professor of Writing and LGBTQ Studies. For over 38 years she taught writing and rhetoric courses, designed pedagogies and curricula, directed the study abroad program, served on a zillion committees, and researched how people become writers. She co-founded the LGBTQ Studies minor and program and worked with others on various LGBTQ educational and policy projects across campus, engaging students and faculty in the field of LGBTQ histories, theories, and politics. She considers her most important accomplishments to include: Teaching the

rhetoric of AIDS. Digging into the archives and learning about LGBTQ folks across time and space. Supporting students through tough times. Creating community across generations. Bringing academics and activists to campus. And developing LGBTQ courses at the university's study abroad centers. In November 2019 Margaret collaborated with her campus colleagues and worked with Kim Dill on hosting a cross-generational dinner at SAGE, with the goal of bringing LGBTQ folks together to share experiences, stories, histories, and hopes. She brought six students from campus, who thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the 'older' folks in the community, and who raved about the people they had met when they returned to class the next day. It is her hope now to follow up on efforts like this – through SAGE – to bring histories forward, share stories, and document the wide range of LGBTQ experiences across generations.



Leslie Lamb was born in Riverside, CA but grew up in Syracuse, NY. She was the 5th out of 6 children (2 boys, 4 girls). She graduated from Cazenovia College in 2004 with a Bachelor's Degree in Human Services. She lives in Cicero, NY with her girlfriend Monica (fiancé as of February 2021). Leslie spent the first 14 years of her career working in Activities in the nursing home setting. She was a member of the SAGE Upstate staff for almost two years. Her first day initiation at SAGE as Program Coordinator was on 11/11/18, with the Veteran's Day potluck! In August of 2020 Leslie took a position as a Care Manager at Circare (formerly Onondaga Case Management Services). In her free time Leslie volunteers for

Seventh Heaven Rescue, where she feels privileged to be a part of a great team helping dogs finding their "forever" homes. She enjoys crafting, reading, traveling, hiking and spending time with her family. She is proud to have 19 nieces & nephews that she absolutely loves spending time with. She has a rescue puggle named Otto, in honor of her love for SU Sports, who has been my sidekick for 11 years.



Rita Gram grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the second oldest in a family of seven children. After high school, Rita joined the Air Force, and served for three years as an administrative clerk for a flight squadron at Norton AFB in San Bernardino, then another year as a communications squadron at Hancock Field. After she got out of the service, Rita took a civil service job at the Armed Forces Entrance Station. She assisted in the processing of troops (mostly draftees) for the military, and enlisted in the NY Army National Guard, receiving an honorable discharge after two years' service. Rita

enlisted again during the Gulf War, this time in the NYS Air National Guard at Hancock Field as a communications specialist and paralegal. At the time gays were not allowed in the military, and though Rita did not identify as gay, she had friendships with lesbians and eventually identified as such. She was asked to resign, and she did so, receiving an honorable discharge, with the understanding she could not re-enlist. Along with motherhood and military service to our nation, Rita worked for the Social Security Administration for 13 years, then left to work for Legal Services as a Senior Paralegal representing people trying to get disability benefits. Rita earned her BS in Vocational Education at SUNY Oswego followed by a dual Masters in Education and Adult Education from Elmira College. She taught adult education for the Syracuse School District and Accounting and Law office procedures at CCBI. She also served in the NYS Unified Courts as a Court Clerk and accepted a position to head the Operations Unit with the 5th Judicial District where she supervised the operations of six counties. In 2010, Rita and Sue Friedland were married in Massachusetts. Rita also stopped teaching in 2010 to spend more time with my new wife, family and friends. In 2017 she retired from her Court position and since then she has been enjoying time with her wife and best friend of over 25 years. Many years ago, Sue and Rita were invited to a dinner at Jim Simonis' house with Coy Ludwig and Dan Smith. There, they first heard of a group called SAGE in New York City. Dan and Coy were enthusiastic with all kinds of ideas for Central New York. After that dinner Rita and Sue were sold. Along with Sue, Rita is a founding member of SAGE. Sue was on the original Board of Directors and Rita worked on the Fundraising Committee. Rita is currently working with SAGE Vets, doing incredible work with the Syracuse VA and SAGE USA.