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PDF Courtesy of GayTucson.com

### Meet Tony Ray Baker the man behind www.gaytucson.com

With 1,000's of ways to communicate in our world today it is hard to tell what is legitimate and what is not. So it's nice to have a site you can trust and count on. That is exactly what you will find when you visit [www.gaytucson.com](http://www.gaytucson.com) but what where did this idea come and what does it take to keep that legitimacy going 24 hours a day 7 days a week. I caught up with Tucson Realtor Tony Ray Baker founder of gaytucson.com to find out.

John Foley: Tony I want to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to talk me aboutGayTucson.com

Tony Ray: Hi John, thank you, I really appreciate your interest in GayTucson.com

JF: Your website GayTucson.com what exactly is your site all about?

TR: Simply put, it's about our community. It's about bringing the Tucson LGBT community and its many allies together as one, in one place so that everyone can find information easily and support each other

JF: When did you launch gaytucson.com?

TR: I purchased the URL in September of 2001 and then launched the first version of GayTucson.com in March of 2002. March 2017 is Gay Tucson's 15th Birthday!

JF: Where did you come up with the concept for this site?

TR: As you know John, I'm a REALTOR®. One day I received a phone call from a very upset, gay man, whose boyfriend had been transferred to Tucson. They needed to buy a home. He had heard a lot of negative things about Tucson and he was afraid to move here. I told him of all the great places and people who I knew and that I loved Tucson for being such an accepting community of everyone. By the end of our conversation he had a completely different view of Tucson. The next day I had the idea to create a website, about 10 pages, that would showcase all of the non-profits, people and companies that were here to help the gay community.

JF: I understand the concept but what inspired you to go through with this website?

TR: I just kept thinking about that phone call; how horrible it must be to feel afraid to live in a new place and not feel safe. I wanted to help others by showing them the beautiful Tucson community that I've always been so proud to be a part of.

JF: What will you find on the GayTucson.com website?

TR: Photos, Videos, LGBT events, Businesses, Non-Profits, News, Links to Resources, Real Estate info (of course lol), Groups, Bars, Clubs, Blogs and anything we can find to support, enhance, unite and lift our community.

JF: What does it take to put this out to the community?

TR: Our team works on the site about 30- 40 hours a week with our main focus on: research, content creation, writing, video, photography, SEO and community outreach.

JF: You mentioned to me that this site is a gift to Tucson what does that mean?

TR: My hope is that the websites gift, is that it's helping others individually and our community as a whole by connecting people with resources and each other. We spend our time, energy and money every week to keep GayTucson.com running for that reason.

JF: What do you get out of putting this site out to the community?

TR: For me, a better place to live and a stronger sense of community. GayTucson.com keeps me connected with what's happening and people and the city. It helps me stay grounded in a sense. On a business level, GayTucson.com connects me with new LGBT members of other communities who are moving to Tucson. It allows me to show them the beautiful Tucson that I know and love.

JF: Where does your passion come from in regards to Tucson?

TR: I have traveled to many places and no matter where I am, I find myself telling someone about Tucson and how proud I am to be a part of this community. Tucson and the people who live here have so much to offer.9JF: What can we expect to see for GayTucson.com in 2017?

TR: Well, we just finished a complete remodel to update the look and feel of the site and make it even more user friendly. We spent all of 2016 recreating GayTucson.com and now it can do just about anything and everything. As you might tell, I'm very proud and excited about it. One of our new projects is to add LGBT accolades focusing on how great Tucson is and we are definitely working to promote more businesses.

JF: How does somebody contact gaytucson.com to post information for the community?

TR: To add events to the calendar, click on the Calendar page and fill out the simple form at the top right. Please upload photos as well as text. Also, there are "Contact Us" forms you can use on every page and you can email me: TonyRay@GayTucson.com

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