

About JJ Marie Gufreda



Joe Gufreda was a loving husband and father, successful businessman and faithful Catholic in the Midwest. But after years of confusion and anxiety, he realized he was not living his true gender and began the journey toward becoming JJ Marie!

Raised in a Sicilian-American household in Cleveland, Joe had a “normal” childhood playing sports, scrapping on the playground, serving as an altar boy and, as he grew older, dating girls. But from early on he knew he was different from the other boys: In secret he liked to dress in women’s clothes.

Thanks to a lack of information about transgenders in that era, Joe was confused about what his leanings meant. Was he one of a kind? A transvestite? It wasn’t until he discovered a book about transgenders in a college library that he began the journey to change genders.

Today, JJ Marie Gufreda is still a faithful Catholic, a loving spouse and parent of three children and “Nonna” to three grandchildren. JJ remains a successful businessperson, serving the past 15 years as President of GEI Inc., an Operations and Process Improvement Consulting firm located in Indianapolis, Indiana. She has been the President of the Indy Rainbow Chamber of Commerce since June 2011 and has recently spoken at University of Indy, Ball State and Indiana University Northwest.

JJ captured the evolution from Joe to JJ Marie in the book *Left-Hander in London: A field guide to transgenders, lesbians, gays and bisexuals in the family, on the job and in the pew*. The book traces Gufreda's journey, from sharing his secret with his wife to dressing as a woman at home and a man everywhere else to telling his family, friends and business associates that he was becoming a woman.

Most recently, JJ is performing a play, *Left-Hander in London: The Earthquake* that also takes the audience through her journey. Riddled with humor and peppered with Gufreda’s shocking obstacles, it’s another way to see just what it means when an ordinary Joe becomes a Jane. Now, JJ is teaming up with a well-known entertainer, “Vanity Fair”-recognized Judy Garland doppelganger, Kimberly Roberts, and taking *The Earthquake* on the road beginning in Toronto, Ontario during World Pride 2014!