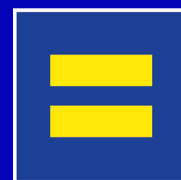




SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS
WHO ARE CHANGING OUR WORLD

ROBERT F.
KENNEDY
HUMAN
RIGHTS



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN
FOUNDATIONTM

Based on the book by KERRY KENNEDY | Photography by EDDIE ADAMS and ARCHITECTS OF PEACE
ROBERT F. KENNEDY HUMAN RIGHTS

PROGRAM INTRODUCTIONS

ROBERT F. KENNEDY HUMAN RIGHTS

Speak Truth to Power, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights

Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights' Speak Truth to Power (STTP) is a human rights education initiative designed to build the next generation of human rights defenders, leaders, and activists. Using the stories and experiences of human rights defenders from around the world, we provide young people with the tools to stand up and speak out against the world's most horrific human rights abuses and violations. Our goal is to empower and embolden: By encouraging one person to realize their role in achieving social justice, we create ripples of hope that will change the way we all engage with our governments and communities, and will prevent human rights abuses and violent conflicts.

STTP immerses both educators and students in human rights, introducing them to knowledge and information that contextualizes the human rights framework. It engages them through human rights by learning and teaching in a way that respects all educators and students. And it is for human rights, equipping them

with the skills and the social and emotional intelligence to defend human rights through mindful action. STTP's goal is a world where human rights education is woven into the fabric of all educators' pedagogy, and where young people have learned the mindsets, attitudes, and behaviors they will need as the next generation of effective human rights defenders. Our program facilitates this development through training and a variety of accompanying lessons and activities connected to international, national, and local learning standards across all subject matters, including the arts, that have been inspired by the stories of prominent human rights defenders.

Through our "How to Become a Defender Toolkit," we equip our young people with the skill sets to take effective action in defending and advancing human rights through the transformative power of community organizing, advocacy, and individual acts of service.



Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and HRC Foundation

The Human Rights Campaign envisions a world where every member of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) family has the freedom to live their truth without fear, and with equality under the law. HRC empowers its 3 million members and supporters to mobilize against attacks on the most marginalized people in the LGBTQ community.

The HRC Foundation seeks to improve LGBTQ people's lives by making the institutions that govern their lives welcoming and

inclusive. It identifies the problems and challenges LGBTQ people face, then follows a clear model for effecting change. The HRC Foundation leverages relationships with its partner organizations, advocates, and allies to advance LGBTQ policy objectives at the local, state, national, and international levels. Ultimately, the HRC Foundation enhances LGBTQ people and their families' lived experiences, as it changes hearts and minds across America and worldwide.

"WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?"

HUMAN RIGHTS ARE THE RIGHTS PEOPLE HAVE SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY ARE HUMAN BEINGS. HUMAN RIGHTS ARE HELD BY ALL PERSONS EQUALLY, UNIVERSALLY, AND FOREVER.

Human rights are inalienable: You cannot lose these rights any more than you can cease being a human being. Human rights are indivisible: You cannot be denied a right because it is "less important" or "nonessential." Human rights are interdependent: All human rights are part of a complementary framework. For example, your ability to participate in your government is directly affected by your right to express yourself, to get an education, and even to obtain the necessities of life.

Another definition of human rights is those basic standards without which people cannot live with dignity. To violate someone's human rights is to treat that person as though they were not a human being. To advocate for human rights is to demand that the human dignity of all people be respected. In claiming these human rights, everyone also accepts the responsibility not to infringe on the rights of others and to support those whose rights are abused or denied.

Human rights are both inspirational and practical. Human rights principles hold up the vision of a free, just, and peaceful world, and set minimum standards for how individuals and institutions everywhere should treat people. Human rights also empower people with a framework for action when those minimum standards are not met, for people still have human rights, even if the laws or those in power do not recognize or protect them.

We experience our human rights every day when we worship according to our beliefs, or choose not to worship at all; when we debate and criticize government policies; when we join a trade union; or when we travel to other parts of the country or overseas. Although we usually take these actions for granted, people both here in the United States and in other countries do not enjoy all these liberties equally. Human rights violations occur when a parent abuses a child; when a family is homeless; when a school provides inadequate education; when women are paid less than men; or when one person steals from another. Human rights are an everyday issue.

BECOME A DEFENDER

Everyone can become a defender, whether they have one day or an entire academic year. Following are a few examples of how you can support students in their efforts to be defenders.

TIPS:

Have a strategy:

- Identify the problem to be addressed.
- Research the problem: Why is this a problem? What solutions have been tried? (Some of this will have been covered in the lesson.)
- What change is required?
- Define action steps and specific target audiences. Who can make the change happen?
- How can the group involve other supporters?
- How will the impact of the group's efforts be measured?

1 DAY: If you have one day to take action, plan an activity that is simple and focused, such as writing letters or organizing an information day in your school.

1 WEEK: If you have a week to take action, focus on an event or program that builds from awareness to action. For example, begin by educating your target community about the issue, then provide a series of actions people can take over the course of a week.

1 SEMESTER: If you have a term to take action, build a program that integrates your classroom learning with a comprehensive, multilayered project. Consider designing a human rights-based service learning project.

GAVIN GRIMM (he/him/his)



“ALL TRANSGENDER STUDENTS SHOULD HAVE WHAT I WAS DENIED: THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE SEEN FOR WHO WE ARE BY OUR SCHOOLS AND OUR GOVERNMENT.”

–Gavin Grimm

[Biography from Gavin Grimm’s Facebook page.](#)

My name is Gavin Grimm. I grew up in Gloucester, Va., and I’m the plaintiff in a federal transgender rights lawsuit that was headed to the Supreme Court but got sent back to the lower courts and is still working its way through the judicial system.

I came out as transgender during my sophomore year at Gloucester High School. With my principal’s permission, I used the boys’ restrooms at school for almost two months without any problems, but then a handful of parents went to the school board to complain about me. The school board held a public meeting to talk about my body. It was humiliating and frightening to see one adult after another stand up and say hateful things about me. Then the school board voted to ban me from using the boys’ restrooms at school. With the help of the American Civil Liberties Union, I sued my school.

My case worked its way up to the Supreme Court and was set to be argued in March 2017, but then the Supreme Court announced that it was sending my case back to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals to be reconsidered in light of the Departments of Justice and Education pulling back the previous administration’s Title IX guidance clarifying protections for transgender students. In 2019 I won my case in the lower court. The school has appealed and we expect to have arguments in the appeal at the Fourth Circuit sometime in the spring of 2020.

Note: In August 2020, the Fourth Circuit ruled that the school board policy that prohibited Gavin from using the boys’ restroom violated both Title IX and the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution’s 14th Amendment.

ANDREA JENKINS (she/her/hers)



“IT’S MORE THAN JUST HAVING A SEAT AT THE TABLE. IT’S HAVING A SEAT AT THE TABLE AND BEING ABLE TO SPEAK TO POWER.”

–Andrea Jenkins

[Biography from the City of Minneapolis’ Information and Services.](#)

Andrea Jenkins made history in 2017 as the first African American openly trans woman to be elected to office in the United States. In addition to representing Ward 8 and serving as the Vice President of the Minneapolis City Council, she is a writer, performance artist, poet, and transgender activist.

Jenkins moved to Minnesota to attend the University of Minnesota in 1979. She worked as a Vocational Counselor for Hennepin County government for a decade. Jenkins worked as a staff member on the Minneapolis City Council for 12 years before beginning work as curator of the Transgender Oral History Project at the University of Minnesota’s Jean-Nickolaus Tretter Collection in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Studies.

She holds a master’s degree in Community Development from Southern New Hampshire University, an MFA in Creative Writing from Hamline University, and a Bachelor’s Degree in Human Services from Metropolitan State University. She is a nationally and internationally recognized writer and artist, a 2011 Bush Fellow to advance the work of transgender inclusion, and the recipient of numerous awards and fellowships. In 2018 she completed the Senior Executives in State and Local Government program at Harvard University.

“WE ARE BORN AS WHO WE ARE; THE GENDER THING IS SOMETHING THAT IS IMPOSED ON YOU.” –Laverne Cox

LAVERNE COX (she/her/hers)



[Biography from Laverne Cox's website.](#)

It was at Marymount [Manhattan College] that the acting bug bit me. My first week there a guest teacher saw me in the hall and thought I would be perfect for a play he was doing in the theater department...I did my first film during my senior year at Marymount. I was spotted on the subway sporting long box braids, too much makeup with long lashes, a paisley vintage coat with a faux-fur collar,

platform shoes, and a mini dress.

During my college years, I went from being gender nonconforming to being more and more femme. I would soon start my medical transition and living and identifying as female. As I started my transition, I knew I wanted to continue to perform, and I often found myself performing in drag shows in the nightclub scene. I never really identified as a drag queen, but it provided an outlet for my desire to perform.

By the time [transgender actress] Candis Cayne made history in 2007, I had done a number of student films and independent films, often to get experience on camera and footage for my acting reel. I had acted in off-off-Broadway shows for free just so I could perform more. I usually auditioned for trans roles and those were mostly the work I got. At the same time, I found myself auditioning for agents and casting directors and not disclosing that I am trans. In retrospect, I believe many of them probably knew. But I didn't want to lead with being trans; I wanted to lead with my talent. I also had a lot of shame still around being trans.

That shame started to lift when Candis Cayne came onto the scene. I didn't think it was possible to be openly trans and have a career as an actress. Candis proved that it is possible. After the premiere of *Dirty Sexy Money*, I made postcards with photos of me declaring, "Laverne Cox is the answer to all your acting needs." I sent that postcard to about 500 agents and casting directors, and it led to four meetings. One of those meetings was with Paul Hilepo, who is still my manager. The next year, I booked my first appearance in an episode of *Law and Order* (a rite of passage at the time for a New York City actor), then a second *Law and Order* appearance. Then I did my first pilot for HBO's *Bored to Death*, followed by a reality show called *I Wanna Work for Diddy*, which led to me producing and starring in my first show on VH1 called *TRANSform Me*. In 2012 I booked the show that would change my life, *Orange Is the New Black*.

SCHUYLER BAILAR (he/him/his)



[Biography from Schuyler Bailar's website.](#)

Schuyler Bailar is a celebrated inspirational speaker and inclusion advocate. He is also the first transgender athlete to compete in any sport on an NCAA Division 1 men's team. Schuyler was a star student at Georgetown Day School in Washington, D.C., one of the top private schools in the country, graduating in 2014. He was aggressively recruited by most of the Ivy League and eventually committed to swimming for Harvard.

Schuyler's love of swimming started with Mommy-and-me classes before he was a year old, and he was swimming solo before his first birthday. Schuyler competed in his first meet at the age of 7, and by 10 Schuyler was competing in the Junior Olympics. By 13, Schuyler qualified for his first national-level competition, and less than two years later, he was ranked one of the top 20 15-year-old breaststroke swimmers in the United States.

In 2012 Schuyler broke his back in three places in a biking accident. He was released from an upper-body brace

shortly before swimming championships. He went on to win all three D.C.-area 100-yard breaststroke championships and qualified as an All-American. At the 2013 NCSA Junior National Championships he qualified for the U.S. Open—the fastest U.S. meet in a non-Olympic year. At the 2013 USA Swimming National Championships, his 400-yard Medley Relay Team set the U.S. 15- to 18-year-old Age Group USA Record.

Throughout his journey, but particularly in high school, Schuyler struggled with issues of body image and self-esteem, often battling with disordered eating and self-harm. In the spring of his senior year, he decided to take a gap year before enrolling in college to deal with these issues. In therapy, it became clear that Schuyler's real struggle was with gender identity and that he was transgender. This presented Schuyler with the most difficult decision ever: whether to continue as a possible NCAA champion—on the women's team—or to transition to a man and be authentic to himself, accepting the consequences and challenges it would entail.

Schuyler's choice—to be true to himself—has been historic. His story hit Facebook's top-trending news and has been recounted globally in thousands of media outlets, from *The Washington Post*, *60 Minutes*, and *The Ellen Show*, with millions of online and broadcast media views. MTV cited his story in their list of "2015's Best Moments for the Trans Community" and BuzzFeed named him one of the "11 Transgender people who are shifting our views."

In 2019, Schuyler was awarded the prestigious Harvard Athletics Director's Award, which is not granted annually, but only when an athlete demonstrates outstanding contribution to athletics through education. He is only the seventh recipient of the award.

Schuyler's advocacy includes speaking to schools, governments, corporations, and nonprofits about inclusion and diversity. His policy work has included many national and international organizing committees, including the NCAA, the IOC, USA Swimming, and the IAAF. His work has received numerous honors from GLAAD, OUT100, MEDA, the Webbys, the Shortys, SMYAL, A-100, and AZN100.

“I REALLY JUST WANT TO BE VISIBLE SO PEOPLE KNOW THIS IS POSSIBLE THAT I EXIST—NOT ‘I’ AS IN SCHUYLER BUT ‘I’ AS IN A TRANS ATHLETE.”

–Schuyler Bailar

JACOB TOBIA (they/them/theirs)



[Biography from Jacob Tobia's website.](#)

Jacob Tobia (they/them) is an actor, writer, producer, and author of the national bestselling memoir *Sissy: A Coming-of-Gender Story*. From running across the Brooklyn Bridge in high heels to giving Trevor Noah an on-air makeover on *The Daily Show*, Jacob helps others embrace the full complexity of their gender, even (and especially) when it's messy as

hell. In addition to adapting their book into a forthcoming TV series for Showtime, Jacob recently made their acting debut as the non-binary character "Double Trouble" on Netflix's *She-Ra* and the *Princesses of Power*. Originally from Raleigh, N.C., Jacob currently lives in Los Angeles.

A member of the *Forbes* 30 Under 30 and the OUT 100, Jacob got their start on the national stage when they were interviewed by Laverne Cox as part of MTV's *The T Word* and profiled in the one-hour, GLAAD Award-nominated episode of *True Life: I'm Genderqueer*. Subsequently, they created, produced, and hosted *Queer 2.0* (a first-of-its-kind LGBTQ series for NBC News), served as the Social Media Producer on Season 4 of Amazon's Emmy Award-winning series *Transparent*, and collaborated with Instagram to produce #KindComments, a custom campaign for Trans Day of Visibility that was viewed over 14 million times. They've also produced and starred in an acclaimed revival reading of the Pulitzer and Tony Award-winning play *I Am My Own Wife* and been featured as the face of Fluide Beauty, a line of trans- and queer-inclusive makeup.

A Point Foundation Scholar and Harry S. Truman Scholar, Jacob has captivated audiences at independent bookstores, conferences, companies, and throughout the Ivy League with their message of personal fabulosity and social change. Their writing and advocacy have been featured by MSNBC, MTV, *The Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, *Time* magazine, *New York Magazine*, *Teen Vogue*, *Playboy*, *The Guardian*, and *Jezebel*, among others.

Jacob graduated Summa Cum Laude from Duke University with a degree in Human Rights Advocacy. Prior to their career in television, Jacob worked at the United Nations Foundation and the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice. Jacob is an avid Sriracha devotee and has worn high heels in the White House twice.

“THE IDEA THAT GENDER IS CONSISTENT IS A FLAWED PREMISE TO BEGIN WITH. BY RESISTING CONVENIENT LABELS AND EMBRACING AUTHENTIC AMBIGUITY, I WANT TO CHALLENGE THE TENET THAT GENDER MUST BE CONSISTENT AND IMMEDIATELY LEGIBLE TO OTHERS.”

—Jacob Tobia

CELEBRATING AND DEFENDING TRANS AND NON-BINARY LIVES

LESSON GRADE LEVELS 9–12

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

- **Article 1:** All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
- **Article 2:** Everyone is entitled to all the rights, without distinction of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status
- **Article 3:** Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.
- **Article 5:** Everyone has the right to freedom from torture and degrading treatment.
- **Article 7:** All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.
- **Article 12:** Everyone has the right to privacy.
- **Article 25:** Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living.
- **Article 26:** Everyone has the right to an education.
- **Article 27:** Everyone has the right to participate in cultural life.

TIME REQUIREMENT

One to seven 50-minute lessons

HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

LGBTQ Rights, Non-Discrimination, Dignity, Right to Life, Adequate Standard of Living, Social Security, Education, Health, Safety

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What does it mean to live and survive as our authentic selves?
- What challenges do transgender and non-binary individuals face?
- How do we learn about transgender and non-binary people in the news and our lives?
- Who are human rights defenders from the transgender and non-binary communities?
- How can we be better allies to the LGBTQ community?

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- Increase their understanding and knowledge of the transgender and non-binary communities (and be prepared to dispel incorrect notions).

- Research and examine reporting regarding transgender and non-binary human rights in the United States and by the United Nations.
- Know and empathize with STTP defenders from the LGBTQ community.
- Understand how to act as better allies for the transgender and non-binary communities and be prepared to take mindful action.

STUDENT SKILLS

- Critical thinking
- Comparing and contrasting
- Researching and analyzing information
- Perspective-taking
- Identifying emotions
- Demonstrating empathy
- Demonstrating open-mindedness
- Identifying solutions for social problems
- Evaluating impact

VOCABULARY

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| • Transgender | • Gender binary |
| • Non-binary | • Gender expression |
| • Gender-expansive | • Gender identity |
| • Gender identity | • Gender spectrum |
| • Discrimination | • LGBTQ |
| • Respect | • Pronouns |
| • Dignity | • Sex |
| • Ally | • Gender |

CONCEPTS

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| • Empathy | • Global citizenship |
| • Fairness | • Interdependence |
| • Justice | • Values |
| • Equality | • Systemic change |
| • Cultural norms | |

TECHNOLOGY REQUIRED

- Internet Access
- Computer access

MATERIALS

“Coming Out: Living Authentically as Transgender or Non-Binary”
<https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/ComingOut-TNB-Resource-2020.pdf?mtime=20201009121132&focal=none>

“Gender and Children: A Place to Begin”
<https://www.welcomingschools.org/pages/gender-and-children-a-place-to-begin/>

“Pronouns 101”
[https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/HRC_ACAF_Pronouns_101_\(1\).pdf?_ga=2.106135683.1867650562.1606163768-1163035106.1605909263](https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/HRC_ACAF_Pronouns_101_(1).pdf?_ga=2.106135683.1867650562.1606163768-1163035106.1605909263)

“Identities are DOPE! Can you name some of yours?”
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=679401079297650>

“Transgender FAQ”
<https://www.hrc.org/resources/transgender-and-non-binary-faq>

“Debunking the Myths: Transgender Health and Well-Being”
<https://www.hrc.org/resources/debunking-the-myths-transgender-health-and-well-being>

“Gender Snowperson: Understanding Gender Identity”
https://assets2.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/documents/WS_Lesson_Gender_Snowperson.pdf

“Seven Things About Transgender People That You Didn’t Know”
<https://www.hrc.org/resources/seven-things-about-transgender-people-that-you-didnt-know>

“Celebrating the Diversity of the Non-Binary Community for International Non-Binary Day 2020”
<https://www.hrc.org/news/celebrating-the-diversity-of-the-non-binary-community-for-international-non-binary-day-2020>

“Understanding the Transgender Community”
<https://www.hrc.org/resources/understanding-the-transgender-community>

“QTBIPOC Mental Health and Well-Being”
<https://www.hrc.org/resources/qtbi poc-mental-health-and-well-being>

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
<https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

UN Free & Equal
<https://www.unfe.org/breakthesilence/>

“Combating discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity”
<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Discrimination/Pages/LGBT.aspx>

“LGBT Bullying as a Violation of Universal Human Rights”
<https://www.undispatch.com/lgbt-bullying-as-a-violation-of-universal-human-rights/>

“Are LGBT rights human rights? Recent developments at the United Nations”
<https://www.apa.org/international/pi/2012/06/un-matters>

“UN Women hosts first high-level event on gender diversity and non-binary identities at UN headquarters”
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/7/news-event-gender-diversity-and-non-binary-identities>

“Guidelines for gender-inclusive language in English”
<https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml>

“Living Free and Equal: What States Are Doing to Tackle Violence and Discrimination Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex People”
<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/LivingFreeAndEqual.pdf>

“See each other. Save trans lives.”
<https://www.hrc.org/campaigns/see-each-other-save-trans-lives>

“How can cis people be good accomplices? | Trans Women & Non-Binary People of Color | Cut”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5hd_5XeSaA

“Be an Ally—Support Trans Equality”
<https://www.hrc.org/resources/be-an-ally-support-trans-equality>

“Teenagers Discuss Microaggressions and Racism #HatchKids”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RfwnibEd3A&feature=youtu.be>

“Making Decisions: Ally or Bystander”
https://assets2.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/documents/WS_Lesson_Ally_or_Bystander.pdf

Human Rights Campaign Blueprint for Positive Change 2020
<https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/Blueprint-2020.pdf?mtime=20201110185320&focal=none>

NOTE TO TEACHERS

RFK Human Rights and the HRC recognize “transgender” as an umbrella term that describes a wide range of people who experience or express their gender in a way that does not necessarily align with what they were assigned at birth. It covers many different gender identities, such as non-binary, gender fluid, agender, genderqueer, trans man, trans woman, or just trans.

This lesson plan will use the phrase “transgender and non-binary” to try to best capture this broad array of identities. That being said, it is important to recognize that not all people in these groups may identify as transgender or non-binary. In addition, there may be transgender or non-binary people whose gender does not fit in any of the terms described above, and we affirm the gender of those people and human rights defenders as valid.

At any time during this lesson, please feel free to share the HRC resource “[Coming Out: Living Authentically as Transgender or Non-Binary](#)” with youth and/or adults for advice and information on safely coming out as transgender and/or non-binary to loved ones. For other recommendations on creating a gender-inclusive classroom, please review the “[Gender and Children: A Place to Begin](#)” checklist from Welcoming Schools.

ANTICIPATORY SET

TEACHER TIP: Before starting the lesson, verbally state your chosen pronouns to class and/or include them on a physical or virtual name tag. Example: “Today, we will be learning about human rights defenders from the transgender and non-binary communities. My name is John Smith. My pronouns are they, them, theirs.” Tell students that they may also choose to share their pronouns, if they would like, on their physical or virtual name tag. Let them know that they should also include the name they would like to be called in class. Ask students to tell you if they do or do not want their pronouns to be used in front of the class, when contacting parents, or in front of other teachers.

As the teacher or facilitator, always use the students’ chosen pronouns unless you have been asked not to do so for a specific reason (e.g., safety or privacy concerns). If you have students in your school or classroom who are transgender and/or non-binary, be mindful not to put those students in the position of teaching other children about their identity. It can jeopardize a student’s safety and well-being if they are outed to their peers or non-affirming adults. Try to use inclusive phrases to address your class as a whole, such as “Good morning, everyone” or “Good afternoon, folks.”

Ensure that all students in your classroom are allowed to express themselves freely, regardless of gender norms—or any aspect of their identity that may be considered by other students to be “different.” If a student wishes to change their chosen pronouns, use the new pronoun that the student chooses.

If you or another student misgenders someone in the class, correct the person who has done the misgendering and have them apologize to the person who has been misgendered.

For other guidelines on pronouns, please refer to the HRC’s “[Pronouns 101](#).”

- Provide students with one or both of the following prompts:
 - Who is your authentic self?
 - What makes you *you*?
- Ask students to write their names at the top of a page. Then, students should write or draw aspects of their identity/their authentic self. Tell students that these aspects may be ascribed (determined by social or cultural constructions in terms of gender, race, sexuality, etc.) or how students would describe themselves. These could be qualities (ambitious, generous, kind) or experientially defining aspects (a student, an artist, an athlete).
- If students need an example for this activity, consider showing the following TikTok from the account @wokekindergarten: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=679401079297650>
- Emphasize to students that our identities and authentic selves are made up of our thoughts and emotions rather than what we or our bodies look like.
- Say or write the following phrase for the class: “Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law” (UDHR, Article 6). Tell students that all human beings everywhere are entitled to human rights by law under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This creates a world where all people (including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, and queer people) are ensured equality and embraced as full members of society at home, at work, and in every community.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1

TEACHER TIP: Consider reviewing or sharing the “[Transgender FAQ](#)” piece before facilitating this lesson to answer questions students may have about the transgender and non-binary communities.

Additionally, educators should dispel any wrongful ideas, myths, and explicit or implicit biases shown by students or others. Before facilitating, educators may review or share with students “[Debunking the Myths: Transgender Health and Well-Being](#).” When students or others express harmful and incorrect understandings of gender-expansive community members, ask students why they believe these ideas. These discussions will help students to recognize and assess the roots of past or current beliefs, as well as potential biases and the impact those biases may have.

- Ask students how they would define “gender.” They may share their definition with the class, work in pairs to develop a definition, or write their definition down privately or in an online chat with the class.
 - After students have had a chance to present ideas, share the following definitions with students on the board or PowerPoint slide:
 - **Gender** refers to the traditional or stereotypical roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women.
 - **Sex** refers to the designation of a person at birth as either “male” or “female” based on their anatomy (e.g. reproductive organs) and/or their biology (e.g. hormones).
 - Ensure that students understand that these terms are not interchangeable. Reiterate to students that sex is based on anatomical, biological, or physical designations and comprised of things like genitals, chromosomes, and hormones. However, a person’s gender identity acknowledges who a person knows themselves to be, whether that is a boy, girl, or person outside of the typical binary.
- Remind students that, as they discussed in the Anticipatory Set activity, there is so much more to a person’s identity than their sex. Tell students that they are the only ones who can define their own gender identity. Regardless of their gender experience, they are deserving of human rights and opportunities to express their gender in a way they feel is authentic.
 - Prompts for small pair share/breakout groups or journaling:
 - What was your earliest memory of realizing your gender? How did this realization come to be?
 - Have you ever experienced discrimination as a result of your gender? For example, have you ever been told not to act or behave a certain way because of your gender? How did you feel and react?
 - Have you ever felt stigmatized because of the way you chose to express your gender? How did you feel and react?
 - Ask students if they have heard of the term, “gender expression.” Allow students to explain to others if they are familiar with this term. Then, share the HRC definition on the board or PowerPoint slide:
 - **Gender expression:** The way in which people choose to express themselves, including but not limited to behavior, clothing, haircut, voice and other forms of presentation.
 - Reiterate to students that no one should be bullied or teased about their personal choice of gender expression. Additionally, it is important not to make assumptions about anyone’s gender regardless of how they choose to express themselves or look.
 - Ask students if they have heard of the term “gender-expansive.” Allow students to explain to others if they are familiar with this term. Then, share the HRC definition on the board or PowerPoint slide:
 - **Gender-expansive:** A person with a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with the binary gender system.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

If students are new to these terms or ideas, consider using or adapting the “[Gender Snowperson: Understanding Gender Identity](#)” exercise from the Welcoming Schools program.

Alternatively, if students are familiar with some of the terms but not others, teachers or facilitators may provide students with some or all of the following list of terms and definitions for reading or matching exercise:

Ally: A term used to describe someone who is actively supportive of LGBTQ people. It encompasses straight and cisgender allies, as well as those within the LGBTQ community who support each other (e.g., a lesbian who is an ally to the bisexual community).

Androgynous: Identifying and/or presenting as neither distinguishably masculine nor feminine.

Cisgender (or cis): Individuals whose gender identity or

expression aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Coming out: The process in which a person first acknowledges, accepts, and appreciates their sexual orientation or gender identity and begins to share that with others.

Gender binary: The notion that only two genders exist, each solidly fixed, biologically based, and attached to various expectations for behavior, appearance, and feelings. The binary gender system, while predominant in most cultures, is not the only model of gender that exists; more nuanced, non-binary understandings of gender have existed throughout history and across cultures.

Gender dysphoria: Clinically significant distress caused when a person’s assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify.

Gender-expansive: A person with a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with the binary gender system. Often used as an umbrella term when referring to young people still exploring the possibilities of their gender expression and/or gender identity.

Gender expression: The ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice, and other forms of presentation. Gender expression also works the other way—as people assign gender to others because of their appearance, mannerisms, and other characteristics based on societal conventions, which are continually shifting and vary across cultures, race, and region.

Gender-fluid: A person who does not identify with a single fixed gender or has a fluid or unfixed gender identity.

Gender identity: One’s innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither—how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One’s gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth. While most people develop a gender identity aligned with their biological sex, for some gender identity is different from their biological or assigned sex.

Gender non-conforming: A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category.

Gender-policing: Attempting to enforce behavioral or cultural norms from the gender binary.

Gender spectrum: Recognition of gender as a complex aspect of self, influenced by a person’s sex, gender expression, and gender identity. Each of these dimensions of gender can be represented as a spectrum, rather than binary. The interaction of these

three aspects of one’s authentic self leads to an infinite set of possibilities in how people can understand and express their own gender, and how others experience it as well.

Gender transition: The processes by which some people strive to more closely align their internal knowledge of their gender with its outward manifestations. Some people socially transition, whereby they might begin dressing, using names and pronouns, and/or be socially recognized as the “other” gender. Others undergo physical transitions in which they modify their bodies through medical interventions. It is also important to note that many people are unable or choose not to transition medically.

Genderqueer: Blurring the lines around gender identity and sexual orientation, genderqueer individuals typically reject notions of static categories of gender and embrace a fluidity of gender identity and often, though not always, sexual orientation.

Legal transition: Changing legal documents to align with one’s gender identity (and name, if one chooses to change it). This can involve changing a driver’s license, Social Security card, passport, or even utility bills.

LGBTQ: An acronym for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer.”

Microaggressions: Everyday exchanges that are insulting or denigrating to individuals because of their identity, even if there was no malicious intent.

Non-binary: An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do. Non-binary can also be used as an umbrella term encompassing identities such as gender-fluid.

Outing: Exposing someone’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or gender non-binary identity to others without their permission. Outing someone can have serious repercussions on employment, economic stability, personal safety, or religious or family situations.

Physical transition: Changing your body to align with your gender identity. This can include haircuts, altering body hair and nails, or changing your use of makeup. The aspect of physical transition that requires doctors is often referred to as a medical transition, and can include hormone replacement therapy, surgical procedures, hair removal or implants, or many other options. Physical and medical transitions are not just limited to binary transgender people, as many non-binary people undergo some form of physical transition as well.

Pronouns: Any word that can replace a noun or noun phrase and

refer specifically to people who are being talked about. Examples of pronouns an individual may use: She/Her/Hers, He/Him/His or They/Them/Theirs. Some individuals use other less common gender-neutral pronouns, such as Xe/Hir/Hirs, or use no pronouns at all. The phrase “preferred pronouns” is being phased out by the community, as it denotes that gender is a choice.

Queer: Expresses a spectrum of identities and orientations that are counter to the mainstream. Queer is often used as a catch-all to include many people, including those who do not identify as exclusively straight and/or folks who have non-binary or genderexpansive identities. This term was previously used as a slur, but has been reclaimed by many parts of the LGBTQ movement.

Sex: The designation made at birth as “male” or “female” based on an individual’s genitalia. Frequently assumed to be the same as gender, a person’s sex is only one of the dimensions that constitute an individual’s gender.

Sexual orientation: Describes an individual’s enduring physical, emotional, romantic and/or spiritual attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same.

Social transition: Living your everyday life as your true gender, and can include changing your name, clothing, and/or pronouns.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

Transition: A process that some transgender and non-binary people go through when they decide to live as their true gender, rather than the one assigned to them at birth.

Transsexual: An outdated term that we recommend avoiding.

Transvestite: An outdated term that we recommend avoiding. Often used as a slur.

- Tell students that transgender and non-binary folks are both included under the gender-expansive umbrella because they do not fall within the gender binary.
- Ask students to read “[Seven Things About Transgender People That You Didn’t Know](#)” and “[Celebrating the Diversity of the Non-Binary Community for International Non-Binary Day 2020](#).” In pairs, small groups, or as a full class, ask students:
 - What information, if any, was new to you in these articles?
 - Were you surprised by anything you learned? How does the information that surprised you compare to assumptions you may have had?
 - How did the presented information influence your perspective on trans or non-binary people?
- Assert to students that trans women are women and trans men are men, and that trans and non-binary humans are humans. Tell students that individuals from these groups represent all walks of life and racial, ethnic, and spiritual backgrounds. They are parents, siblings, and kids. They are coworkers, neighbors, and friends. There is no one way for people of any gender to act, look, or behave.

ACTIVITY 2

- Divide students into two groups. Ask one group to research how stories about transgender people are reported in the news and ask the second group of students to research how stories about non-binary people are reported in the news. For their research, students can work in groups or alone.

Students can opt to use a newspaper or magazine, or the “News” section of Google.

- Ask students to record their results in a paragraph format or through visual representation, such as a graph that denotes key trends in coverage.
- After students have had time to research and record conclusions, ask the two student groups to present if they found more positive success stories or negative stories related to violence against the transgender and non-binary communities. Students should compare their findings in coverage, taking into account:
 - The distribution of positive versus negative stories about the transgender and non-binary communities.
 - Were some stories easier to find than others? Why do students think that is?
 - The sources of the reporting.
 - Frequently used themes, terms, or trends in reporting.
- Ask students to present their findings visually in a table, chart, or graph.
- Based on student research, discuss the challenges transgender and non-binary people face. Feel free to share “[Understanding the Transgender Community](#)” to outline challenges including lack of legal protection, poverty, stigma, harassment, discrimination, violence, lack of health care, and challenges with identity documents. After naming the challenges, discuss the effects they may have on individuals’ mental, emotional, and physical health and well-being. For example:

- Misgendering and inability to access the school bathroom that corresponds with their gender identity may lead to bullying, stigmatization, sadness, anxiety, and emotional distress about attending school. (UDHR Article 26)
- Gender-policing (attempting to enforce behavioral or cultural norms from the gender binary) or rejection from family could lead to resentment, depression, substance abuse, or homelessness. (UDHR Articles 12, 25)
- State legislature could allow businesses to use religion as an exemption to not provide services, including health care or legal protection, to people from gender-expansive populations, thus impacting mental, emotional, and physical health. (UDHR Articles 7, 23, 25)

TEACHER TIP: If students feel uncomfortable discussing how discrimination and stigmatization have affected their mental health, sharing your own experience with mental health may help others to open up. If youth are in need of resources related to mental health and well-being, please share this [list](#) of resources related to Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous People of Color (QTBIPOC) mental health and well-being.

ACTIVITY 3

- If you have not already, share the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR) with students and tell them that gender-expansive people are protected under Articles 1 and 2, which state that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights,” and everyone is entitled to all the freedoms listed in the UDHR, “without distinction of any kind such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.” This means that all people, including transgender and non-binary people, are entitled to exercise their human rights without discrimination. In other words, to discriminate against transgender and non-binary folks is to treat those individuals as unworthy of human rights.
- Show students the site and video for [UN Free & Equal](#).
- Ask students to find one article about how the United Nations (UN) is advancing the rights of transgender and non-binary people (if students have trouble with that, they may select an article from the list below to read). After students have read their article(s), ask each student to share one action that the UN has taken to advance human rights of transgender and/or non-binary people.
 - “Combating discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity” [https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Discrimination/Pages/LGBT.aspx](#)
 - “LGBT Bullying as a Violation of Universal Human Rights”

<https://www.undispatch.com/lgbt-bullying-as-a-violation-of-universal-human-rights/>

- “Are LGBT rights human rights? Recent developments at the United Nations” <https://www.apa.org/international/pi/2012/06/un-matters>
- “UN Women hosts first high-level event on gender diversity and non-binary identities at UN headquarters” <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/7/news-event-gender-diversity-and-non-binary-identities>
- “Guidelines for gender-inclusive language in English from the United Nations” <https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml>
- “Living Free and Equal: What States Are Doing to Tackle Violence and Discrimination Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex People” <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/LivingFreeAndEqual.pdf>
- Optional activity for the class: Ask students to discuss and compare the treatment of the transgender and/or non-binary communities by the UN and the United States (as evidenced either by Activity 2 research or personal experience).

ACTIVITY 4

- Show students the “[See each other. Save trans lives.](#)” PSA from the HRC website. If time permits, feel free to show other videos featuring the people from the campaign.
- Ask students how they participate in their community. They may answer either “popcorn” style in the class or in a virtual classroom chat. Tell students that their answers could include activities, such as going to school, working to put food on the table, enjoying leisure and time with family, etc. Tell your students that these are their guaranteed human rights. For example, school corresponds to UDHR Article 26, working corresponds to Article 23, and leisure corresponds to Article 24.
- Ask students to think about what would happen if they weren’t able to do those things. In other words, what would you do if your human rights were stripped away? How would you feel? How would you survive as your authentic self?
- Suggest that students may journal or create art based upon these prompts. While they work, they should consider how these challenges may be compounded or impact those in the transgender and non-binary communities.

ACTIVITY 5

- Tell students that there are more than 2 million transgender and non-binary people across the United States, representing all walks of life. In fact, one in five Americans personally knows someone who uses a pronoun other than he or she.

- Optional discussion for the class: With more than 2 million transgender and non-binary individuals in the U.S., why is our knowledge, understanding, and/or news coverage of them (potentially) so limited?
- In groups or individually, tell students to pick one or more of the STTP defenders from this lesson and explain how they represent many sectors and facets of the human experience (including students, politicians, artists, athletes, entertainers, and activists). Ask students to research their defender(s) of choice, finding articles, interviews, videos, and their social media, and create a presentation about their defender for the class. For their presentation, they should consider:
 - What students have in common with these individuals.
 - The background of these individuals and their passions.
 - How they engaged in advocacy.
 - What human rights these individuals are defending.
 - Challenges they may be struggling with or have overcome.
 - How they survive as their authentic selves.

CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- Summarize the previous activities and remind students that everyone deserves the opportunity and freedom to do what they love and to live their authentic lives.
- Prompt for the whole class to discuss: What does it mean to be an ally?
- After students have had a chance to discuss, write this definition on the board or PowerPoint slide, or verbally tell students: Allies are people who are not LGBTQ themselves but work to advance the cause of LGBTQ equality. An ally can show support for LGBTQ friends, coworkers, classmates, neighbors, co-congregants, family members, and others in a wide variety of ways.
- Show students the video "[How can cis people be good accomplices?](#)" and ask students what was said that resonated with them.
- Discuss how students can be allies and defend the human rights of those in the LGBTQ community. This activity could be a full group discussion or an individual reflective exercise based on the video they just watched, the following strategies, or [others](#):
 - Talk to your friends/family members.** Ensure that you and those around you will not tolerate stigma, prejudice, or discrimination against queer, trans, and non-binary folks.
 - Have everyday conversations about pronouns, inclusive language, microaggressions, transphobic language, and more.** Familiarize yourself with different pronouns. Practice using inclusive language that acknowledges and supports various gender identities, including those who are non-

binary. Be mindful of microaggressions and backhanded compliments that may cause emotional damage to a trans or non-binary person, even if the person saying them thought that they were being supportive. Some examples of microaggressions and backhanded compliments are:

- "Did you have the surgery yet?"
- "I never would have guessed you are trans. You look so good!"
- "You're too pretty to have ever been a man."
- "I could tell you are trans because of your voice/the size of your hands/your jawline/etc."
- "If you were going to look like a tomboy, why didn't you just stay a boy?"
- "Are you going to get some work done to look more real?"
- "Be thankful you don't have periods. They are so annoying."
- "How do you have sex?"
- "It's so cool to have a trans friend."

For more information on microaggressions, view "[Teenagers Discuss Microaggressions and Racism #HatchKids](#)." You will probably start to notice transphobic language happening around you, so it's important to use your voice to interrupt that kind of casual or intentional transphobia. When you speak up, you can become the catalyst that causes others to speak up as well.

- Learn about the transgender and non-binary experiences through your own research.** Educational books and autobiographies, videos and podcasts, or articles written by trans and/or non-binary teens and adults for major media outlets allow you to hear a firsthand perspective without putting the emotional burden on one person in your life to speak for a community. Learn about the many ways gender norms have shifted from culture to culture and through history. Become even more familiar with the differences between sex and gender, gender expression and gender identity, and sexual orientation and gender. Become familiar with current language and terminology used about and within the transgender and non-binary communities.
- Explore and share content from transgender and non-binary activists on social media to show your support.**

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

Feel free to engage in the "Four Corners" activity or role play the scenarios for allyship listed in the lesson [Making Decisions: Ally or Bystander](#) from Welcoming Schools.

BECOME A DEFENDER

- Write a detailed letter to the President, a government agency connected to the issues, or your U.S. senator or representative to ask them to support the recommendations from the Human Rights Campaign's [Blueprint for Positive Change 2020](#). In this letter, you can both make a strong point and back it up with evidence from class and your own research, or you can raise important questions. Remember to cite sources in your letter and use proper business letter format.
- Write a detailed letter to the United Nations or join a local chapter of the United Nations Association to advocate on behalf of the U.S. for Global Efforts to Advance LGBTQ Human Rights. In particular, research ways to support efforts of the UN LGBTI Core Group, the Equal Rights Coalition, the LGBTI Core Group of the OAS, the Human Rights Council, and more.
- Advocate for transgender and non-binary-inclusive trainings for your school or workplace that will teach educators and staff how to treat trans and non-binary people with courtesy, respect, and professionalism. Support all school staff and students to learn about gender and the ways in which today's students are defining and expressing it. This includes professional development that gives adults language and tools from which to draw as they seek to create a more inclusive school environment.
- Create an LGBTQ inclusive affinity group at school to advocate for strong policies that protect all students' rights to a safe and supportive learning environment, and explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression. Explore school policies to see if they account for and support different gender identities and expressions. Update forms and documents that ask for information about gender to ensure that they are gender-expansive. Rethink dress codes that reinforce gender stereotypes or that might cause a non-binary person stress while getting dressed each day. Update your school's non-discrimination policy to offer explicit, enumerated protections for transgender and non-binary students and to specify punitive policies for those who are disrespectful. Ensure that everyone has access to restrooms and gendered facilities that are private or gender-neutral so that all students can feel safe and comfortable.
- Write a letter to a community leader of a faith-based or religious group to which you belong and ensure they adopt gender-inclusive policies and protections. Share your thoughts and feelings about discrimination against the transgender and non-binary communities on the basis of

religion and explain why it must end. Make it relevant to the person/group receiving the letter using information and facts learned from the lesson. Send your letter.

- Join the campaign for the prohibition of the practice of conversion therapy. Conversion therapy includes a range of harmful and discredited practices that seek to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. Write to the Department of Education and Federal Trade Commission to prohibit conversion therapy in education and business and speak out against the practice in your local community.
- Support local, national, or international organizations that support the transgender and non-binary communities. From mental health facilities, suicide prevention, low-income housing or homeless shelters, social services, public transportation, and public safety, show support for the organizations that have done the work to become educated on trans and non-binary issues and needs.
- Call your elected officials, write op-eds, testify at hearings, collect signatures for petitions or ballot initiatives, and vote to pass non-discrimination laws at the local, state, and federal level for non-discrimination in public accommodations, health and social services, barriers to legal identification, housing, finance, or education. Additionally, advocate for support for transgender and non-binary immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers and speak out against unequal policing and criminal justice against the transgender and non-binary communities.
- Understand that intersectional issues affect a large portion of the gender-expansive community; you can show your allyship by recognizing your privilege and using it to advocate for those who are experiencing greater struggles than your own. Educate yourself and speak out for Black LGBTQ people, who face increased discrimination at the intersection of white supremacy, anti-Blackness, and anti-LGBTQ attitudes. Write op-eds and support specific initiatives for Black LGBTQ people who face some of the highest risks of violence, workplace discrimination, homelessness, HIV and AIDS, health care disparities, and mistreatment in the United States.
- Join a group to identify and counteract the root causes of anti-transgender violence and develop a plan to implement policy and societal changes. This working group must listen to and collaborate with Black and Brown transgender people before and during the development of solutions, and then maintain communication to determine if the solutions are working and what needs to be changed.

Meet Young Leaders taking mindful action in your communities!

Through Speak Truth to Power, we provide opportunities for young people to engage with the human rights framework and see human rights activism as a way of life. By allowing youth to see themselves as human rights defenders, they begin to take active roles in the work of creating a more just and peaceful world. The RFK Human Rights Young Leaders are some of those young people who defend human rights in a variety of fields (including finance, art, education, technology, law, and marketing) and share a commitment to effecting change in creative and meaningful ways.

DANIELLA CARTER (she/her/hers) NEW YORK, N.Y.



I'm 100 percent a human rights defender. I started my fight for transformative justice back in 2012. I have been on the frontlines fighting [for] transgender issues, youth in foster care issues, and overall helping to start conversations about intersectionality.

At 14 years old, I made the bold decision to transition into my authentic self (which is from male presenting to female). I faced many obstacles because of this decision: I

was kicked out of the home I was raised in, which resulted in homelessness and survival work. I managed to survive and persevere from that reality.

Even when experiencing hardship, I always looked to women of color who are in positions of power and reflect the journey I aspire to. I made sure to connect myself to mentors and industry leaders who could help me build a platform to move the conversation forward about what access and opportunities need to look like to help LGBTQIA+ youth thrive. I [connected with] with my mentor, Janet Mock, in 2013. I reached out to her in an email expressing my yearning to help my community and build the tools to do it. Since the cultivation of that relationship, I have [gone] on to build a number of relationships with many powerful women, from actress Laverne Cox, New York State Attorney General Tish James, top scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, CEO of GLAAD Sarah Kate Ellis, and so many other amazing powerhouse women.

With the help of these women, I have spoken at top Ivy League [and other] universities all over the globe. I have helped to co-found two global foundations. I [have] given three TED Talks. I've also won an Emmy Award, and I have received a lifetime achievement award for my activism. So, what I know is that when you are determined to achieve your goal/mission to uplift a community, you must first build the network and tools. And from there, anything is achievable.

For more information: daniellasquestbook.com

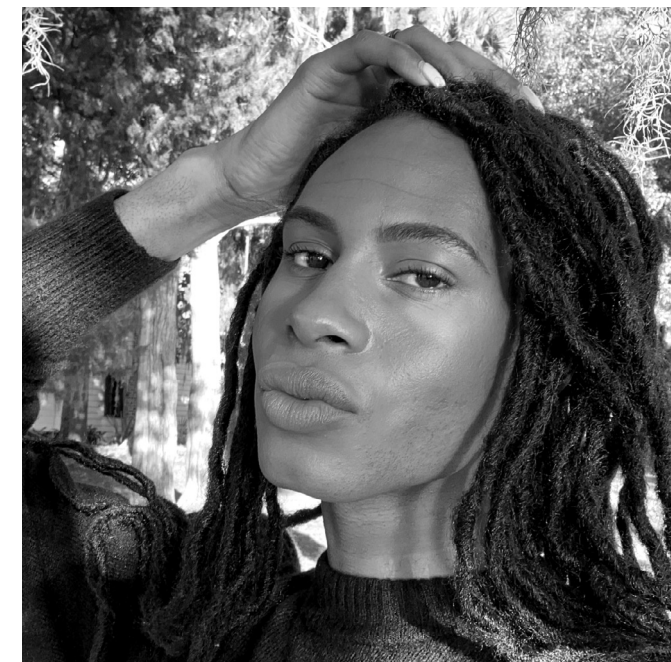
DARIUS LYMORE (they/them/theirs) HOWARD UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

As a marginalized person myself in America, being Black and queer, I have always done what I can to help others in my community. Some of [my actions] include:

- Protesting to address violence against persons of the LGBT community.
- Signing petitions.
- Donating money to help create change in our country on the local and national level.
- Urging lawmakers to label white supremacist groups as terrorist organizations.
- Working with co-workers to provide housing opportunities for homeless LGBT youth living in the Washington, D.C., metro area during the coronavirus pandemic.

In retrospect of my efforts to promote positive change, I am happy to know that through my endeavors, I have helped to push for the change I want to see in this world.

DIONTRE JONES (they/them/theirs) NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, BROOKLYN, N.Y.



I would like to change this year to speak up for my community, especially for Black trans [people]. They're very underrated with everything going on in the world and there's no respect [for] my fellow sisters and brothers.

I definitely have been fighting for Black Lives Matter and Black Trans Lives Matter, showing my support by donating to different organizations and helping out small Black-owned businesses. The method I've been using is Google to help me figure out what good resources I should be looking up toward Black Trans Lives Matter, helping out with different organizations. My outcome of my activism is that I have learned so much about the Black Trans Lives Matter movement and LGBTQIA+ by standing up for my community and fighting for us.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

WELCOMING SCHOOLS

<https://www.welcomingschools.org/>

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation's Welcoming Schools project offers professional development tools, lessons aligned with the Common Core State Standards, and many additional resources for elementary schools on embracing family diversity; avoiding gender stereotyping and affirming gender; and ending bullying and name-calling. Welcoming Schools is inclusive of the many types of diversity found in our communities, especially in regard to LGBTQ families and people.

MERMAIDS

<https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/>

Mermaids has evolved into one of the U.K.'s leading LGBTQ charities, empowering thousands of people with its secure online communities, local community groups, helpline services, web resources, events, and residential weekends. They also seek to educate and inform wider society on gender identity by helping professionals accommodate and reassure gender-diverse young people.

GENDER DIVERSITY

<http://www.genderdiversity.org/>

Gender Diversity increases the awareness and understanding of the wide range of gender variations in children, adolescents, and adults by providing family support, building community, increasing societal awareness, and improving well-being for people of all gender identities and expressions.

GENDER EXPANSION PROJECT

<http://genderexpansionproject.org/>

This Midwestern program promotes gender inclusive education and awareness surrounding transgender, intersex, and gender-diverse people through evidence-based care, education, research, advocacy, public and private policy, and respect in transgender health and well-being.

GENDER SPECTRUM

<https://www.genderspectrum.org/>

Gender Spectrum provides community information and training to support gender variant children and their families. Also of note is the Gender Spectrum Family Conference, an annual conference for people raising gender non-conforming, gender variant, and transgender children and adolescents.

STAND WITH TRANS

<https://standwithtrans.org/>

Since 2015, Stand with Trans has been dedicated to developing programs, educational events, and support groups to serve transgender youth. Their mission is to provide the tools needed by transgender youth so they will be empowered, supported, and validated as they transition to their authentic lives.

TRANSYOUTH FAMILY ALLIES (TYFA)

<http://www.imatyfa.org/>

TYFA empowers children and families by partnering with educators, service providers, and communities to develop supportive environments in which gender may be expressed and respected. They have well-trained advocates and provide resource assistance for families experiencing discrimination or other difficulties in schools or other environments.

TREVOR PROJECT

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

The Trevor Project is the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) young people ages 13 to 24.

SAFE SCHOOLS COALITION YOUTH PAGES

<http://safeschoolscoalition.org/youth/trans-gender.html>

Safe Schools Coalition is an international public-private partnership in support of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth, that is working to help schools in the U.S. and all over the world become safe places where every family can belong, where every educator can teach, and where every child can learn, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.

ADVOCATES FOR YOUTH

<https://advocatesforyouth.org/>

Advocates for Youth champions efforts that help young people make informed and responsible decisions about their reproductive and sexual health. The organization believes it can best serve the field by boldly advocating for a more positive and realistic approach to adolescent sexual health.

CULTIVATING RESPECT: SAFE SCHOOLS FOR ALL

<https://pflag.org/cultivating-respect-safe-schools-all>

This program is a safe schools initiative sponsored by PFLAG, a group of parents, families, and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer persons who celebrate diversity and envision a society that embraces everyone, including those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

THE GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCE NETWORK (GSA NETWORK)

<https://gsanetwork.org/>

GSA Network is a youth leadership organization that connects school-based gay-straight alliances (GSAs) to each other and community resources. Through peer support, leadership development, and training, GSA Network supports young people in starting, strengthening, and sustaining GSAs

GAY LESBIAN AND STRAIGHT EDUCATION NETWORK (GLSEN)

<https://www.glsen.org/>

GLSEN is the leading national education organization focused on ensuring safe schools for all students. They provide curriculum ideas, such as No Name-Calling Week.

LEARNING FOR JUSTICE

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/>

Founded by the Southern Poverty Law Center, this organization offers suggestions for promoting respect and teaching about diversity in the classroom.

“OUR FUTURE MAY LIE BEYOND OUR VISION, BUT IT IS NOT COMPLETELY BEYOND OUR CONTROL. IT IS THE SHAPING IMPULSE OF AMERICA THAT NEITHER FATE NOR NATURE NOR THE IRRESISTIBLE TIDES OF HISTORY, BUT THE WORK OF OUR OWN HANDS, MATCHED TO REASON AND PRINCIPLE.”

—Robert F. Kennedy

**ROBERT F.
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