

GSA Newsarama
Volume 5, Issue 17
June 19th, 2007

This newsletter is created by Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools to keep students, school professionals and other community members up to date on the issues, events and news items that may be of interest to those working within Wisconsin schools, communities, gay-straight alliances and similar clubs. If you are no longer interested in receiving this update, simply reply to this email requesting that your name be removed from the list. Please include your current school, or previous school if you have graduated or are no longer in school.

Feature

Happy Summer from GSA for Safe Schools!

Headlines

1. Join GSA for Safe Schools at Madison Pride in July!
2. GSA for Safe Schools Looking for Team Captains for 2007 Walk/Run
3. Nominate Someone to Be an Honorary Course Marshal for the GSA for Safe School Walk/Run

Related Readings: Resources and Opportunities

4. GLSEN 2007 National School Climate Survey
5. New Coming Out Resource from National Center for Transgender Equality and the Human Rights Campaign
6. OutReach Awards Nominations – DEADLINE JUNE 20th!
7. New Harvest Foundation 2007 Garden Tour – Volunteers Wanted
8. Madison Area Down Syndrome Society Seeks Volunteers for their “Lose The Training Wheels Bike Camp” NEXT WEEK

Related Readings: News and Publications

9. Shepherd Express – It’s the Most Liberating Thing: Six Milwaukeeans Tell Their Coming-Out Stories

Feature

Happy Summer from GSA for Safe Schools!

On behalf of the staff at Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools, HAPPY SUMMER EVERYONE! You all worked incredibly hard this past school year and deserve to take some time off.

We'll be sure to keep you up to date on all the happenings around Wisconsin, and please let us know if there is an event coming up in your area that you'd like us to include in the Newsarama.

Don't forget to register your GSA or club through our website for the 2007-2008 school year at: http://www.gsaforsafeschools.org/gsa_register.html.

Headlines

1. Join GSA for Safe Schools at Madison Pride in July!

Madison's Pride Weekend will be taking place on the weekend of July 21st and 22nd this year. GSA for Safe Schools has reserved a spot in the parade, and we need YOU to walk with us! We'll also be looking for volunteers to help out at our booth at the Magic Picnic. We'll have more details (times, volunteer opportunities, etc.) in the next Newsarama...so stay tuned!

2. GSA for Safe Schools Looking for Team Captains for 2007 Walk/Run

Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools is organizing a Walk/Run for Saturday, October 13th in Madison. The Walk/Run will feature a 5K and 10K run (for people like Brian J, who enjoy that kind of thing), as well as a one-mile walk (for people who would rather amble or mosey, like me).

We are beginning our search for students who would like to be team captains for their GSA or school. Team captains will be responsible for recruiting their friends, teachers, families and neighbors for the event, as well as assisting us in keeping track of registration and pledges raised by students at their school.

If you are interested in being a team captain for your school or club, please email Tim Michael at tim@gsaforsafeschools.org.

3. Nominate Someone to Be an Honorary Course Marshal for the GSA for Safe Schools Walk/Run

We often hear that middle school and high school athletics can be the worst places for LGBTQ youth. Help up identify those folks who are breaking the silence and creating safer teams for all.

Do you know a coach, gym teacher, or athletic director who has created a safe environment for LGBTQ students and athletes? Is there a student athlete at your school who has stood up to heterosexism and transphobia and is a role model for others? If so, we're looking to identify honorary course marshals for our October 13th Walk/Run. Course marshals will be stationed at various locations along the route, helping to direct runners/walkers and keeping folks motivated. It's a pretty important job. ☺

Drop Tim a note at tim@gsaforsafeschools.org if you have someone in mind.

Related Readings: Resources and Opportunities

GSA Newsarama is a publication of GSA for Safe Schools (GSAFE). Events, resources, and news items listed under the "Related Readings" sections of GSA Newsarama are not sponsored by GSAFE, and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of GSA for Safe Schools.

4. GLSEN 2007 National School Climate Survey

Every two years, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) conducts a National School Climate Survey to give lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQQ) students the opportunity to share their middle school and high school experiences. The survey is completely anonymous, and GLSEN uses the results to inform education policymakers and the public about the problem of anti-LGBTQQ bias in K-12 schools across the nation.

If you attended high school or middle school some time in the last year (2006-2007), identify as LGBTQQ, and are at least 13 years of age, please take a few minutes to complete the survey: <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/student/library/record/2061.html>

The information gathered from this survey will help GLSEN and other social justice organizations lobby and advocate for the rights of all students to be treated with respect in their schools. Many students in the past have used the survey results to advocate with their teachers and administrators for safe schools for LGBTQQ students.

SUMMER IS A GREAT TIME TO FILL OUT THIS SURVEY (wink wink)

5. New Coming Out Resource from National Center for Transgender Equality and the Human Rights Campaign

The National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) recently came together in collaboration to create and publish a new resource guide entitled "Coming Out as Transgender". This new guide offers advice and recommendations on how to talk with friends, family, and co-workers about being transgender.

Topics covered in the guide include terminology, myths and facts about transgender people, and issues around transitioning. The guide gives information on coming out, such as the process of deciding to come out and live openly, how to make a coming out plan, and how to have positive coming out conversations with the people in your life. There is also a special section in the guide that specifically focuses on issues with friends and families. The new guide provides a list of helpful Internet resources.

Mara Keisling, the Executive Director of NCTE, said about the guide, "I wish that a resource like this had been available when I was coming out. Coming out and talking with the people in your life about being transgender is a deeply personal journey; this resource will help point the way." According to Keisling, "While no single guide can provide anyone with everything they need for coming out as transgender, this resource will be an important starting point for a lot of people."

Click here to download this great new resource:

http://nctequality.org/Resources/Coming_Out_as_Transgender.pdf

6. OutReach Awards Nominations – DEADLINE JUNE 20TH!

The 15th Annual OutReach Awards Banquet is scheduled for Friday, July 20, 2007, in the Main Ballroom of the Monona Terrace. OutReach is again turning to the community to solicit award nominations in the following categories: Woman of the Year, Man of the Year, Ally of the Year, Organization of the Year and Volunteer of the Year. They are also accepting nominations for Lifetime Achievement and Political Courage Award.

Nomination forms can be picked up at OutReach (600 Williamson St.) and are also available on the OutReach website www.outreachinc.com. Please take a moment to nominate someone you know TODAY!

7. New Harvest Foundation 2007 Garden Tour – Volunteers Wanted

New Harvest Foundation is the only foundation in Dane County that channels charitable contributions exclusively to organizations working to promote gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) rights, services, culture and community development. They have regularly supported the student programming and work of GSA for Safe Schools, in addition to other local groups like Teens Like Us, Proud Theater, OutReach, and PFLAG.

Please do consider signing up to help New Harvest continue to support others!

Wanted: 28 volunteers, 2 people at each site for each shift

Shift options: July 1st from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Where: Lovely gardens on the east or near east side of Madison

Volunteer responsibilities: Selling tickets, collecting money, distributing garden brochures, and possibly selling water.

Training will be provided.

Grab a friend or family member (or both) and sign up to volunteer today. Younger students are encouraged to sign up with an adult ally.

If you are interested, please contact Brian J. at brianj@gsaforsafeschools.org.

8. Madison Area Down Syndrome Society Seeks Volunteers for their “Lose The Training Wheels Bike Camp” NEXT WEEK

Next week, the Madison Area Down Syndrome Society is sponsoring a 5-day camp for 40 children and youth with special needs, ages 8 to 21, who need a little help graduating to a two-wheeled bike. MADSS is looking for 60 volunteers to help out June 25th through the 29th this summer at Waunakee High School. Sessions will be held from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M., Monday through Friday, and MADSS is looking for volunteers for the following shifts:

Monday through Friday: 8AM to 5PM

Monday through Friday: 8AM to 1PM

Monday through Friday: 1PM to 5PM

****Each volunteer will be matched with one camper, so it is important that volunteers are committed to the shift they sign up for throughout the week of the camp.****

For more information, contact Jennifer at 608.497.0174, or email her at jennifer@madss.org. You can view a video for a similar bike camp by following this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eyHg2pu9wk>

Related Readings: News and Publications

9. Shepherd Express – It’s the Most Liberating Thing: Six Milwaukeeans Tell Their Coming-Out Stories

The Shepherd-Express is a weekly newspaper in Milwaukee, featuring stories about entertainment, arts and culture in the Milwaukee area. In the first week of June, their cover story was entitled “It’s the Most Liberating Thing”, which shines the spotlight on six individuals in Milwaukee who share their coming-out stories (you may recognize some of them!). Check it out here:

<http://www.shepherd-express.com/1editorialbody.lasso?-token.folder=2007-06-07&-token.story=177343.113121&-token.subpub=#123>
