

GSA Newsarama
Volume 6, Issue 14
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Read GSA Newsarama online at www.GSAforSafeSchools.org. Visit our website to download past issues of Newsarama in clean, easy-to-read PDF format.

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

Apply Now for Leadership Training Institute!

Headlines

1. Get Ready for Day of Silence
2. Nominate Someone for Educator of the Year or Community Activist TODAY

Related Readings: Events and Opportunities

3. The Young Womynz Empowerment Conference WANTS YOU
4. 5th Annual Wisconsin Teen Poetry Slam
5. Save the Date for the Midwest Trans Youth Conference
6. NEWPride 2008 is Shaping Up in Green Bay
7. Online Survey on Cyberbullying

Related Readings: News and Publications

8. The Sheboygan Press – School District Denies Grievance From Request for Same-Sex Union
9. The New York Times – When Girls Will Be Boys

Feature

Apply Now for Leadership Training Institute!

Do you think you have what it takes to come to Leadership Training Institute? Well WE do! Leadership Training Institute, or LTI, is GSA for Safe Schools' BIG DEAL event. The goal of LTI is to help students locate their leadership muscles (we've all got 'em!) and pump them up over a three-day period in August.

This year, LTI will be held from Saturday, August 23rd through Monday, August 25th at the MacKenzie Environmental Education Center in Poynette, Wisconsin. You don't have to already be a leader in your school to come – you just have to prove to us that you want to become a leader in your school.

Applications for LTI are available to download from the GSAFE website at www.GSAforSafeSchools.org. Enrollment for LTI is capped at 30 students total, and a maximum of two students per school will be invited to come. Here is what some of last year's LTI grads had to say about it:

"LTI is an extremely rewarding and life-changing experience. You will never find a place more accepting than LTI." - Robin

"At LTI, I learned how to shake some social change." - Leah

"LTI is freaking awesome." - Sky

"You will be well fed for three days." – Miles

The deadline for applying is April 18th, one month from today. Hey upperclassmen – if you're worried about who's going to keep the GSA going once you've graduated, this is your chance to pass along the torch. LTI is open to current freshman, sophomores and juniors.

If you have any questions about Leadership Training Institute, drop Brian J. an email at brianj@gsaforsafeschools.org or give him a call at 608.661.4141.

Headlines

1. Get Ready for Day of Silence

National Day of Silence will be observed on Friday, April 25th this year. Is your school or club planning something for Day of Silence (DOS)?

This year, the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN) has dedicated Day of Silence to Lawrence King, the student in Oxnard, California who was killed by a classmate in February. Friends of Lawrence say that he was killed because of his sexual orientation and gender expression.

Whether you're planning to take the traditional day-long vow of silence, wear a ribbon to show your support, or host a Day of Dialogue, there are many resources available to help make your event as successful as possible.

For schools that are holding a traditional Day of Silence, visit www.dayofsilence.org to download materials and an organizing manual.

Feel like changing things up and doing something different this year, but you're not sure where to start? Drop Tim an email at tim@gsaforsafeschools.org or call him at 608.661.4141.

We'll be letting you know the details about bigger Day of Silence events happening in communities around the state as they come into focus.

And hey - would you like to be involved in the planning of Madison's Breaking the Silence rally? The next planning meeting will be held on Sunday, March 30th at the GSA for Safe Schools office. Let Tim know that you're interested, and he'll give you the details.

We'll be scheduling speakers for the rally again this year, and will be asking folks who want to speak to sign up ahead of time. The UW-Madison Allies Program has made t-shirts for this year's event, so let Tim know if you're interested in purchasing some for your school or GSA (they are stylish AND inexpensive).

2. Nominate Someone for Educator of the Year or Community Activist TODAY

There are only TWO DAYS LEFT to nominate someone you know for the Community Activist or Educator Award. Every year, GSA for Safe Schools recognizes two individuals for their dedication to creating safe schools and communities for LGBT and all people.

Nominating someone is SUPER easy. All you have to do is follow this link... http://www.gsaforsafeschools.org/nominate_form.html ...and fill out the online form. There are only three questions to answer.

The Community Activist and Educator Award recipients will be recognized at our 12th Annual Celebration of Leadership in Madison on Saturday, May 17th.

The deadline to nominate someone is THIS THURSDAY, March 20th.

Nominate someone TODAY at www.GSAforSafeSchools.org.

Related Readings: Events 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 GSAFE.

3. The Young Womynz Empowerment Conference WANTS YOU

The dates have been set for the Young Womynz Empowerment Conference (YWEC). Organized by Project Q of Milwaukee, YWEC is a three-day, two-night conference for all lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning and straight ally female-identified persons aged 24 and under.

YWEC will be taking place from May 2nd through the 4th at Camp Minikani in Germantown, Wisconsin. At YWEC, you will have the opportunity to participate in workshops, team- and trust-building activities, and tons of other fun stuff.

Many of the workshops will be youth lead, so if you're interested in presenting a workshop at YWEC, contact Rachel Coles at rcoles@mkelgbt.org or call her at 414.292.3071 ASAP to get a workshop proposal form.

The cost to attend YWEC is \$25, and scholarships are available upon request. Please contact Rachel if you have additional questions.

4. 5th Annual Wisconsin Teen Poetry Slam

Calling all teen poets, emcees, and storytellers - here is your chance to take center stage. This March and April is the 5th Annual Teen Poetry Slam, where dozens of youth poets from Madison and Milwaukee will show their excellence and compete for an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC for the Brave New Voices International Youth Slam this July. Sign up now!

MADISON SCHOOLS Semi-finals

March 31 - April 3

at East, West, Memorial, & LaFollette

Register with the poet-mentor at your school: <http://omai.wisc.edu/schools>

OPEN SLAM Semi-final

Friday, April 4, 9:00 pm

Memorial Union Main Lounge

Register with Josh Healey at jghealey@wisc.edu

* Note: Poets can only compete in one semifinal, either at their school or at the open slam.

WISCONSIN SLAM FINALS
Saturday, April 12, 7:00pm
Orpheum Theater
hosted by Baba Israel
\$5 students, \$10 adults

5. Save the Date for the Midwest Trans Youth Conference

The Midwest Trans Youth Conference is a weekend conference dedicated to transgender, gender nonconforming, questioning and SOFFA (significant other, friend, family member, or ally) youth.

Not only will you meet and get to know youth from throughout the Midwest, but with a host of nationally-recognized speakers and performers, you're sure to find things that entertain and inspire you.

While we don't have too many details yet, we DO know that this year's Midwest Trans Youth Conference will be held from November 14th through the 16th.

Mark your calendars! More info coming soon.

6. NEWPride 2008 is Shaping Up in Green Bay

Were you hoping for a Pride event in Northeastern Wisconsin this year? Well, you've got it!

On July 12th, 2008, hundreds of members of the LGBT community and their allies will come together at Joannes Park in Green Bay to remember our similarities and celebrate our differences. The goal of Pride is to perpetuate a positive LGBT presence in Northeastern Wisconsin and allow businesses to create a relationship with the community. It's also a way for us to learn about the various nonprofit organizations in Northeastern Wisconsin dedicated to helping and providing support to LGBT folks and their allies. This one-day event will be held late morning to early evening and will include various vendors, panel discussions, educational booths, and stage entertainment. This family-inclusive event will be open to the general public.

Interested in getting involved? NEWPride is looking for more people to join the committees and be a part in creating Pride. Remember, this is your Pride! Help

make it the best it can be. To get involved, call Andrew DeBaker at 920.471.3260 or email him at info@newpride.org.

7. Online Survey on Cyberbullying

A research team at Iowa State University is conducting a survey on cyberbullying and its impact on LGBT youth.

If you are in middle school, high school, or college, identify as LGBT and would like the opportunity to share any experiences you've had with cyberbullying, please take a few minutes to fill out this survey:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=inXcDEo9Xqgg_2f0KY9QPZew_3d_3d

Of course, all responses will be kept completely confidential.

Related Readings: News and Publications

8. The Sheboygan Press – School District Denies Grievance From Request for Same-Sex Union

GSA Newsarama has been following the story of Judy Stock and Leigh Robert, the couple who planned to travel to Canada in March to celebrate their wedding. Leigh works in the school district of Sheboygan, and was being told that she was not allowed to use paid-time off for her trip, even though the district's contract allows for a maximum of two days granted for "marriage of the staff member or of a member of the immediate family."

While they were in Canada, the Sheboygan Area School District announced that they had decided to deny Leigh's grievance, and she would not be receiving compensation for the days of work she missed. To read more, follow this link: <http://tinyurl.com/2ohmqk>

PLEASE NOTE: The Sheboygan Press online allows readers to make comments on new stories, and some of the posted comments may be offensive and/or insensitive to LGBT people and their allies.

9. The New York Times – When Girls Will Be Boys

What do you do if you're a transman attending a women's college? That's the question being faced by a growing number of transgender, gender nonconforming and genderqueer individuals attending our country's single-sex universities.

Following the story of one such student, this article in the New York Times explores the intersections of feminism, sexuality and gender in the world of academia:

<http://tinyurl.com/2n7rjy>
