

GSA Newsarama
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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.

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Feature

The deadline to apply for this summer’s Leadership Training Institute (LTI) is fast approaching, but it’s NOT TOO LATE! Our website lists April 18th (today) as the deadline, but we will accept any applications we receive from students into next week.

Will your school be represented at LTI this year?

Leadership Training Institute seeks to help students find and refine their organizing, activism and leadership skills. At LTI, you will have the chance to learn about...

- ...the laws surrounding GSAs and safe schools for all students
- ...issues of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression
- ...the intersection of various oppressions and “isms” in our society
- ...how to advocate for getting LGBT issues incorporated into the classroom
- ...and so much more.

In addition to all the good learning and skill building, you will have the chance to spend three days with other students from all over Wisconsin at a beautiful nature center outside of Poynette, Wisconsin. Do I hear campfires and s’mores and nature walks calling?

Oh yeah. And the food is awesome - Lunch Lady Lisa will take care of your every craving.

Download an application for LTI today at www.gsaforsafeschools.org.

Still not convinced that LTI is the place for you? Give Brian J. a call at 608.661.4141 or drop him an email at brianj@gsaforsafeschools.org.

Special Feature

Exclusion and Fear Must Give Way: An Editorial by Cindy Crane

In addition to being the Day of Silence, this April 25th marks an important anniversary in the LGBT equality movement. On April 25th, 1993, hundreds of thousands of people marched in Washington, D.C. to demand equal rights for gay, lesbian and bisexual people.

This past weekend Cindy Crane, GSA for Safe Schools fabulous Executive Director, had an editorial published in the Wisconsin State Journal. In it, she reflects on the 15th anniversary of the march and why it's important to know our history. Check it out online here:

<http://www.madison.com/wsj/home/opinion/281409>

Headlines

1. Day of Silence Only One Week Away

Next Friday, schools and campuses across the nation will be a little bit quieter. Hundreds of thousands of students at thousands of schools will be taking part in the 12th Annual National Day of Silence.

Here in Wisconsin, a number of rallies and events will be taking place after the school day lets out:

MADISON: Day of Silence participants are invited to gather at the bottom of State Street in Library Mall beginning at 2:00PM. At 4:30PM, there will be a silent march up State Street to the Capitol building. Marchers are encouraged to bring signs with information about Lawrence King, Day of Silence, and hate crimes in general. After the march, there will be a rally to break the silence on the Capitol steps. If you would like to sign up to speak at the rally, please contact Tim Michael at 608.661.4141 or at tim@gsaforsafeschools.org.

EAU CLAIRE: Day of Silence participants are invited to join Spectrum, the UW-Eau Claire LGBTQA student organization for a rally at the clock tower on the lower campus at 5:00PM. In case of rain or inclement weather, the rally will be moved to the Schofield Auditorium.

APPLETON: The GLBT Partnership of the Harmony Café will once again be hosting a "Night of Noise". Day of Silence participants will have a chance to come together and share their stories and experiences from the day. This year, Night of Noise will be joined by the folk rock and slam poet duo of Good Asian Drivers. Check them out at <http://goodasiandrivers.com/>. Night of Noise starts at 4:30PM, and Harmony Café is located at 124 North Oneida St. in Appleton.

MILWAUKEE: To top off the Day of Silence, Project Q will be hosting a life-sized game in their headquarters. From 4PM until 8PM, participants will be playing eQuipped, and from 8PM to 10PM there will be a breaking the silence celebration. Head on down to 315 W. Court St. in Milwaukee to join in the fun. Questions? Contact Jay at 414.292.3068 or email him at jbotsford@mkelgbt.org.

FOND DU LAC: A celebration and Breaking of Silence rally will be held in the UW-Fond du Lac Commons Area at 4:00 PM.

LA CROSSE: A vigil will be held in the evening on the UW-La Crosse campus on Day of Silence in memory of Lawrence King. For more information about this event, email pridecenter@uwlax.edu or call 608.785.8870.

Good luck with your events!

2. Celebration of Leadership Scholarship Awards Banquet

In our next issue of Newsarama, we'll be shining the spotlight on this year's GSA for Safe Schools scholarship recipients and the folks who will be receiving the Community Activist and Educator of the Year awards.

These seven individuals will be honored at the 12th Annual Celebration of Leadership Awards Dinner on May 17th at the Monona Terrace in Madison.

Last year's Awards Dinner was attended by nearly 350 community members, school professionals, business people and students, and this year's event is shaping up to be just as big and awesome (possibly even bigger and awesomer!).

The cost to attend the event is \$25 for students. If you think you might want to get dressed up and join us for an evening of good food, inspiring stories and (yes!) a keynote speech from Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin, give Tim a call at 608.661.4141 or email him at timm@gsaforsafeschools.org for more info.

3. Be a Part of The "Dream Big" Video Project

And speaking of Celebration of Leadership, this year's theme for the Awards Dinner is "Dream Big". We are in the process of putting together a video for the event, and we're looking for students who would like to be a part of that project.

The video will feature clips of students talking about what they dream for their schools, their communities, and for themselves.

If you think you would like to be a part of that video, we will be taping at the GSA for Safe Schools office on Saturday, April 26th between the hours of 1PM and 5PM. The GSA for Safe Schools office is located at 301 S. Bedford St., Suite 1 in Madison.

Want to be part of the project but can't get to Madison? We may be able to arrange a time to come to you, if you're not too far away. Give Brian J. a call at 608.661.4141 or email him at brianj@gsaforsafeschools.org if you'd like to be a part of the "Dream Big" video.

Note: Any student who participates in the video will need to sign a media release form, which means also getting a signature from a parent or guardian if he or she is under the age of 18.

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.

4. Become a Jump-Start Student Organizer with GLSEN National

GLSEN National (the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network) is searching for its next team of student leaders! The Jump-Start 2008-09 National Student Leadership Team will be a group of middle and high school students who will support student organizing nationally. Jump-Start students represent various regions across the country and receive training on strategic action planning, coalition building, leadership skills, and up-to-date information on safe school policies.

In the past, Jump-Start students have held local safer school summits, trained teachers, lobbied for safe school legislation, supported peers who have started Gay-Straight Alliances (GSA), contributed to GLSEN resources, organized various days of action in their local communities and networked and supported student clubs across their state. GLSEN is currently accepting applications from students who have prior leadership experience or seek to develop these skills. Students must fill out a brief application form and provide a recommendation letter from a school faculty/member and a letter of support from a local organization.

Students can access the application and more information at <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/news/record/2040.html>.

Applications are due May 9th. For further information please contact the Director of Student Organizing, Benny Vasquez at bvasquez@glsen.org.

5. Madison SOS – Speak Out, Sister!

Madison SOS is a teen-led initiative that aims to provide high school teen girls from Madison with a forum to make their voices heard and to take action on the issues that most matter to them. Last fall, Madison SOS sponsored a workshop series for students from six area high schools called the Young Women's Leadership Forum. This spring, we're working with teen girls across the city to create a girl-written status report on the issues that most matter to them.

We're hoping that the report will give girls' groups in Madison a platform for action on several critical issues. After the report is published this fall, we'll be creating multi-age task forces and supporting existing groups in action projects on our priority issues.

We'll also use the report as a tool for advocacy. The report will include girl-written goals for community progress on the issues it highlights, and we hope it will give girls an opportunity to tell adult policy-makers what's on their minds.

In the coming months, we're hoping to meet with groups of girls across the city to discuss specific issues in depth, as well as surveying and interviewing a broad range of girls (ages 14 to 18). We're kicking off our efforts on Thursday, May 1st from 5:30 to 7:30PM at the United Way of Dane County with a community roundtable for girls' groups.

By participating in this forum, girls will have a unique opportunity to speak out, to help influence the decisions that affect their lives, and to learn more about city-wide leadership opportunities.

If you're interested in getting involved, contact Becky McGill at 816.914.9899 or email rmcgill@wisc.edu with any questions.

6. Young Womynz Empowerment Conference in Milwaukee

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.

7. GALAXY Ball This Weekend in La Crosse

It's time once again for the glitz, the glamour and the red carpet style of the Galaxy Ball. Open to youth ages 13 and up, the Galaxy Ball will include a silent auction, an awards program, and a dance.

Date: Saturday, April 19th

Time: 7:30PM to 11:00PM

Location: At UW-La Crosse in the Cartwright Center

Cost: \$5 for adults in advance (\$7 at the door)
and \$3 for students in advance (\$4 at the door)

GALAXY exists to Support, Educate, and Empower LGBTIQQA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning and allied) young people between the ages of 13 and 19. We meet for weekly programs and activities, attend community events together, go on group outings and road trips, participate in conferences, provide referrals, sit on panels for diversity days and other experience-based opportunities, have socials, and try out other cool ideas that people in our Galaxy dream up and enact.

Questions? Send them to galaxy@ywcalax.org.

8. Hip Hop As A Movement Week

Erupting as a powerful social movement in the Bronx in the 1970's, Hip Hop has since proven to be dynamic multicultural force crossing socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic borders.

The Multicultural Student Coalition of UW-Madison is proud to organize and create a collaborative effort between various campus groups and community members to present Hip Hop As A Movement Week 2008. Building off the success of last year, we plan to take the movement to the next level by showcasing hip hop and its fusion with other musical genres, politics, global movements, the environment, community, art, and academia. This truly dynamic

week includes a lineup that presents each of these unique fusions with a variety of discussions, panels, art galleries, spoken word events, films, and concerts.

Hip Hop As A Movement Week begins TODAY, the 18th, and goes through Saturday, April 26th. On Sunday, April 20th, there will also be a day-long “(YOU)th Change Conference” at Grainger Hall on University Avenue. This conference seeks to help youth find positive ways to get involved and make a difference in their communities and their lives.

The (YOU)th Change Conference and all Hip Hop As A Movement Week events are FREE.

For information about workshops, performances, times and locations, check out:

www.MySpace.com/HipHopWeek
www.MySpace.com/YouthChangeConference

9. It's Almost Prom Season!

I think we can safely say that spring has finally arrived in Wisconsin, which means that Prom Season is just around the corner. Here are a couple of queer-friendly proms that we know about:

MADISON: Hosted by Teens Like Us, the 2008 Pride Prom will be held again at the Lussier Family Heritage Center (3101 Lake Farm Road) on Friday, May 23rd. Doors will open at 7PM and close at 10PM. There will be food, a DJ, Prom Court and a handful of schnazzy door prizes for some safe sex savvy winners.

All Teens Like Us events are open to middle school- and high school-aged youth, and are alcohol, drug, tobacco and harassment free! A \$5 donation will be requested at the door, although no one will be turned away for inability to pay.

FOX VALLEY: Hosted by the GLBT Partnership of the Harmony Café, the 2nd Annual Gay Prom will be on May 31st at the Liberty Banquet Hall in Kimberly (800 Eisenhower Dr.). More details about this event will be coming your way in the next Newsarama.

Do you know of an LGBTQA Prom coming up that isn't listed here? Let Tim know at tim@gsaforsafeschools.org and he'll list it next time.

10. April is National Poetry Month

In honor of National Poetry Month, we thought we'd share some poetry-related events coming up that you might like to know about:

A CALL FOR POETRY ON THE BUS LINES

The Madison's Poet Laureate and the Madison Arts Commission (MAC) are pleased to announce the new program, Bus Lines, a high school poetry competition that will print selected poems on the placards right above the seats on Metro Transit buses in the 2008-09 academic year. Students whose work is selected will also be invited to read their work at the Wisconsin Book Festival next October.

Students who are enrolled in a Madison high school during the 2007-08 school year are invited to submit up to three original, unpublished poems to Bus Lines. Poems can be submitted in any language, but must also include an English language translation. Each poem must be no longer than eight lines. There is no entry fee. There will be no monetary prize awarded to students whose work is selected.

Applications and Guidelines are available on the MAC Website at <http://www.cityofmadison.com/mac/buslines/> or by calling the Arts Program Administrator at kwolf@cityofmadison.com or 608.261.9134.

April 30, 2008 is the last day to apply.

GOOD ASIAN DRIVERS IN APPLETON AND MILWAUKEE

As we mentioned above, slam poet Kit Yan and folkrocker Melissa Li will be performing at the Harmony Café's Night of Noise in Appleton on Friday, April 25th. Well, Good Asian Drivers will ALSO be performing at Project Q in Milwaukee on Saturday, April 26th. The show starts at 7:00PM at 315 W. Court St. in Milwaukee, and is ALL AGES and FREE.

11. Community Transgender Training

Are you interested in learning about the transgender community? Want to learn how to become a better trans ally? Then come to our community transgender training! This is a free event and lunch will be provided both Saturdays by Noodles and Company (off Fish Hatchery). This training is sponsored by the Madison Area Transgender Association, LeDame Footwear, and OutReach. EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND!

DETAILS:
Saturday, April 26th, from 12:00PM to 5:00PM

Gender 101: Where do you lie on the “gender spectrum” (masculinity/femininity)?
Transgender 101: What’s the “T” in LGBT? Located at Escape Java Joint and Gallery (916 Williamson St., Madison).

Sunday, April 27, from 1:00PM to 5:00PM

View the Logo Network’s “TransGeneration”. Panel discussion to follow.

“TransGeneration” is a documentary that focuses on the lives of four college students struggling to fit into a society that doesn’t understand why they are the way they are, that is, transgender young adults trapped in bodies that belie their true selves. Located at OutReach (600 Williamson St., Ste. P-1).

Saturday, May 3, from 12:00PM to 5:00PM

Transgender 102: A Cultural View (famous trans people, history, etc.) How to be a trans ally! Escape Java Joint and Gallery (916 Williamson St., Madison).

Feel free to come with lots of questions; there will be transgender speakers all three days! Donations appreciated, but not required. Proceeds benefit The Madison Area Transgender Association. All participants will receive a certificate of completion. For more information, or if you have questions please call OutReach at (608) 255-8582 and ask for Leslie, Josh, or Brian. RSVPs are appreciated but not required. (Class Instructors/Professors: this might be an opportunity to offer your students extra credit for their attendance).

Related Readings: News and Publications

12. Twin Cities.com – Eau Claire Principal Admits “Error In Judgment” Over Teacher’s Sexual Orientation Talk

A couple of weeks ago, a health teacher at South Middle School in Eau Claire, Wisconsin came out to her five classes of seventh graders. Although Stephanie Rowe had discussed her plans with Principal John Wallace and gotten the okay to do so, many parents feel that they should have been notified ahead of time and question the relevance of Rowe’s disclosure.

According to the article, the question of Rowe’s sexual orientation had come up previously during a question and answer portion of the human growth and development unit, and she felt that refusing to answer was not “modeling the honesty, respect and authenticity that she encourages in her students.”

You can read more about this story here:

http://www.twincities.com/wisconsin/ci_8876522
