Published on *Genders & Sexualities Alliance Network* (http://gsanetwork.org)

Two Spirits: Honoring Fred Martinez on the Transgender Day of Remembrance

Oct. 31, 2011 ? Daniel

November 20th is the annual **Transgender Day of Remembrance** and is an important day for GSAs to bring attention to the violence transgender and gender non-conforming people face every day.

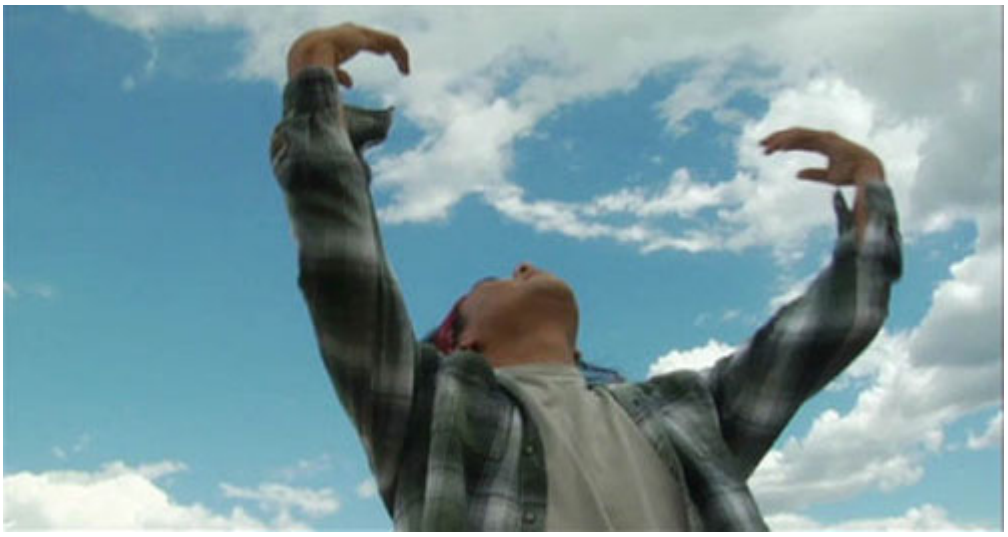
File photo

Fred Martinez, Jr., a Navajo teen who liked to dress in women's clothing and considered himself transgendered, was brutally murdered in Cortez on June 16, 2001.

A great way for your GSA to recognize the Transgender Day of Remembrance is to show the film Two Spirits [1]. The film tells the story of **Fred Martinez**, a Navajo youth who lived his life as a **nádleehí** ? a Navajo term for male-bodied person with a feminine nature. Fred became one of the youngest hate-crime victims in modern history when he was brutally murdered at age sixteen.

?Two Spirit? is a contemporary term created by **Native American LGBTQ activists to recognize and reclaim their pre-colonial past when many Native American societies had complex gender systems that included more than just ?woman? and ?man?.**

While different Native American communities use different terms to talk about people like Fred whose gender identities are complicated, the term ?Two Spirit? helps unite these different communities when they talk about the issues they face.??The film Two Spirits captures the complicated histories of European colonization and its effects on Native American society?s relationship to gender, as well as communicating the dire realities faced by LGBTQ Native Americans today.



Your GSA can show Two Spirits during your regular meeting or you can organize a special screening and invite students, teachers and other staff. You can also ask your history or social studies teachers to show the film on the Transgender Day of Remembrance since it discusses the history of Native American communities and current issues like hate crimes and discrimination. Remember, the FAIR Education Act requires your school to teach about the contributions of LGBTQ people and movements in your social studies and history classes. **For more information on the FAIR Education Act visit** www.gsanetwork.org/FAIR [2]

Click here to see the trailer for Two Spirits [1]

For other ideas on what GSAs can do to honor the Transgender Day of Remembrance, check out GSA Network?s resource guide! [3]

More Resources:

Remembering Our Dead [4]

Transgender Law Center [5]

Sylvia Rivera Law Project [6]

Source URL: http://gsanetwork.org/news/blog/two-spirits-honoring-fred-martinez-transgender-day-remembrance/10/31/11

Links:
[1] http://twospirits.org/about-the-film/trailer/

[2] http://gsanetwork.org/fair
[3] http://gsanetwork.org/resources/gsa-actions-events/transgender-day-remembrance%20
[4] http://www.rememberingourdead.org/index.html#
[5] http://transgenderlawcenter.org/cms/
[6] http://srlp.org/