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Mar. 2, 2012 ? Victoria

Planning is underway for GSA Network's [Expression Not Suppression Logo](#) [Expression Not Suppression](#) ^[1] (ENS) conference on March 24, 2012! ENS is a free, annual conference in the Fresno area for LGBTQ and straight ally youth (ages 13 to 21) who are dedicated to creating safer schools and building the GSA movement in the Central Valley.

A group of ten local youth get together each week to plan an empowering conference dedicated to a day of activist workshops, networking, coalition building, and of course lots of FUN! The ENS Youth Planning Committee cannot wait to see all their ideas and creativity come to life. Many of the committee members expressed a desire for ENS 2012 to incorporate the arts, and to challenge traditional conference settings by inviting artists to be our keynotes and workshop presenters. "We don't want people talking at us. We want people sharing something with us!" said Rachel, a youth leader on the planning committee. "We want to feel like we got something from this conference. We want youth to learn and have fun."



Because of ideas from youth leaders like Rachel, **GSA Network is proud to announce Yosimar Reyes as our keynote speaker for ENS 2012.** His fierce call for social justice and revolutionary love fuel a sense of urgency within our youth. Hearing his spoken word poetry for the first time at an ENS meeting, the members grew more energized. Yosimar moved and inspired them with his rhythmic story telling and passion for justice. Join us for ENS 2012, and you too will be inspired by the art of Yosimar. [Check out Yosimar's beautiful work!](#) ^[2] In addition to spoken word, ENS 2012 will host a range of workshops teaching youth "How To Have a Kick Ass GSA?", a film screening of "Out In The Silence?", information on FAIR Education Act, LGBT inclusive sex education and much more!

Brianna, a planning committee youth leader, urged the committee to make transgender issues, education, and organizations a central part of the conference. "The 'T' gets left out a lot. We say LGBTQ, but most of our work and organizations don't remember the 'T'," explained Brianna. "Fighting transphobia is important too. Let's remember the T means Transgender." Fueled by Brianna's commitment to justice for all the communities represented in LGBTQ acronym, ENS 2012 is going to be an amazing opportunity for Central Valley youth to gain leadership skills to positively transform their communities and schools.

This year our youth committee is working to make the FAIR Education Act a central component of Expression Not Suppression. All our presenters are encouraged to think about the ways their work reinforces the need for California and all students to be taught fair and accurate LGBTQ history. Because these youth believe that history is not limited to a classroom, but extends into the arts and beyond, we invite you to become an activist in your community by attending ENS 2012!

[Register NOW for ENS 2012!](#) [1]

Expression Not Suppression is an annual youth conference with workshops, a resource fair and dance party for LGBTQ and straight allied youth activists and adult allies who are dedicated to challenging homophobia and transphobia, and creating safe and supportive schools for everyone.



GSA Network welcomes Central Valley LGBTQ and straight ally youth, teachers, GSA advisors and community members to attend Expression Not Suppression 2012. Check out the details below.

WHEN:

Saturday, March 24th, 2011, 9:00am to 9:00pm

CONFERENCE: 9:00am to 7:00pm

YOUTH DANCE PARTY: 7:00pm to 9:00pm

LOCATION:

Big Red Church of Fresno

2131 N Van Ness Blvd.

Fresno, CA 93704

Parking: Free street parking

If you have questions or want to know more about ENS 2012, contact Victoria N. Benavides at Victoria@gsanetwork.org [3].

Want to make a donation to support Expression Not Suppression? Reach out to GSA Network's Program & Development Coordinator, Renee Bracey Sherman, at renee@gsanetwork.org [4].

Source URL: <http://gsanetwork.org/news/blog/central-valley-prepares-ens-2012/03/02/12>

Links

[1] <http://gsanetwork.org/ens>

[2] <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Yosimar-Reyes-Poetry/192105320831056?sk=info>

[3] <mailto:Victoria@gsanetwork.org?subject=I%20want%20to%20go%20to%20ENS%202012!>

[4] <mailto:renee@gsanetwork.org?subject=I%20want%20to%20donate%20to%20ENS%202012!>