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3 Ways for GSAs to Honor Transgender Day of Remembrance

Nov. 14, 2012 ? Owen Aptekar-Cassels

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Next Tuesday, November 20th, is Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR), a day when we honor those who have died because of anti-transgender violence. A lot of violence against trans* people is not reported in the news, even though transgender people, particularly trans women of color, face disproportionately high rates of violence and hate crimes. Talking about transphobia is important, and it is something many people don?t think about when they focus on fighting homophobia in schools. Transgender day of Remembrance is an important event for GSAs to hold to help fight this trans erasure.

There's no one way to honor TDOR, but my years of GSA activism have given me a few ideas for what GSAs can do:

1. At my GSA, we usually get fake flowers and stick the stems into the ground so that they line a walkway. Then we put up signs that say ?Remember? and list names of transgender people who have been killed (the photo above is my GSA's sign for this year). Each flower represents one of those people who were killed for bravely trying to live their lives as the gender they identify as -- which is something most people take for granted.

2. Make posters with names or biographies of the life and activism of transgender people from history and post them around school with the word ?remember.? If your school has a bulletin that is read in homeroom classes or over the loudspeaker, you can explain what Transgender Day of Remembrance is, ask for a minute of silence, list the names of people who have been killed, or outline the contributions of one or two trans people. If the announcements are read daily, you could highlight a different person each day of the week leading up to TDOR.

3. You can also show a movie in your GSA. There are a number of movies that deal with trans issues and get people thinking about transphobia and violence against trans people. Check the rating of any movie you're thinking about and, if you plan to show one that's rated R, make sure that members turn in signed permission forms.

GSA Network has a Transgender Day of Remembrance page [1]with even more ideas about what your GSA can do. You can also check out the Transgender Day of Remembrance website [2] for the names of people being memorialized and other information.

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Links:
[1] http://gsanetwork.org/resources/gsa-actions-events/transgender-day-remembrance
[2] http://www.transgenderdor.org/