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## Building the GSA Movement One Leadership Summit at a Time

Jan. 26, 2011 ? Daniel

Over 70 GSA activists, GSA advisors, and allies came together at **GSA Network's Long Beach/South Bay GSA Leadership Summit**, held at Long Beach City College on Saturday, January 22, 2011, to gain new skills, learn their legal rights, make new friendships, and help build a stronger GSA movement in Long Beach and the South Bay of Los Angeles County.

GSA Network organizes regional [GSA Leadership Summits](#) <sup>[1]</sup> throughout California in order to provide GSA activists with the skills and resources necessary to transform their schools into safe and accepting places, as well as to connect youth to one another. **Current high school students trained by GSA Network staff to be peer Youth Trainers, lead all workshops in our Leadership Summits.**



In our Southern California region, GSA Network staff has organized Leadership Summits in communities ranging from the Pomona Valley to Long Beach/South Bay to the Coachella Valley to Bakersfield to San Diego County.

**More Summits are scheduled for 2011** in San Luis Obispo County, North Santa Barbara County, Orange County, South LA, Southeast LA County, the Antelope Valley, and the Santa Clarita Valley.

**Topics covered at a GSA Leadership Summit include:**

- ? How to run GSA meetings
- ? Outreach, membership building, coalitions, and diversity
- ? Understanding gender identity/expression and sexual orientation
- ? Understanding laws that protect LGBTQ youth in schools
- ? Taking action against slurs, harassment, and discrimination in schools
- ? Launching a campaign at school to create change



To better understand how GSA Leadership Summits help give students and teachers the tools to fight homophobia and transphobia in their school, we asked some GSA activists, GSA advisors and one of our Youth Trainers what a GSA Leadership Summit means to them.

Here's what they said:

The Long Beach/South Bay Leadership Summit renewed my energy and inspired me! I loved being around such amazing young people who are committed to making a positive difference! My students came away so excited about [GAYLA](#) [2] and next year's summit and can't wait to get together with other GSAs.

? **Anjelica Adams, GSA Advisor Compton High**

I train at GSA Leadership Summits because I feel empowered sharing my knowledge with other SoCal students. I enjoy meeting activists from all over Southern California and hearing about how they are changing their communities.

**? Melba Martinez, GSA Network Youth Trainer, Granada Hills High**

I loved it when we got to interact with new people in small groups and got to share our stories about how we became GSA activists through the maps we drew. We are gonna share with the rest of the GSA what we learned at the Summit about filing a report against harassment and discrimination.

**- Mortisha Moss, GSA President Compton High School**

For more info about upcoming GSA Leadership Summits in your area check out our [Trainings and Summits](#) <sup>[1]</sup> page.

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#### **Links**

[1] <https://gsanetwork.org/events/trainings-and-summits>

[2] <https://gsanetwork.org/events/gayla>