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[Home](#) > SAC-ATTACK! GSA Network hits the road to Sacramento for a regional GSA Leadership Summit

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## SAC-ATTACK! GSA Network hits the road to Sacramento for a regional GSA Leadership Summit

Nov. 11, 2011 ? laura

When GSA Network youth and staff travel to Sacramento, it usually means they are speaking with legislators at the State Capitol. But this past weekend, LGBTQ youth activists were learning how to make it better in their own schools - locally around Sacramento.

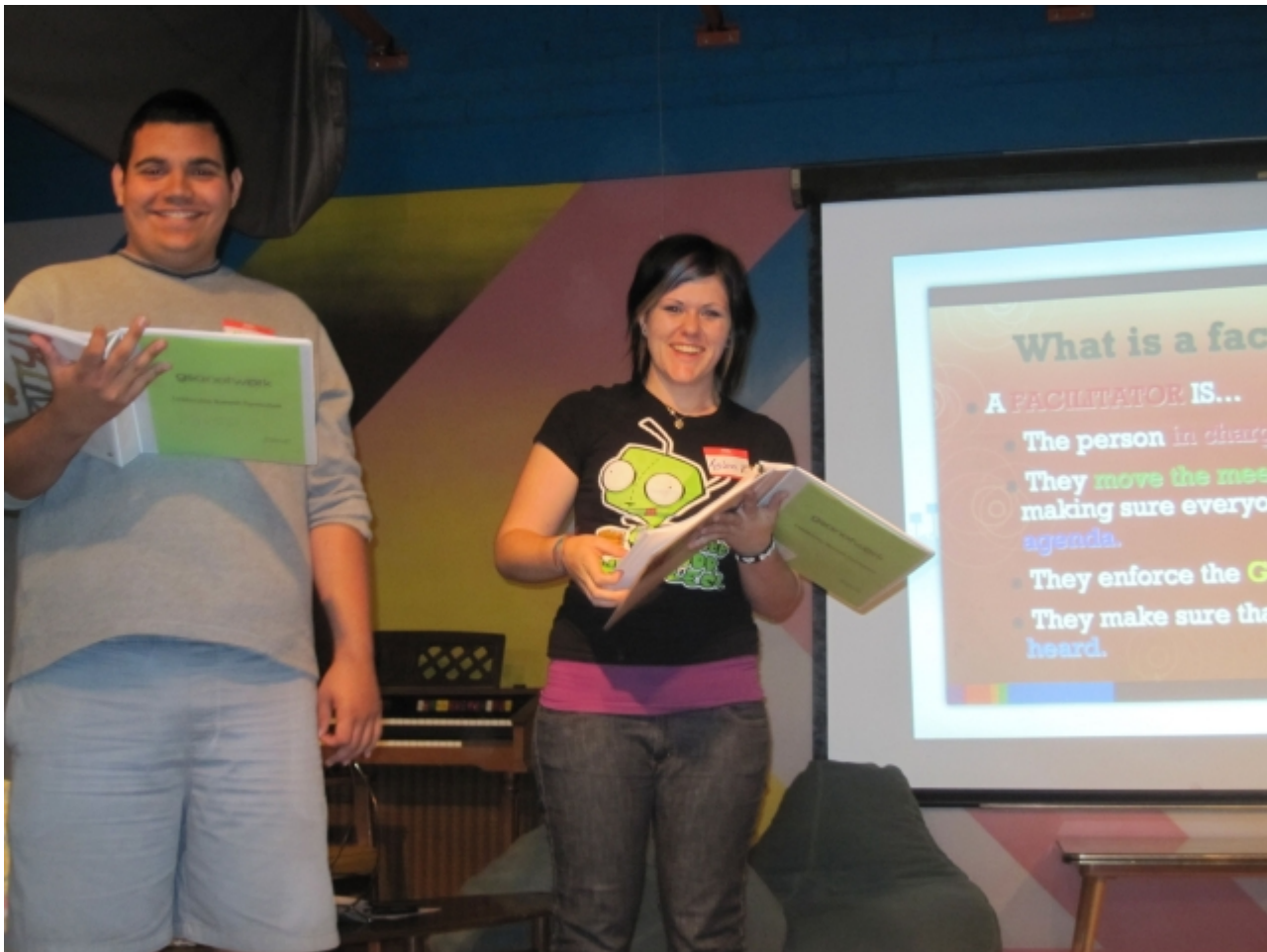


Nineteen students from over 10 high schools in the surrounding area gathered at the Vibe, Youth Lounge & Career Center, a youth community center in downtown Sacramento, for the day-long leadership summit. GSA Network hosts GSA Leadership Summits in specific, localized regions around the state, bringing together GSAs from that area to network and learn how to build upon the work their GSAs are doing. Three youth trainers from the Northern California Youth Council trained workshops such as **Fight 4 Your Rights, How to Have a Kick-Ass GSA** and **Fighting the Gender Binary**.

**Nick Penland**, a sophomore from Granada High School, was a trainer at the summit for the first time. "It's the best experience that I can describe," he said about the experience of training other youth. "It's so uplifting to give what I've learned from GSA Network to other youth."

**Tosha Black**, a junior from San Jose Collegiate, was also a first-time trainer at the summit. "I like to tell people my story and then inspire others to be activists," she explained. Tosha's mom

inspired her to join Northern California Youth Council, and now she is taking the next step to be a trainer.



The energy at the summit was electric throughout the day, especially during the Fight 4 Your Rights workshop. Youth shared stories about how their schools weren't following the law, and one student in particular shared how they planned to make change at their own high school.

"I thought that the Fight 4 Your Rights portion was really helpful because it gave us a clear resource for changing policy in our school," said **Vivian Wang**, a senior at Vista del Lago High School. "What we're looking forward to the most is our anti-slur campaign because we feel like a lot of people at our school aren't hateful, they're just uninformed of what the words mean. So an anti-slur campaign will make the most impact."

"There was a wide variety of students from different school climates there, so their issues were very diverse," said **Amanda Harris, the Northern California Program Coordinator**, who was thrilled at the large turnout. "It was great for them to hear each others issues and gain new perspective about other school climates."

GSA Network would like to thank the local partners who helped make the Sacramento Leadership Summit possible: Lawrence Schwegy of the [Sacramento County Unified School District Integrated Support Services](#)

[1], [Empty Closets Community Foundation](#) [2], [Vibe Lounge & Career Center](#) [3], and [PFLAG of Sacramento](#) [4].

The next large event in Northern California is the Youth Empowerment Summit, which will bring over 500 LGBTQ and ally youth and their adult allies to San Francisco for a day-long conference. To learn more about YES or how to bring a Leadership Summit like the one in Sacramento to your area, go to [www.gsannetwork.org/YES](http://www.gsannetwork.org/YES) [5] or email Amanda Harris at [Amanda@gsannetwork.org](mailto:Amanda@gsannetwork.org) [6].

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### Links

[1] <http://www.scusd.edu/SupportServices/Pages/IntegratedSupportServicesHealthyStart.aspx>

[2] <http://emptyclosets.com/>

[3] <http://www.thevibefoundation.org/>

[4] <http://www.pflagsacramento.org/>

[5] <https://gsannetwork.org/yes>

[6] <mailto:Amanda@gsannetwork.org>