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For four days this week, Louisville, Kentucky will become the queer youth capital of the country as GSA activists come together for the 7th annual National Gathering of statewide networks of Gay-Straight Alliance clubs. The best part? I get to go!

It's my first time going, and I'm extremely excited for all of the stories, ideas, and opinions to hear and share. Starting on Thursday, August 2nd, youth from all around the United States will meet, help each other with problems, find new friends, and create some great activist memories.

While so many amazing things happen at once, there's one thing the National Gathering strives for as a whole: bringing local GSA clubs together to create an inspiring movement that youth from all across the country can join. I believe in the power of the national GSA movement because of what I've experienced on a local level. The atmosphere of my school in the Central Valley changed greatly after the first year our GSA club was formed. Students came together, educated one another, and felt accepted for who they were. They made friends along the way and shared great moments.

Nothing would please me more than to see that same type of community built for other youth. My

goal for the GSA movement is for it to affect as many people as possible in the most positive of ways. I believe that this movement can really make a change in the lives of others, especially in the lives of youth who might think, right now, that they're alone.

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