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## **Alaska, Kansas Organizations Join National Association of GSA Networks**

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This month, the Kansas Queer Youth Network and Identity, Inc. in Alaska became the newest members of the National Association of GSA Networks. Operated by Gay-Straight Alliance Network, the National Association is a professional network of statewide organizations supporting local GSA clubs. Through its National Association, GSA Network builds the capacity of the LGBTQ youth movement to address issues of educational justice and safe schools locally, statewide, and across the country.

"We are thrilled to welcome the Kansas Queer Youth Network and Alaska's Identity, Inc. to our National Association's incredible group of organizations committed to supporting the vital work of GSA clubs," said Carolyn Laub, GSA Network's executive director. "We look forward to working with them as partners in our struggle to ensure youth in all states have the opportunity to go to school, be themselves, and thrive."

With this announcement, GSA Network's National Association has expanded to 39 member organizations, each working in their respective states to support school-based Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) clubs.

"KQYN is incredibly honored by our ability to be a part of a queer youth organization with as much history and power in the trans and queer community as the GSA Network," said James Good-DeCosta, a youth organizer with Lawrence Queer Youth Voice and KQYN. "We see this as a huge step towards the liberation of queer young people, and hope to use our involvement as a platform to educate people and dispel negative stereotypes about queer youth in Kansas."

Identity Executive Director Drew Phoenix said: "Identity is proud and honored to be a new member of the Gay-Straight Alliance Network, working in partnership to empower youth to become leaders in their communities and activists to advance LGBT inclusion and equality in schools." Added Hannah Gershel, a senior at Eagle River High School in Alaska, "Our LGBTQ youth need a voice and a place to shine. With the help of the national network, I know that our young leaders can feel empowered to make Alaska a great place to call home."

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*Identity was founded in 1977 to advance the LGBTQ community in Alaska through advocacy, education, and connectivity. Identity works with GSAs in the Anchorage and Mat-Su valley region to help strengthen their groups and provide them with engagement opportunities.*

<http://www.identityinc.org/><sup>[1]</sup>

*The Kansas Queer Youth Network (KQYN) is currently organized by Lawrence Queer Youth Voice, a youth-led, youth-run trans and queer organization working in Lawrence, Kansas since 2011. KQYN (pronounced "Kay, Queen!") will provide support and technical assistance to GSAs and work to build the trans and queer youth movement in Kansas.*

<http://www.lawrencequeeryouthvoice.org/kqyn/><sup>[2]</sup>



*Gay-Straight Alliance Network (GSA Network) is a national youth leadership organization that empowers youth activists to fight homophobia and transphobia in schools by training student leaders and supporting student-led Gay-Straight Alliance clubs throughout the country. GSA Network operates the GSA Network of California and the National Association of GSA Networks, which unites 39 statewide networks of GSA clubs.* [www.gsanetwork.org](http://www.gsanetwork.org/)<sup>[3]</sup>

Press Release

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**Source URL:** <https://gsanetwork.org/news/Alaska-Kansas-Orgs-Join-National-Association>

#### **Links**

[1] <http://www.identityinc.org/>

[2] <http://www.lawrencequeeryouthvoice.org/kqyn/>

[3] <https://gsanetwork.org/>