



#WeHonorThem: A Toolkit for #GSADay4RJ **February 21, 2020**

How to Honor, Share, and Archive
Trans Youth of Color Leadership

Presented By:
The National Youth Council of GSA Network



trans and queer youth uniting for racial and gender justice

Give Trans Youth of Color Leaders Their Roses Now!

For [#GSADay4RJ](#), we call on GSA clubs and our partners across the country to **HONOR and ARCHIVE** Trans Youth of Color who are leaders in their communities **despite** their experiences within the [school-to-prison pipeline \(STPP\)](#). [#WeHonorThem](#) and will make sure they get their roses and commemoration now.

The STPP refers to a set of school policies and practices that push students out of schools and into juvenile detention and the prison industrial complex. These include “zero tolerance” policies, policing and the use of metal detectors on campus, as well as high rates of suspension and expulsion. Not only does the STPP seek to normalize harsh consequences, isolation, full submission, and cruelty, it disproportionately pushes out youth of color, trans and queer youth, undocumented youth, lower income youth, and visibly and non-visibly disabled youth.

The STPP must be abolished! Until that day, impacted Trans Youth of Color Leaders will shout #StillWeRise!

Trans Youth of Color continue to lead communities, organizations, schools, and chosen families in non-traditional and traditional ways. Some Trans Youth of Color lead by organizing and marching in their communities. Others lead by being the school’s kindest and best listener. All forms of leadership are valid, important, and deserving of celebratory roses (real or imagined). However, Trans Youth of Color often lead without any recognition, especially when they do so in non-traditional ways.

We honor those who persist and continue to take and make space, especially where none previously existed.

This [#GSADay4RJ](#) we honor Trans Youth of Color Leaders in alternative and continuation schools. We honor Trans Youth of Color Leaders in public or charter schools. We honor Trans Youth of Color Leaders persevering outside their former schools’ walls. We honor Trans Youth of Color Leaders experiencing incarceration, detention, and deportation.

In solidarity,

The National Youth Council of GSA Network
[#GSADay4RJ](#) [#WeHonorThem](#) [#StillWeRise](#)

Take Action Before and On #GSADay4RJ!

Call to Action: What Trans
Youth of Color Leader
Will You Honor?

HONOR a Trans Youth of Color Leader in your community who is navigating or previously navigated the STPP.

Where Trans
YOC Leaders &
the STPP cross paths

FIND them in alternative and continuation schools, public or charter schools with STPP frameworks, outside school walls, in the community, or experiencing incarceration, detention, and deportation.

Unique and
Traditional Leaders

EXPLAIN why that Trans Youth of Color is a leader. Some lead by organizing the community's marches in cute shorts and a crop top. Others lead by being the school's kindest and best listener in a suit and tie. All are valid. All combinations of expression for a leader are valid.

Honor. Share. Archive.



There are two parts of the #WeHonorThem Toolkit.

HONOR (Part 1)

Honor Kiki (approx. 5-10 minutes per person): This is when, where, and how your GSA chooses to honor a Trans Youth of Color Leader in your school or community. Choose from the List of Honor Kiki Activities:

“Their Roses, Their Flowers”

“Rise”

“Notes from the Heart”

“Le Collage Nostalgia”

“Slideshow”

SHARE + ARCHIVE (Part 2)

Share: This is what you choose to do to share this special moment for #GSADay4RJ. Whether you decide to take a video, group photo, or selfie during or after the kiki is your choice! **Share on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, or Youtube with a caption and the hashtags #WeHonorThem and #GSADay4RJ.**

Archive: This year, we’re providing guidance for an interview session with a Trans Youth of Color Leader that can be archived on the [TRUTH Council’s website!](#) Please [email the National Youth Council](#) to assist in archiving an interview.



Honor Kiki: The Main Event

Honor: This is when, where, and how you choose to honor, recognize or celebrate a Trans Youth of Color Leader in your school or community. It gives a moment to connect the dots about ways the young person is a leader in their school, community or organization. Kiki represents the communal aspect of the honoring process.

The Honor Kiki includes:

- a space/location,
- time,
- GSA club members and allies,
- lead-up & introduction, and
- the Honor Kiki Activity

Do you know what the above parts will look like for you?



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Lead Up Questions for GSA Planners:

1. What is the Trans Youth of Color Leader's name?
2. Why does this leader stand out to you/ your organization/ their community? Try to describe this in 2-3 sentences.
3. Would a large or small group of people be better for the youth's comfortability?
4. Will you need the youth leader to stand or sit in a particular place before the Honor Kiki begins?

Kiki Introduction:

(Name of Leader) , we are grateful that you are a part of our (student body/ group/ organization/ club/ school/ community center/ GSA) . Today, we honor you as a leader in our (org/ club/ group, etc) . We appreciate all the ways you lead and support us. You are a vital. Your leadership looks like (personal or leadership quality) , _____, _____, _____, & _____. The STPP does not (or did not) define you.

Kiki Introduction (completed example):

Taia, we are grateful that you are a part of our **GSA**. Today, we honor you as a leader in our **GSA and school**. We appreciate all the ways you lead and support us. You are vital. Your leadership looks like **always sharing smiles and laughs when we need them most, leading from your heart, and spearheading non-discrimination policies for our school**. The STPP does not (or did not) define you.

Choose Your Honor Kiki Activity

“Their Roses, Their Flowers”

1. Complete the introduction from above.
2. Form a semi-circle around the Honoree.
3. Each person participating in the semi-circle holds a rose or flower.
 - Everyone present may not be participating in the actual Honor Kiki.
4. Each person will hand the rose to the Honoree and state a quality related to that person.
 - The more people, the more roses and qualities...
5. Each person says, “This rose represents your...”
 - Ex. “This rose or flower represents your persistence, your drive, your joy, your heart, your brave spirit, your laugh, etc...”
6. At the end, the group says “Thank you for your leadership!”

“Rise”

1. Complete the introduction from above.
2. The Honoree may stand or sit in front of everyone, or among the group.
3. Other participants are sitting, then stand up to share a note (written on paper or recited from memory).
4. As each individual rises, they tell the Honoree a “plus”.
 - how they have been impacted by the Honoree, or
 - a moment they remember that positively impacted them, or
 - ways the Honoree inspires, motivates or helps them
5. Then, the whole group claps or cheers, and the next individual rises.

“Notes from the heart”

1. Complete the introduction from above.
2. The honoree is handed short notes from peers or staff.
3. The notes or short letters are phrases, lines, quotes and positive notes that are about the Honoree.

4. The Honoree reads the notes aloud.
5. After each reading, they are handed the next note to read.

“Le Collage Nostalgia”

1. Complete the introduction from above.
2. The honoree is given multiple collages of photos from Kiki participants.
 - Cut and glued photos that share fond memories, leadership in action, moments from years ago, etc
 - Photos might be printed from cell phones, Facebook, Instagram, etc
3. The collages and/or individual pictures are described by the collage makers and shared with the group or audience.
4. Once they’ve described the collage or photos, each person says, “I just wanted to remind you who you are...” or “I just wanted to remind you of all that you do for us...”

“Slideshow”

1. Complete the introduction from above.
2. The honoree is presented with a powerpoint or Prezi of photos from individuals at the Kiki.
 - Photos might be shared from cell phones, Facebook, Instagram, etc that capture fond memories, leadership in action, moments from years ago, etc.
3. The photos are narrated and shared with the group or audience.
4. Once done, each person gives appreciation or gratitude.

Feel free to create your own Honor Kiki!



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Kiki Remix

Timeline

You don't have to wait until #GSADay4RJ to host an Honor Kiki and or talk about it with us! The entire month of February is a great time to host a kiki and uplift it.

Mix and Go!

"Their Roses, Their Flowers" and "Rise" can be altered to use notes or poems that are read aloud by the Honoree. Also, pieces of original art or gifts could be described and exchanged, depending on local protocols and policies.

Music

Music is always a welcome addition to the Honor Kiki. Does the Trans Youth of Color Leader have a favorite song or artist?

Party Time: Food

Do you have more time and want to further honor the moment? All Kiki ideas above, and any ones you come up with, can become cake, ice cream, or snack socials, as well.

Remembering Historical Figures

Having trouble identifying Trans Youth of Color Leaders in your network? Reach out to us at NationalYC@gsanetwork.org and we can share trans youth leaders from the past to honor!



Share: This is what you choose to do to highlight this special moment for #GSADay4RJ. Whether you decide to take a video, group photo, or selfie during or after, it's your choice! **Post on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, or Youtube with a caption and the hashtags #WeHonorThem, #GSADay4RJ, and #StillWeRise.**

If you take photos and videos at any part of the Honor Kiki, the National Youth Council— or your GSA or organization—can uplift your Trans Youth of Color Leader for other clubs to learn about. If you host an Honor Kiki before or on #GSADay4RJ, feel free to [email photos or videos to the National Youth Council](#) to share on February 21, 2020. Connect to the larger GSA movement by following the hashtags #GSADay4RJ and #WeHonorThem and sharing other clubs' posts!

Feel free to use these captions for your posts:

#WeHonorThem because Trans Youth of Color lead by mentoring.

#WeHonorThem because they lead by inspiring their communities.

#WeHonorThem because they're on the front lines protesting injustice.

#WeHonorThem because they lead by standing up for others.

#WeHonorThem because they lead by cooking for their families.

#WeHonorThem because they lead by strategizing with us.

#WeHonorThem because they lead by comforting others.

#WeHonorThem because they lead by showing that we can speak for ourselves, just give us the mic!

#WeHonorThem because they lead by motivating peers.

#WeHonorThem because they lead by being reliable.

#WeHonorThem because they lead by embodying love and kindness.

#WeHonorThem because they lead by making sure we stay focused on the big picture.



Archive: This year, we're providing guidance to hold an interview session with a Trans Youth of Color Leader, and that interview can be archived on the [TRUTH Council's website!](#) Both video-recorded or text format interviews are welcome. Please [email the National Youth Council](#) to assist in archiving an interview.

How to Interview a Trans Youth of Color Leader

Leadership Questions:

1. How do you personally define leadership?
2. Describe the work that you're doing to lead or change your community.
3. When did you start _____?
 - a. Ex: When did you start protesting police violence in your community?
 - b. Ex. When did you start leading trainings about trans young people's needs in your community?
4. What motivated you to do this work? Was there a specific event that made you want to get involved?
5. Have you had any standout victories or highlights while doing this work?
6. What is a leadership or project goal that you have for this year?
7. Why do you think it's important for trans POC to take on leadership roles?
8. What advice do you have for trans POC who may want to create change in their communities but don't know how or where to start?



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School-to-Prison Pipeline Questions:

1. What was your experience with the school-to prison-pipeline?
 - a. How did school policing impact your time as a student? Do you feel comfortable sharing an experience that you had with an officer on campus? (These should only be asked if their experience had to do with policing)
2. How did the experience(s) impact you outside of school?
3. How did you bounce back and decide to embrace your power?
4. Did your experience with the pipeline shape _____ in any way? If so, how?
(Insert whatever leadership role they're being recognized for.)
 - a. Ex: When did you start protesting police violence in your community?
 - b. Ex. When did you start leading trainings about trans young people's needs in your community?
5. Do you have advice for other trans POC who are experiencing school pushout?



Definitions and Additional Resources

- **What is #GSADay4RJ?** GSA Day for Racial Justice (**February 21, 2020**) is an annual day of action to mobilize for racial justice and celebrate the multiple identities we hold as LGBTQ youth. #GSADay4RJ is hosted by the National Youth Council of GSA Network.
- **What is the School to Prison Pipeline (STPP)?** The STPP is a system of policies or practices used by school districts, such as zero tolerance policies, police and school guards, and metal detector entry, that push youth of color, queer youth, queer youth of color, undocumented youth, lower income youth, and visibly and non-visibly disabled youth, out of schools and into the juvenile justice system.

10 minute short film: [East of the River by Hannah Peterson | Drama Short Film](#)

A day in the life of teenagers finding their way through an overburdened school system.

- **Why Trans Youth of Color Leaders?** Because they constantly fight systemic marginalization. The respect and recognition they deserve is not going to appear out of thin air. Organizing, mobilizing, and taking action(s) can combat interlocking, oppressive systems.
- **Recognition is a form of Racial Justice, too:** People of Color don't always receive recognition or validation for their varied forms of leadership and existences. That's surely not the norm for Trans and Queer Youth of Color, and especially not for Trans Youth of Color Leaders.
- **What are unique or non-traditional leaders?:** This group includes Trans Youth of Color or Two-Spirit Indigenous Youth Leaders who may or may not "look" or "dress" or "sound" like a typical leader. Nonetheless, they are community forces, group role models, guides to their peers, and sources of inspiration. They offer hope, determination, love, and other higher aims.