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Ready! Set! Go! Safe & Healthy LGBT Youth Project Organization Convening

Nov. 18, 2011 ? Ian

Thursday November 10, 2011 marked a historical moment for the LGBT safe schools movement. GSA Network hosted 24 stakeholders from around the nation for a two day convening in San Francisco to discuss and strategize about the first-of-its-kind federally funded **Safe & Healthy LGBT Youth Project**. Since GSA Network will be working with many different partners throughout the nation on this project, we wanted the participants to be reflective of the geographic and institutional diversity in the project.

GSA Network?s Research Project Manager, **Hilary Burdge**, walked us through the current research on LGBT issues in schools and their relationship with GSAs. We were fortunate to have **David Fischer**, the program manager at Illinois Safe Schools Alliance [1], give us a run down of the exciting new work that is being done in Illinois. **Christine Sun**, Deputy Legal Director of Southern Poverty Law Center [2], ended the convening on a note of creating confidence for the future of LGBT youth.

Other participants at the convening ranged from **Marge Kleinsmith-Hildebrand**, the HIV/Sex Ed Resource Teacher at San Diego Unified School District on the West Coast to **Andrew Barnett**, Executive Director of Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League [3] (SMYAL), on the East Coast, all the way down South to **Ashley Jackson**, Co-Coordinator of the Mississippi Safe Schools Coalition [4]. We were thrilled to have these and other incredible people at our convening, and the information gathered will be invaluable in informing our work to make schools safer for all youth. This convening marked the beginning of a groundbreaking project ? and we could not be more excited to do this work with the help of these other amazing organizations.

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Links:
[1] http://www.illinoissafeschools.org/
[2] http://www.splcenter.org/
[3] http://smyal.org/

[4] http://www.mssafeschools.org/