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GSAs Are Creating Change

Feb. 1, 2012 ? Dulce

This year GSA Network staff traveled to [1]Baltimore to attend the **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force?s** national conference on LGBT equality, **Creating Change**. Over five days, activists from around the country, and the world, gathered in workshops and meetings to discuss the LGBTQ movement. We met up with **GSA activist Shaily Haikimian, a student from Indiana University**, and interviewed her on her experience at Creating Change.

Read the interview below or watch the video on YouTube [2].

Dulce Garcia, GSA Network: Where are you from?

Shaily Haikimian: I?m originally from the North suburbs of Chicago ? Lincolnshire, Illinois - but I currently live in Bloomington, Indiana, at Indiana University.

you become an activist?

SH: My freshman year of high school I decided to sign up for the Day of Silence. And I knew after that day I should start doing more. My sophomore year I started doing work with the GSA and my work really blossomed from there.

DG: You lead a workshop at Creating Change about GSA activism. What was it about?

SH: The workshop included ways to start a GSA and ideas to incorporate into a GSA. Many people don?t realize that almost always there?s a right to a GSA. If you?re in a community that says, ?We can?t have a GSA because it?s against our values.? You know, the law is with you most of the time.

DG: What activism skills or new ideas from Creating Change are you going to take back with you?

SH: A lot of the conversations we had here were all about privilege ? the privilege we have, when do we check our privilege, and when can we utilize our privilege to get our movement ahead of the game. It?s been a recurring theme at a lot of the queer conferences I?ve been to and I think that?s a huge take away ? to make us all come together in our differences.

DG: What inspires you to be an activist?

SH: I think the youth really do inspire me to be an activist. When I see someone else or myself helping a youth become better and want to take another step to do more work or to even just come out. I think that is so beautiful. That means that our work is already successful when we can make kids feel comfortable with who they are. And I think that?s what continues to motivate me; because I know - even if we just change one life you?ve already made a difference.

Haikimian is making it better and creating change by educating others on how to start a GSA. To watch the full video, click here [2]. **Her story inspired us to create change, too.**

To read more about Creating Change, visit:
http://colorlines.com/archives/2012/01/creating_change_2012.html [3]

Also at Creating Change, FIERCE youth [4] 'mic checked' the Obama administration and call attention to the lack of support given to LGBT/Q youth of color. Youth across the nation are demanding their voice be heard!
See the video! [5]

What?s your activist story? Tell it on camera. Upload your own video to YouTube [6] as part of the Make It Better Project [6].

Source URL: http://www.gsanetwork.org/news/blog/gsas-are-creating-change/02/01/12

Links:
[1] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18vweh0r_aA&feature=youtu.be

[2] http://youtu.be/18vweh0r_aA
[3] http://colorlines.com/archives/2012/01/creating_change_2012.html
[4] http://www.fiercenyc.org/
[5] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHkeCvzhYfU&feature=share
[6] http://www.youtube.com/user/MakeItBetterProject