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Sponsor an Activist 2013

Activists are born this way.

Christian, Alice, Darrien, Taiyana, Darrion, and Ashton are changing California. At the end of April, they joined dozens of other Gay-Straight Alliance youth activists [1] to advocate for two crucial bills that will increase opportunities for LGBTQ youth to succeed in school.

The first bill, AB 1266, will allow transgender and gender non-conforming youth to access school facilities and sports in a way that aligns with their gender identity. The second, AB 420, will encourage common sense school discipline to keep queer youth in school and successful, not punished and pushed out because of who they are.

Learn how activists are born. Read their stories below and

Sponsor an Activist [2] today!

Christian Capulin

Christian is a senior from California?s Central Valley who wants to ensure that all queer youth know their rights. ?What?s the point of having rights if we aren?t aware of them or if our teachers and schools don't enforce them?? asks Christian. After learning his rights at last year?s Queer Youth Advocacy Day, Christian hopes to return as a Youth Trainer to share his passion for activism and motivate other youth to advocate for their rights in their schools.

Alice Vardanian

?I strive to become a better and stronger activist to fight for what the LGBTQ community deserves,? says Alice, a junior at Birmingham Community Charter High School in Van Nuys. She started her school?s first GSA and steadily grew the club from 5 to nearly 60 members in less than two years. Alice has inspired teachers to include LGBTQ historical figures in their lessons. Now, she?s ready to learn everything she can about activism and lead her generation into the future.

Darrien Mazariegos

Darrien instinctively knew to become an activist. ?I was suspended multiple times in middle school because of my sexual orientation, was not allowed to take school photos, or participate in graduation.? Now, Darrien is the Vice-President of the GSA at El Toro High School in Orange County and successfully advocated to implement policies that allow transgender youth to succeed in school, participate in sports, and decrease school violence. Darrien is ready to stand up for other transgender youth in the State Capitol.

Taiyana Murray

?I am the only out lesbian at my school and the entire school knows,? says Taiyana, a sophomore from Oakland who has gained the respect of her peers because she does not hide who she is. Taiyana helped start her school?s GSA. By participating in other GSA Network programs, ?I?ve learned how much power I have as a youth activist.? Now she wants to expand her powerful youth activism to change California laws to benefit LGBTQ youth.

Darrion Burgess

As the straight son of a lesbian mother, the passage of Prop 8 was a turning point in Darrion?s life. That year, he heard anti-gay slurs every day at his East Bay middle school. The discrimination hurt, yet inspired him to make LGBTQ activism an integral part of his identity. He joined the GSA and became a vocal straight ally. For Darrion, Queer Youth Advocacy Day is a chance to meet with legislators to advocate for the LGBTQ community that raised him, an experience he hopes will help him pursue a career as a civil rights attorney.

Ashton Lee

Ashton refuses to stand by and watch her peers get bullied. She actively works with her school's GSA to promote non-discrimination, acceptance of LGBTQ youth, and unity between students and staff at Manteca High School. Thanks to her GSA, ?many students are now more self-confident, making it easier for them to stand up for themselves when faced with bullying,? she says. Ashton is ready to travel to Sacramento to learn how to make a long-lasting impact in her community.

Donate now to send Christian, Alice, Darrien, Taiyana, Darrion, Ashton, and dozens of other youth to lobby for change in Sacramento at Queer Youth Advocacy Day [2]!

Source URL: http://www.gsanetwork.org/sponsor-an-activist-2013

Links:
[1] http://www.gsanetwork.org/news/blog/queer-youth-advocacy-day-2013/05/08/13
[2] http://gsanetwork.org/sponsor-an-activist