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Undocumented GSA leader Yordy Cancino freed

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After months of advocacy by thousands of immigrant and LGBT youth, Gay-Straight Alliance leader Yordy Cancino has been released from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center where he was being held. Yordy was dropped off late Wednesday night in downtown San Diego, where he was welcomed with hugs by Familia Trans Queer Liberation Movement organizer Ronnie Veliz, his lawyer from South Bay Immigration Attorneys Nanya Thompson, and the teacher who supported him just a few years ago in starting the Gay-Straight Alliance club at Animo Jackie Robinson High School, Natiya Guin.

"I'm feeling dizzy with reality, but I am so grateful to be free," said Yordy.

Gay-Straight Alliance Network welcomed the news while emphasizing that too many youth are still in danger of deportation.

?I am overjoyed that Yordy Cancino, a GSA Network alum like me who has lived in the United States since he was a child, is now allowed to return to the country he worked so hard to make safer for LGBTQ youth,? said Mario Vasquez, the vice-chair of Gay-Straight Alliance Network?s board of directors, who created the petition to bring Yordy home. ?I am proud of the GSA movement for uniting for one of our own and know that we will continue to fight to ensure all undocumented LGBTQ youth receive justice.?

In April, Mario delivered the petition he created in support of Yordy and all LGBTQ immigrant youth to the White House and ICE headquarters. Over 3000 GSA youth and immigrant activists from across the country united behind Mario and Yordy, signing the petition to bring their fellow GSA leader home. On the same day, youth rallied outside of the federal ICE building in Yordy?s hometown of Los Angeles. Several organizations worked together for Yordy?s release through the #BringThemHome campaign, including Gay-Straight Alliance Network, the National Queer and Trans Latin@ Alliance, the Immigrant Youth Coalition, the Queer Undocumented Immigrant Project, and SMYAL ? DC Regional GSA Network.

Yordy is one of many undocumented youth leading GSA clubs and making schools safer across the country. As Gay-Straight Alliance club president at his Los Angeles high school, Yordy

worked to transform his community in California, where he has lived since he was a child. Like many others held in detention, Yordy was a victim of our broken immigration system, and today?s decision is just one step toward mending that system?s harms.

With Yordy returning home, GSA Network will continue working to ensure undocumented LGBTQ youth leaders can thrive in the U.S. without fear of deportation. We urge Yordy?s peers in Gay-Straight Alliance clubs across the country to support their undocumented members and ensure students at their school have the information they need on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, their rights, and the resources that are available.
Press Release

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