



The Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth

Monthly Newsletter

June 2020

Commission News



Commission Issues Annual Report, Swears In Members

The Commission released its [recommendations](#) for the 2021 fiscal year (which begins in July) on Thursday, June 18. The report includes new research on how COVID-19 is impacting LGBTQ youth; recommendations on how the Commonwealth can address family rejection of LGBTQ youth; and new data on the inequities and challenges facing transgender youth in particular.

The event, which featured Representative Jack Lewis as its keynote speaker, also included the formal swearing in of Commission members. This was scheduled to take place in the State House in April, but the event was postponed and moved to a virtual event in light of the pandemic.

The executive summary and special reports from the recommendations can be found online now [here](#). The full report will be posted on July 1. If you were unable to attend, there is a recording of the event on YouTube that can be found [here](#).

Congratulations to Advancing Equity Award Winners

At our June 18 event, the Commission also presented its third annual Advancing Equity Awards. Congratulations to the following individuals, who were recognized for their outstanding work in the community over the past year:

- Casey Dooley, Chair of Boston Black Pride
- Ashton Mota and Rothsaida Sylvaince, youth activists for LGBTQ rights
- David Conner, Community Engagement Director for the Worcester Historical Museum

- Don Gorton and Arline Isaacson, co-chairs for the MA Coalition to Ban Conversion Therapy
- Mandy Lussier and Katherine Solss-Hartman, Youth on Fire

Letter from Our Chair on the Commission's Annual Recommendations

The following is an excerpt from our annual report, available [here](#).

This month would have been the 50th anniversary of Boston Pride, a march that started with 30 people walking down the sidewalks of Boston on the Anniversary of the Stonewall riots, a protest against police brutality led by black and brown transgender and gender-nonconforming people. This year, instead of the traditional Pride parade down Boston's main streets, thousands of people joined in solidarity at Franklin Park to bring Pride back to its roots. Following the lead of black trans activists, the LGBTQ+ community and allies marched against police brutality through the streets of Roxbury and chanted in unison: Black Trans Lives Matter. Amidst Boston Pride's 50th anniversary, the indefinite pandemic, and the growing Black Lives Matter movement, we know that our mission to advise the Commonwealth on how to improve services and decrease inequities facing LGBTQ youth is more important than ever.

When the emergency shut down began due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we knew that LGBTQ youth would be disproportionately impacted by social isolation, job loss, inability to access critical mental and physical health services, and more. We are incredibly proud of the Commission's youth leadership who immediately began hosting virtual Gender & Sexuality Alliance (GSA) meetings to bring LGBTQ youth together to connect, cope, and build community with one another. We awarded \$18,000 in emergency grants to queer youth and the organizations that serve them to combat the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on LGBTQ youth. We also created a COVID-19 resource page filled with helpful information for LGBTQ youth in Massachusetts. Still, we know the full impact of the pandemic has yet to be felt, and maintaining these services to a growing LGBTQ population will become even more of a challenge.

When the world rightfully erupted after the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer in May, we joined the outcry against systemic racism and police brutality and thought of Tony McDade, a black trans man unjustly murdered by Tallahassee Police, making him at least the 14th transgender or gender non-conforming person to have been fatally shot or killed by other violent means, this year alone. We know these murders often are unreported, falling between the cracks of the intersections of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and more. In order to address the ongoing crisis, our governmental institutions – be they schools, executive agencies, law enforcement, or anything else – must be LGBTQ-competent and bias-free. The Commission's core recommendations outline steps to advance this work here in Massachusetts, issued to specific agencies throughout the report.

As Massachusetts' LGBTQ community reflects on the progress made over the last 50 years, we must double down our commitment to dismantling white supremacy, cis-sexism, and patriarchy within our work - starting with ourselves. Since 2016, the Commission has engaged racial justice consultants to develop a racial justice framework for our work. This has included training and workshops for our staff, members, and agency partners, and reviews of our policy and programmatic work. As the saying goes, "nothing about us without us," I'm pleased to say that our large commission body is more representative of our diverse LGBTQ community today than when I joined in 2014 in regards to race, ethnicity, gender identity, age, geography and more - but we still have a long way to go.

The Commission joins many of our partners to say #BlackLivesMatter, and we continue to commit ourselves to the action those words require. We are grateful to the many members of state government, nonprofit organizations, community coalitions, and others who weighed in to help shape [our annual report](#). We look forward to partnering with all branches and levels of government in Massachusetts to advance these goals throughout the new fiscal year.

Sincerely,

Sasha Goodfriend
She/Her/Hers
Chair, MA Commission on LGBTQ Youth

Letter from Our Director on COVID-19's Impact on LGBTQ Youth

The following is an excerpt from our annual report, available [here](#).

The Commission is this month presenting new research on the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a disastrous impact for LGBTQ youth, and particularly LGBTQ youth of color, in the Commonwealth. We commend the frontline workers who have put their lives on the line during this time, including healthcare professionals and support personnel, but also those who have kept our supermarkets stocked, transportation running, and news reported. We also express our gratitude to so many across the state government who have supported LGBTQ youth specifically, and responded to the pandemic more generally, despite the challenges they have faced.

While the COVID-19 virus itself has most strongly impacted older adults, youth – who face little risk of death from the virus – have borne the brunt of the closure of services, schools, and workplaces that were justifiably shut down to reduce the spread of the virus. The state and federal governments have taken various steps to stem the economic impact of these closures, and while these steps have been promising, they are merely the tip of the iceberg of what is needed. Youth and young adults need rent bills canceled, loans paid or forgiven, missed educational opportunities replaced, and wages raised to help them recuperate all they have lost. In short, the day has come for the Commonwealth to begin repaying the incalculable cost that young people have paid during the pandemic and shutdown.

It would be impossible to present this report without first noting that the Commonwealth has elected not to collect sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data in its work in measuring and responding to the pandemic. This decision has dealt irreparable harm to the community. Such an erasure of our identities not only sends the message that LGBTQ people do not matter, it also means that we will never truly know the depth and breadth of the pandemic's impact. With critical months having passed, it is impossible for this harm to be undone. But we can begin to reconcile for this inaction by taking seriously the stories of LGBTQ youth and adults – such as those collected herein – because with our decision to not collect SOGI data on the pandemic, stories (and careful, expert analysis thereof) are all that we have.

In other words, a lack of data that is of our own doing cannot serve as an excuse for our government to ignore the impact COVID-19 has had on LGBTQ people, particularly those of color. This [report](#) represents a small contribution to the long list of what must be done to aid the recovery, and to avoid a repeat of this disaster.

Corey Prachniak-Rincón
They/Them/Theirs
Director, Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth

Community Resources

Find many more resources to help during the pandemic on the Commission's [COVID-19 resource page](#).

[A Legal Perspective on COVID-19- Ebook](#)- The U.S. Department of Labor has provided ongoing guidance

related to COVID-19. This ebook breaks down some of this complicated legislation and answer frequently asked questions related to:

- **Recent federal employment laws addressing COVID-19**
- **Actions providers should take if an employee or client exhibits COVID-19 symptoms**
- **Recommended safety measures for your facility**

[Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute Free COVID-19 Resource Guide](#)- various videos, handouts, and exercises to reduce stress and anxiety during this difficult time.

[Food Stamp Recipients May Now Order Online](#)- Massachusetts new pilot program will allow those with SNAP benefits to order online, such as Walmart and Amazon. Click [here](#) for more information.

[UTEC- Breaking Barriers to Youth Success](#)- "UTEC is dedicated to helping young people overcome the very real challenges of poverty, gang involvement, unemployment, and cultural barriers that are pervasive in our communities. UTEC intentionally engages [impact young adults](#), ages 17-25, who are returning to our communities from incarceration or have other histories of serious criminal and/or gang involvement. When impact young adults succeed, our communities see the greatest positive impact." Click [here](#) for more information.

[Accessing Gender Affirming Care During COVID-19](#)

Created by the Massachusetts Transgender Health Coalition, includes tips for providers and insurers on top of guiding principles for trans, non-binary, and gender-diverse people.

[Learn About the OCA Complaint Line Here](#)

The OCA operates a Complaint Line, which anyone with concerns about a child or youth who is receiving state services can contact. If you or a family you are working with is having difficulty with a state service for children (e.g. foster care, residential treatment, special education services) that you have been unable to resolve through the normal state agency administrative process, please contact our staff at the OCA. You can reach the OCA Complaint Line by email at childadvocate@state.ma.us or by phone at 617-979-8360.

[LGBTQ Survivors Webinar](#)

Check out this virtual learning opportunity presented by the "Women of Color Network" a national and state group focused on bringing information and equity to women of color - and other people of color - who have experienced DV or sexual violence. This [link](#) includes the LGBTQ Survivor webinar with the powerpoint as well as the Zoom Recording.

[*Virtual Community Events*](#)

ACTIVIST ACADEMY 2020

is a fellowship program that will recruit and train community stakeholders and activists in educating community members about HIV prevention and access to care for those living with HIV/AIDS.

And we're looking for Fellows!



PARTICIPANTS WILL

be a member of a diverse + passionate cohort

build relationships in their community

receive training + opportunities to expand their networks

be compensated by stipend

Getting to Zero MA- Fellowship Opportunities

The Getting to Zero MA coalition is searching for the next cohort of Fellows to join our 2020 Activist Academy Fellowship! This fellowship is an opportunity to join [a state-wide coalition of 40 organizations working to end the HIV epidemic](#) and achieve a future with zero stigma, zero new HIV diagnoses, and zero AIDS-related deaths! The Academy will equip participants with the comprehensive knowledge and tools to advocate on behalf of their community, mobilize and cultivate other activists, and educate community members and state officials. Applications are due July 17. For more information about this fellowship, click [here](#).

Brick by Brick Curriculum Launch Party

National Women's Law Center presents new curriculum, "Brick by Brick" which speaks to the experiences and identities of LGBTQ+ students of color and can be adapted to suit a variety of learning settings (classroom, GSA club, or anything else!). It includes "know-your-rights" education, histories that are not commonly shared or centered, assignments that encourage students to take on roles as advocates and leaders, and individual and group projects. It makes use of multiple forms of media for experiential learning. Brick by Brick teaches students how to work toward change in their schools, and in the world beyond. We encourage you to read and share the curriculum after the launch party. And [don't miss out on our virtual launch party](#) on Thursday, June 25.

New LGBTQ+ Youth Mentoring Program in Greater Boston

Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Boston recently began piloting an initiative that matches LGBTQ+ children in need with adult mentors in the LGBTQ+ community. *During the COVID-19 pandemic, they are still working to match people remotely!* They serve and engage children, adults, and families from all religions, ethnicities, and backgrounds. They are currently recruiting LGBTQ youth (6-18) from mostly Brookline, Brighton, JP, Cambridge, Somerville and Newton and areas nearby. They are also actively recruiting adult mentors to be BIGS so that they can be paired with their Littles. Bigs and Littles see each other twice a month for a couple of hours, mostly on the weekends, and make at least a year commitment. All matches are supported by experienced Clinical Match Specialists who are there throughout the span of the relationship.

Contact Lorraine@jbbbs.org for info on participating as a youth, parent, or volunteer mentor.

Celebrate Pride Month with Black and Pink, Boston!

June 26th, 3pm

Transgender Experiences in the Criminal Legal System

<https://bit.ly/2YoW0yo>

Pride In Prison

June 28th, 3pm

<https://bit.ly/2Ytja74>

Queer Abolition: Building Love and Power

July 2, 6pm

<https://bit.ly/2BoG1rc>

Black and Pink Webinars

This Pride Month we will be offering a series of webinars to learn more about the ways the criminal legal system targets and impacts LGBTQ people and / or those living with HIV. Here is a quick overview of our events over the next two weeks. [Register now](#) to save your spot.

Virtual Summer Camps

Fully interactive week-long sessions and they are all free! Each camp consists of five sessions, starting on Monday and ending on Friday. You can sign up for one camp, or all of them! They are designed for ages 5 – 18 and run June – August. They have so many options from photography, digital scrap-booking, making Lego movies, a Harry Potter movie summer camp session, language classes and so much more.

Gender Spectrum Youth Summer Series - various types of workshops designed for non-binary and trans teens ages 13-19. Includes “Zine Making workshops, Medical Q&A, and a Gender Basics workshop.”

Click [here](#) for more information.

Black Trans/Non Binary Group- This group is intended as a way to meet other Black trans, non-binary and gender expansive teens navigating their gender in a relaxed space! Fill out [this form](#) to sign up for our teen group open to youth 13-19 years old.

BU Virtual Pride by the Queer Activist Collective Google Calender

BU's Queer Activist Collective will be inviting renowned LGBTQ+ folks from around the world to join them for "Pride Look" makeup tutorials, stand-up comedy shows, a history of the Pride march mini-lesson, a DIY Pride face-mask tutorial, a self-care workshop with Fenway Health, a workshop on the intersections of art and activism, and much more all during the month of June. Get more information on their [Facebook](#) page.

National LGBT Health Education Center - Fenway Institute

They offer over 40 on-demand webinars, as well as planned webinars, on topics such as:

- Introduction to LGBT Health
- LGBT Youth
- Transgender Health Care
- HIV Prevention
- Same-Sex Domestic Violence

[TransLash Tells Trans Stories to Save Trans Lives](#)

Check out www.translash.org, based in NYC, sharing stories about trans people. They have been doing some marvelous lectures/discussions online. They're hosting an absolutely necessary conversation about COVID-19 and sex workers, particularly QTPoC who are greatly at risk. Their other presentations are archived on their site, and they're very skilled at bringing often-marginalized voices to the center of the conversation.

[Pathways Virtual Coffee Hour](#)

You are warmly welcomed to join Bay Path for a chat at their new weekly Pathways Virtual Coffee Hour. Please RSVP, drop by and say hi on Tuesdays at 11 am on Zoom. Please RSVP to Julie via jnowak@baypath.org, or call her confidential line at 508-573-7288 and leave a voicemail. Our friendly group would be delighted to have you join us for a chat!

[North Shore Pride Virtual Vendor Fair](#)

June 1 - June 30, Applications to be a vendor are due May 31. North Shore Pride will be publishing links to different LBGTQIA+ organizations and stores. To find out more, follow them on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) or send them a note at info@northshorepride.org.

FACEBOOK.COM/VIRTUALPRIDEFESTIVAL / LIVE



JUNE 21st

12AM-3AM

Saturday Night into Fathers Day Morning

June 21st: 12pm-3pm Fathers Day Afternoon

June 28th: 7pm-10pm in honor of the Stonewall Riots

*This is a
broadcast..*



NEW ENGLAND VIRTUAL

PRIDE

 **LIVE** EASTERN TIME



[New England Virtual Pride](#)

First annual New England Virtual Pride will stream to a potential of 6,000 followers on Fathers Day morning, Sunday June 21st. Audiences will enter the behind the scenes world of LGBTQ+ drag performers, DJ's, event promoters, queer music artists, gay bars, go-go dancers, community organizers, activists, and more from the CT/MA/RI/NY area! Stream true stories and real life commentary on how queer culture has changed due to the rise of YouTube, reality television, and social media.

June 20th 11:59pm-3:00am (Saturday night into Fathers Day morning)

June 21st 12:00pm-3:00pm (Fathers Day afternoon)

June 28th 7pm-10pm (Sunday evening to commemorate the Stonewall Riots)

[Camp Lightbulb](#)

Camp Lightbulb is launching their second official Virtual Camp this Saturday, on June 20, from 10 AM PST / 1

PM EST to 6 PM PST / 9 PM EST! This camp will operate on a Pay What You Can Fee basis. At this special camp, they will celebrate the end of the school year with campers from around the world. This year was interrupted for all of us, so we will have a Lavender Graduation Ceremony, Prom Party and all the things you missed this year plus so much more.

[Story Telling for Pride - Queer Fiascos, presented by SpeakOUT and the History Project](#)

Join The History Project and SpeakOUT for an online event to relive and remember LGBTQ+ stories with the theme of "Queer Fiascos!" There will be a group of spotlighted storytellers, plus an opportunity for some participants to share their own short fiasco stories. Have a story you'd like to share? Email Joan (info@historyproject.org) or Ellyn (ellyn@speakoutboston.org) for details.

Get your ticket on [Eventbrite](#), the link to the event will be sent out the day of the event.

Email info@historyproject.org with any questions. For security purposes, Zoom meetings require an authenticated Zoom account, so please be sure to register with Zoom prior to the event. All proceeds generated via [Eventbrite](#) will support SpeakOUT and The History Project. The event will also be livestreamed, details forthcoming.

[North Shore Pride Virtual Interfaith Service 2020](#)

June 25 @ 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM, One of the highlights of the North Shore Pride Parade and Festival throughout the year has been the annual Interfaith service in Salem. This year, we will be bringing this service to you virtually through a live stream on our [Facebook page](#). The Interfaith service will bring together more North Shore churches, temples, synagogues and spiritual communities to celebrate our shared commitment to the values of community, diversity, and equality for all that drive our 50+ year movement for equality.

[North Shore Virtual Pride Parade 2020](#)

June 27, 12:00 PM North Shore Pride's theme for this year is "Uniting Community" and, despite the cancellation of the Parade & Festival, we must do just that. Remember, we are all in this together, and we will get through this together. And so, we are excited to announce that we've been planning an ongoing 2020 Virtual Pride to take place to keep our community engaged and connected throughout the year. Tune into the Facebook livestream of the Virtual Pride Parade on June 27th at 12:00 PM.

[North Shore Pride Virtual Pride Parade Drag Show and After Party 2020](#)

June 27 @ 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm, More information to come

[Global Pride 2020](#)

On Saturday 27 June, Pride organisations from across the world will celebrate Global Pride 2020. With musical and artistic performances, speeches from activists and campaigners, and addresses by public figures, we will stream 24 hours of content that reflects and celebrates the beautiful diversity of LGBTI+ people everywhere. View the event on [Facebook](#).

[AIDS WALK BOSTON GOES VIRTUAL](#)

[October 18th, 2020](#). In light of the emergent developments concerning COVID-19, we will not be able to hold this year's AIDS Walk & Run Boston as scheduled on Sunday, June 7. AIDS Action remains steadfast in its efforts to provide its clients with the vital services they need to remain housed, employed, safe, and as healthy as possible.



[www.mass.gov/cgly]



Corey Prachniak-Rincón | Commission Director
617-285-2624 | corey.prachniak-rincon@state.ma.us

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).