

GSA Conference 2021

Workshop Descriptions:

Monday, April 19th:

4:00-4:50:

1. Workshop A: House Lives Matter: An Introduction to the Ballroom Scene -- David Sell (they/them), MOCHA Center

Voguing is more than striking a pose and hitting “death drops” – which are properly called “dips.” During our workshop, we’ll discuss the origins of the cultural sensation, how the Ballroom Scene has played a crucial part in self-expression for QTPOC and host a live tutorial from two budding statements from our city.

2. Workshop B: Safer Sex for Queer and Trans Bodies -- Simone Shuster-Zimicki (she/her) and Casey Bednarski (she/her), Native American Community Services (NACS)

This workshop will provide an overview of safer sex strategies for LGBTQ+ youth/ young people. It will explore sexual/ reproductive health disparities among LGBTQ+ folks and explain why inclusive and affirming sex education is vital. It will also provide information on how to reduce the risk of HIV, STIs, and unplanned pregnancy through barrier use, and other interventions such as PrEP/PEP.

5:00-5:50:

3. Workshop A: PSAs from the Peer Educators (PEEPS) -- Crystal Hernandez (She/Her) & Aviana Perez (She/They), Native American Community Services

Our Peer Educators worked to create short PSA videos that they wrote and performed. This year our PSAs discuss mental health in the pandemic, abusive relationships, body image, and self-care. Throughout the presentations the PEEPs will show the PSAs, talk about the PSA process, and offer a place to discuss the topics brought up in each PSA.

4. Workshop B: Bisexuality: A Whole, Full Identity -- Dani Johnson (she/her)

Bisexuality is an identity that is sometimes misunderstood. At times, bisexuality is considered a temporary identity as a gateway to identifying as gay or lesbian. Other times, bisexual people are thought of as wanting the benefits associated with heteronormative privilege while aligning with the LGBTQ community. At this session, we will discuss bisexuality as its own stand-alone identity, discuss what it means to live as a bisexual person, and answer any questions that attendees might have.

6:00-6:50:

5. Workshop A: Beyond Lipstick: Lesbian Visibility and Representation -- Galina Swords (they/she) and Allie Ambrosio (they/them), GLYS WNY

What does it mean to identify as a lesbian? How lesbians have been perceived in history? How have lesbians been involved in social justice movements? This session will engage in discussions on lesbian visibility and representation throughout history and today.

6. Workshop B: How to Find an LGBTQ+ Friendly College - Tim Snider (they/them), Jessica Menica (she/her), Jace Jacobs (he/they) and Bradley Klemens (he/him)

Tips to help you find an LGBTQ+ friendly college, roommate, and other issues that will make your experience a positive one is critical if you are planning your future. This workshop is for you if you have concerns or questions and want to talk to college students who are experiencing it firsthand!

Tuesday, April 20th:

4:00-4:50:

7. Workshop A: Queerness in the Literary Arts -- Richie Wills (he/him) & Robin Jordan (she/her), Just Buffalo

We still live with the legacy of queer people being regarded as something different, something other, something abnormal or illegitimate. It remains rare for queer experience to be the focus of mainstream fiction or non-fiction. For years queer characters have been depicted as the bad guys, as tragic, or in tokenistic ways like the 'gay best friend'. We still see this today, particularly in the representation of trans people, as highlighted in the recent documentary "Disclosure." In this session we will spend some time looking through examples of how queerness has been depicted in literature and do some creative writing of our own in which we center the queer experience.

8. Workshop B: Understanding (un)Healthy Relationships from an LGBTQ+ Perspective – Victor Morales (he/him) and Amanda Schultz (she/her), Family Justice Center of Erie County

Relationships can be hard work, but you should never feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Young adults, ages 16-24 are at the highest risk for abuse in their dating relationships and youth that identify as LGBTQ+ are at even greater risk. However, it's common for discussions about abuse to be centered around cisgender/heterosexual relationships -- which can leave out important perspectives. In this interactive workshop you will learn about warning signs, the similar ways in which abuse presents itself in LGBTQ+ relationships along with differences, and find out more about how the Family Justice Center can assist you or a friend that needs some support.

5:00-5:50:

9. Workshop A: LGBTQ+ Health Care in WNY: Advocating for Ourselves -- Aanya Wood (she/her), Evergreen Health

It is well-known that LGBTQ people experience health care in a unique way that can oftentimes be negative. This workshop is to discuss how we as trans and queer people can advocate for ourselves with health care providers (primary care offices, emergency rooms, STI clinics, etc) to ensure our needs are met. This workshop is meant to be a conversation about the ways that we have to navigate health care (accessing HIV/STI treatment, starting PrEP, starting hormone replacement therapy and getting surgeries, etc) and build skills and learn from each other on how we can access the health care we deserve.

10. Workshop B: Use Theatre to Teach Sex Education! -- Tony Alcocer (he/him), Teen Reality Theatre of Planned Parenthood of CWNY

This workshop will demonstrate how theatre brings people together as a collaborative art and how fearless engagement connects us as members of an educated and artistic community. You will discover how courageous acting techniques provide the type of sex education young people identify with. TRT encourages teenagers to express their true self, to relate stories about one another and discover the overall human connection that inspires knowledge, agency and empowerment.

6:00-6:50:

11. Workshop A: Queer Faith -- Sue Frawley (she/her), Rev. Matt Lincoln (he/him), and Rabbi Sharon Sobel (she/her)

A panel of local clergy will take questions and speak about how their faiths view LGBTQ+ people. Present will be a Rabbi, an Episcopal Rector, and a Unitarian Universalist Minister.

12. Workshop B: Anime Discussions -- Desiree Gaeckler (she/her)

Join us during the Anime Discussions workshop, a safe space for facilitated discussions about the anime community, as well as some discussion on LGBTQ+ representation in anime.

Wednesday, April 21st:

4:00-4:50:

13. Workshop A: Safe Harbour: The Realities of Human Trafficking in Chautauqua County -- Kayleah Feser (she/her), Child Advocacy Program

Safe Harbour is New York State and Chautauqua County's response to the growing number of identified cases of child sex trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Join Safe Harbour Coordinator, Kayleah Feser, LMSW, as she discusses the realities of trafficking in our community. Through this conversation she will dispel several of the myths and misconceptions surrounding human trafficking and you'll learn who is at-risk and more vulnerable to exploitation and how to spot the red flags and warning signs of human trafficking.

14. Workshop B: LGBTQ+ Music (T)h(is er ey)story -- Robert Roush (he/they), GLYS WNY

LGBTQ+ people have been performers and composers in the music world since humans could make sound. Learn a little about that history in this workshop - From Tchaikovsky to K.D. Lang, from Wendy Carlos to the GALA Choruses and Queer-Core movements... Come prepared to share video/audio of your favorite artists if you wish, or perform one of your own songs (live or recorded)! Participants will each be able to share as time allows during the hour.

Please note: there will be plenty to sample, learn and talk about, so you do not *have* to bring samples of your own.

5:00-5:50:

15. Workshop A: LGBTQ Professional Careers -- Greg Rabb (he/him), Professor, Jamestown Community College

Accomplished LGBTQ individuals representing a wide variety of professional careers will discuss their experiences and successes in pursuing jobs and careers while being open about and true to their identities in order to help young LGBTQ students find their own success and happiness doing what they enjoy and for which they have a talent. They will also discuss their own ongoing efforts to achieve equal rights and dignity for all in our Queer community.

16. Workshop B: Staying Active -- Katie Anna (she/her), Varsity Gay League

Staying fit at home. Varsity gay league partners with a trainer that does workout videos. We would be completing a 45 minute workout that is all work from home and requires no equipment.

6:00-6:50:

17. Workshop A: Drag 101 and More -- CoCo LaTique (she/her), Vanity Vogue (she/her), Christian Gaye (he/him) and others, The Imperial Court of Buffalo

An open discussion with members and friends of the Imperial Court of Buffalo: watch as Buffalo's fiercest drag queens and kings beat their face while dishing on all things drag, history, and LGBTQ+ life.

18. Workshop B: Q&A with an LGBTQ+ Sportswriter -- Lyndsey D'Arcangelo (she/her)

Are you interested in writing a novel? Getting an article or essay published online? Do you want to pursue writing or journalism as a career? Do you dream of being a published author? Come have a chat with local Buffalo LGBTQ author and sportswriter, Lyndsey D'Arcangelo.

Thursday, April 22nd:

4:00-4:50:

19. Workshop A: Introduction to LGBTQ+ History -- Dr. Jeffry Iovannone (he/him), SUNY Fredonia

This workshop will provide participants with an overview of LGBTQ history in the United States, including time to ask questions based on individual interests. Participants will also be provided with a (digital) handout of resources and suggestions for further exploration. We can't know who we are and where we're going unless we know where we've been.

20. Workshop B: Organizing for Queer and Trans Liberation -- Harper Bishop (he/they), PUSH Buffalo

In this workshop, you'll learn about the movement for queer and trans liberation from a historical and contemporary perspective. Participants will learn about campaigns that they can join and discuss ones that they've led. Join us for 50 mins of fighting for the world that we want - and deserve!

5:00-5:50:

21. Workshop A: Advisor Workshop: A Time for Sharing Ideas

This time and space will be for advisors to share ideas in creating, motivating, and promoting their GSA group in their schools. Discussion will be open to share ideas for meetings, strategies to work with administrators or anything else that is on your mind. Ask questions, share ideas and learn from each other!

22. Workshop B: CREAM -- Gideon Belin (he/him), Tee Douglas (he/him), and Addison Laczkowski (he/him), Pride Center of WNY

This workshop addresses real-life and practical sexual health interests, activities, and issues.

6:00-6:50:

23. Workshop A: Parent/Caregiver Workshop: So Your Child has Come Out as LGBTQ+, Now What? -- Sue Frawley (she/her), GLYS

A panel of parents of LGBTQ + youth will answer questions and talk about their experience of supporting, understanding, and caring for their children.

24. Workshop B: Beyond Bathrooms: GSAs as Gender Advocates -- Mel LeMay (they/them), GLYS

Learn strategies and opportunities for you and your GSA engage to in advocacy for transgender, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming students at your school or in your community, including areas like dress codes, sports and activities, pronouns, gender stereotypes, and of course, bathrooms and locker rooms!