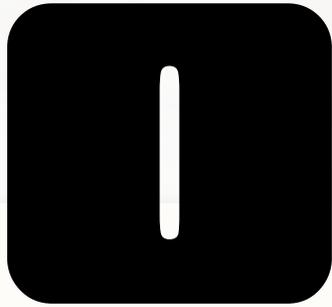


our lives



LGBTQ Youth Housing



Michael's Frozen Custard



Jaida Essence Hall

SUMMER 2020

SPECIAL: Gay Pride amid a pandemic and an uprising

Madison's **LGBT&XYZ** Magazine

July/August 2020

FREEDOM FIGHTER

M Adams

Adams has been one of the faces leading the Movement for Black Lives, and efforts for Gender Justice, Queer Justice, and Black & Southeast Asian Liberation, as the Co-Executive Director of Freedom, Inc.

QTPOC PRIDE

Our annual list celebrating LGBTQ leaders of color.

p.34

SUNDAY AUGUST 16TH 1PM-6PM

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

MAGIC PRIDE FESTIVAL

A VIRTUAL EVENT

CELEBRATE 31 YEARS OF PRIDE IN MADISON!

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR FUTURE UPDATES, VIRTUAL STORE INFO, ENTERTAINMENT, & MORE!

WWW.OUTREACHMAGICFESTIVAL.ORG

DIAMOND

HINCKLEY PRODUCTIONS mgoe UW Health
Quartz & Unity Health Insurance

PLATINUM

93.1 JAMZ KACI SULLIVAN uw credit union
WWW.KACISULLIVAN.COM

GOLD

AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE CENTERLINK THE COMMUNITY OF LGBT CENTERS Crucible FIVE NIGHTCLUB & SHOWBAR

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers RENEW Reach out and Engage Next-gen Electrical Workers viventhealth thrive. together. WORT EIGHTY NINE.NINE FM COMMUNITY RADIO - MADISON, WI zendesk

SILVER

DELTA BEER LAB D VINO First United Methodist Church GATHER

NEW HARVEST FOUNDATION our lives MADIISON WOOF'S MADIISON
ourlivesmadison.com

DAVID CLARENBACH, FORMER WI STATE REPRESENTATIVE

INTERESTED IN BEING A SPONSOR?
CALL 608.255.8582 AND ASK FOR STEVE!





TABLE OF CONTENTS PRIDE JULY / AUGUST 2020

DEPARTMENTS

- 5 ADVERTISER DIRECTORY
- 6 PUBLISHER'S NOTE
OBITUARY LETTERS

FEATURES

- 28 THE WORLD BUILDER
M Adams is one of the most prominent and effective organizers for racial and gender-based justice through her work with Freedom, Inc.
- 34 QTPOC PRIDE
Our annual list celebrating LGBTQ leaders of color.
- 48 OUR HISTORY
David Carter's Madison Roots.

CONNECT

- 9 PRIDE EVOLVES
The pandemic seemed poised to alter how we celebrated Pride. Now the Movement for Black Lives can forever transform it.
- 13 OUR NEWS BRIEFS
- 16 OUR ORGANIZERS
MadRainbow's Steven Wang.
- 18 OUR ADVOCATES
DaMontae January.
- 20 OUR AUTHORS
Alina Boyden's *Stealing Thunder*.
- 22 OUR ARTISTS
Photographer Cammie Nicole's *Queer Black Love*.
- 24 OUR ENTERTAINERS
America's Next Drag Superstar Jaيدا Essence Hall.

IMPROVE

- 50 OUR HEALTH
Dr. Kathy Oriol launches Out Health.
- 52 DEAR QUEER WHITE PEOPLE
How to be better allies both during the protests and in our daily lives.
- 54 OUR RIGHTS
What the Supreme Court said about LGBTQ employee rights.
- 56 OUR TASTE
Sergio De La O Hernandez and Michael Dix of Michael's Frozen Custard.
- 58 OUR YOUTH LEADERS
Democratic Socialist Max Prestigiacomo.

Cover photo by Dupré Armon.



Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine

- Patrick Farabaugh
Publisher / Editor-in-Chief
- Virginia Harrison
Features & Copy Editor
- Stacy Harbaugh
Contributing News Editor
- Dana Rowe
Online Events Curator
- Contributing Writers
Angela Baerwolf
Joseph S. Diedrich
Randi Hagen
Stacy Harbaugh
Emily Mills
Jeanne Moe
Jill Nagler
Nibiiwakamigkwe
Cammie Nicole
Kathy Oriol
Adam Ouahmane
Max Prestigiacomo
Sami Schalk
Steph Tai
Dick Wagner
- Contributing Artists
Dupré Armon
Ian DeGraff
Melanie Jones
Thomas Yonash
- Social Media Team
Jill Nagler
Dana Rowe
- Webmaster
Genesis Keefer
- National Advertising Sales
Rivendell Media Inc.

Subscribers in 400+ Wisconsin cities & towns

©2020 All Rights Reserved.
July/August 2020, Volume 14, Issue 1
Life in the Middle Publishing, LLC
Patrick Farabaugh, Publisher.
PO Box 1202, Madison, WI 53703

Any reproduction of OL: Our Lives Magazine in part or in full without the written permission of the publisher is strictly prohibited. OL: Our Lives Magazine shall not be held responsible for any claims made by our advertisers. Submission of photographs or other images to OL: Our Lives Magazine may be published without providing image credit. Appearance of any person, business or organization within photographs, advertisements, or editorial content neither implies nor infers any indication of their sexual orientation.

ADVERTISER DIRECTORY



Our Lives is a 100% ad-supported publication. We are able to exist because you support our dedicated advertising partners. To help us thank them for their support of LGBTQ people and our stories, check out their businesses whenever you need them—and specifically thank them for advertising with us. A little bit of love goes a long way!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Amidst the extraordinary strain on small businesses, these advertisers are helping to keep us publishing. If the opportunity arises, please join us in thanking them.

ART / ARTISTS / ART SUPPLIES

- p. 38 Monroe Street Framing

ATTORNEYS

- p. 45 Balisle Family Law

AUTOMOBILES

- p. 51 MINI of Madison

BANKING / FINANCIAL ADVISING

- p. 49 Shannon M. Anderson
Ameriprise Financial
- p. 40 Dane County Credit Union
- p. 55 Mike Fumelle, Associated Bank
- p. 21 Summit Credit Union
- p. 59 UW Credit Union

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

- p. 47 Diverse & Resilient
- p. 36 Freedom, Inc.
- p. 14 New Harvest Foundation
- p. 15 OPEN
- p. 2 OutReach
- p. 10 WI LGBT Chamber of Commerce

COUNSELING / SUPPORT

- p. 17 Alexander Einsman, MS MFT

FASHION

- p. 13 Ulla Eyewear

FOOD & BEVERAGE

- p. 53 Capitol Center Market
- p. 11 Delta Beer Lab
- p. 4 Michael's Frozen Custard
- p. 41 The Sow's Ear
- p. 57 Willy Street Co-op

FUNERAL SERVICE

- p. 17 Ryan Funeral Home & Cremation Services

HEALTH/WELLNESS

- p. 26 Dental Health Associates
- p. 23 Forward Fertility, LLC
- p. 13 New Health Chiropractic
- p. 51 Safer Communities Dane County
- p. 8 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- p. 7 UW Health
- p. 41 UW Hospital Dept. of Surgery
- p. 39 UW School of Medicine & Public Health
- p. 27 Vivent Health

- p. 19 Wisconsin Fertility Institute
- p. 32 WI Well Woman Program

INSURANCE

- p. 5 Colleen Frentzel Agency
American Family Insurance
- p. 5 David Ryan-Sukup
American Family Insurance
- p. 37 Jim Hartman, State Farm
- p. 56 Quartz Health Solutions

INTERIOR DESIGN / HOME SUPPLY

- p. 31 Bethke Heating & Air Conditioning Inc.
- p. 16 Chad's Design Build
- p. 37 Kool View
- p. 60 Quigley Decks & Cable Rails
- p. 18 Time 2 Remodel

I.T. / INTERNET

- p. 18 5 Nines

JEWELERS

- p. 19 Goodman's Jewelers
- p. 29 Jewelers Workshop

MEDIA

- p. 54 Towns & Associates, Inc

PAPER SUPPLIES & CARDS

- p. 43 Anthology
- p. 11 Mayday Press

PETS

- p. 31 Angel's Wish
- p. 41 Bad Dog Frida
- p. 20 EarthWise Pet Supply

PHOTOGRAPHY

- p. 23 Dutcher Photography
- p. 53 Melanie Renee Photography

REALTY

- p. 43 Jason Fowler, Century 21
- p. 6 Lauer Realty Group

SPIRITUAL

- p. 44 First Congregational United Church of Christ
- p. 19 First United Methodist Church

UTILITIES

- p. 33 Madison Gas & Electric

VIDEO PRODUCTION

- p. 29 Hinckley Productions

WEDDINGS

- p. 21 Brandi's Bridal Galleria



AS YOUR DREAMS EVOLVE, WE'RE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU.

Whether you're buying your first car or your retirement home, American Family Insurance is with you every step of the way, ensuring that your dreams are always protected.



Colleen Frentzel, Agent
4407 Milton Ave Ste 110
Janesville, WI 53546
cfrentzel@amfam.com
(608) 302-4101



David Ryan-Sukup, Agent
514 Grand Canyon Dr
Madison, WI 53719
dryansu1@amfam.com
(608) 833-1717



American Family Mutual Insurance Company, S.I. & its Operating Companies,
American Family Insurance Company,
6000 American Parkway, Madison, WI 53783
008747 - Rev. 12/15 ©2015 - 11827798



BLACK LIVES MATTER

THIS HAS BEEN A YEAR UNLIKE any in living memory. A global pandemic is forcing us to safeguard our health and the health of our collectivities. We have a dumpster fire raging in the White House, stoking hyper-partisan division and continuously fanning the flames of white supremacy. We're in the middle of a racial justice reckoning that is hundreds of years past due. To call this moment a powder keg isn't enough. With all of these things colliding, it can be easy to feel stunned into complicity. But we fail again if we allow that.



This moment demands that we take inventory of the ways that white complacency has nurtured and fed our complicity in institutional systems built to oppress and actively harm communities of color. This moment demands that we take action to dismantle—to shatter—those institutions. This moment is also giving us an opportunity to envision and embrace new, more equitable systems. In doing so, it's giving us hope.

So what role can *Our Lives* play in this movement? Media is positioned to help shape the conversation. We do that by amplifying melanated voices and centering the lived experiences and perspectives of people of color. This issue is a celebration of that, and of this precise moment. This is our fourth year of purposefully building our Pride issue around queer and trans people of color (QTPOC). Our cover story on **Freedom, Inc.'s** Co-Executive Director **M Adams** is giving readers a chance to build a stronger relationship with the queer Black woman-led organization at the center of the tactical protests in Madison and the Movement for Black Lives. Our 4th annual **QTPOC Pride community feature** is celebrating 180 QTBIPOC faces doing the work in our communities. If a city as small, and as white, as Madison can make a project like this a reality, and also make it sustainable, then all other queer media in larger cities are being put on notice. There's no good reason why we're the only regional queer media doing this. Queer media (including *Our Lives*) must do better. ■



LAVENDER MORNING KNIGHT squirmed into the world under a lavender sky on the morning of April 6th, 1979 near Luana, Iowa. She was born at home, in an old farmhouse nestled in the hills of the Driftless Area. She grew up wading in creeks, hanging out with hippies, writing her own angsty zine, and reading the dictionary for fun. She moved to Madison to attend the University of Wisconsin. While there, she had her first child, Derek, who went to classes with her as a toddler. They lived at many of the MCC cooperative houses. Lavender unschooled her kids, focusing on subjects like ornithology. A true Domestic Goddess, she was a phenomenal baker and canner. She had a natural aptitude for gardening

and dreamed of becoming an Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA) specializing in Horticulture Therapy. Lavender had her Permaculture Design Certificate and flourished in her wild garden raising monarch butterflies. She volunteered at SSM Day Health Center creating a small healing garden. A foster parent, she loved children and was the quintessential Nanny for a decade. A bereaved parent, she supported others in their grief. She valued her sobriety of nearly 5 years. She had just started attending MATC COTA program when she was diagnosed with kidney cancer at the end of 2018, her youngest child just 4 months old. The inimitable Lavender Knight died on May 6th, 2020 after a lavender sunset. She is survived by her wife Tanya Mudrick; her kids: Rain Lochner, Alana Weathers, Derek Knight, and Cedar Knight Mudrick; her parents, Suze Pope (Don) and Jack Knight; her siblings, Jess Coonen, Violet Flores (Jaime), and Lucia Alexandria (Buho); her nieces and nephews, Alex, Iziah, Marko, Cruz, Ruby, Carmi, and Noah; and her best friend Karol Niemann. She is preceded in death by three babies: Sam, Oren, and Miriam; her beloved aunt Renee Knight, and her grandparents. She had a green burial at Natural Path Sanctuary. A memorial service is being planned for August 1st at 1:00pm at Burrows Park in Madison. In honor of Lavender, consider buying flowers for yourself from Naly's Floral Shop. Donations can be made to Madison Area Permaculture Guild, The Respite Center at RISE, and Gilda's Club of Madison.



QUOTE THE ISSUE! Thanks to all the contributors to *Our Lives* this month. I want to particularly give a shout out to Dick Wagner for his column, "Here we go again!" I have been raging for a few months now about the word "unprecedented."

As long as the U.S. is committed to describing this viral outbreak as the first of its kind since 1918, we will continue to disregard 32M lives lost and the 75M HIV infections, largely among Black and brown people. We will fail to employ the very things we learned in the 1980s and 1990s. We will ignore the contributions of lesbian and bisexual women who cared for and protested with their queer brothers. We will not challenge CDC and HHS. I think once again our community needs to put up a stink not seen in 25 years.

Gary Hollander
Milwaukee



Remarkable healthcare.

At UW Health, we deliver inclusive, affirming healthcare in a supportive environment. And we're proud to be recognized as a leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality by the Human Rights Campaign.



Designated a **Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality** by the Human Rights Campaign.



 In these times, having the right home for you and your family to stay safer at home is our priority. We are all in this together, we are here and we care. Be well.
Powerful Results. Real People.





**IF YOU WANT A
SINGING CAREER,
STAY AWAY FROM
SECONDHAND SMOKE.**

Ellie, Age 57
Her partner, Karen
Florida

Ellie's severe asthma attacks were triggered by secondhand smoke at work. She and her partner have to live with its effects forever. If you or someone you know wants free help to quit smoking, call **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.

#CDCTips



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention
[CDC.gov/tips](https://www.cdc.gov/tips)



Pride Evolves

Initially, the pandemic seemed poised to alter how we celebrated **Pride in 2020**. Now the national reckoning and **Movement for Black Lives** are poised to forever transform it.

COVID-19 PRIDE BLACK LIVES MATTER PROTEST SUPPORT

AMID A GLOBAL CORONAVIRUS pandemic, Wisconsinites are making a lot of sacrifices to help slow the spread of COVID-19. Since Governor Evers declared a State of Emergency on March 12 and Safer at Home orders on March 24, LGBTQ+ businesses and community groups had to close or cancel while living with daily uncertainty about what the future held.

In addition to the queer-friendly third spaces where we can gather and socialize, Pride month as we know it in June became be a study in the evolution of community, uprisings, and solidarity.

CASCADE OF CANCELLATIONS

Milwaukee Pridefest was one of the first and the largest Pride events to be canceled in Wisconsin. In early March, Pridefest organizers originally chose to postpone the event. As other event cancellations were announced into the fall of 2020 due to the uncertainty around large gatherings and the future of safer-at-home orders, Pridefest was officially canceled by mid-May.

Pridefest President Wes Shaver says there aren't plans to try to make the event virtual this year, but organizers intend to sponsor and

Dear Friends, while we are anxious to gather in person and see you all again, we're committed at the Chamber to finding ways to support you and your business. We hope you'll consider joining us at one of these upcoming events.

In addition, please be sure to visit our online Business Directory to find LGBTQ and allied businesses to support.

-Jason Rae, President & CEO

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendar for these events



Virtual Coffee Connection

July 16 - 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Online at Zoom

Free to attend. All welcome. Register on website



Virtual Chamber on Tap Happy Hour

July 28 - 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Online at Zoom

Free to attend. All welcome. Register on website

Join the Chamber

Join more than 675 businesses as a member of the LGBT Chamber

Connect with consumers who want to do support LGBTQ and allied owned businesses



Join online today.
Memberships start at just \$175 a year

WisLGBTChamber.com



CONNECT → OUR NEWS

OURLIVESMADISON.COM



LEFT: Karma Mirage and Anya Knees at Liquid's MadPride 2020 Virtual Festival. RIGHT: Amethyst Von Trolenberg, Anya Knees, Malaiya Marvel, Jasper Madison, and MI MI Sanchez raise funds for Freedom, Inc. at FIVE nightclub.

support other events when people can gather safely. Diversity in their line-up will continue to be a priority, but organizers will also be having conversations about the presence of police in future Milwaukee Pride events.

OutReach LGBT Community Center's **Magic Pride Festival** is now being held virtually on August 16. OutReach had a successful event last year when Pride in Madison changed from a parade to a picnic in a park. The last parade was held in 2018 when the LGBTQ+ community was starkly divided over whether to permit Madison police officers to participate. Looking back, it was a prophetic debate.

Even with a virtual event, OutReach is optimistic that between income from sponsorships and the decrease in costs and logistical effort required to hold an outdoor event for 5,000+ people, things may even out. Center Director Steve Starkey notes that because the planning of the event comes from board leaders like Dana Pellebon and from community groups, the August event can still be a fun and safer way to celebrate.

Two other popular events in Madison were also canceled. There won't be a **Woof's Pride block party** in August, however GSAFE asked for the bar's popular meat raffle fundraiser proceeds to be donated to Freedom, Inc.

Fruit Fest will keep evolving after several years of change. Once a block party hosted by LGBTQ nightclub Plan B, it made its first shift to become an LGBTQ music festival after new ownership rebranded Plan B as Prism. With the influence of nightlife organizer Lili Luxe, the event returned to more of a diverse, LGBTQ+ mission. After the closing of Plan B/Prism and competition for both physical and calendar space, event organizers looked for an alternative location. At the same time as the pandemic forced a shutdown, organizers were in negotiations with Breese Stevens Field (home

of the Forward Madison Football Club). Now, with more time to plan, the event could bring in more sponsors, more diversity in participation, and potentially secure Breese Stevens as its new location.

Though the state Supreme Court struck down Governor Evers' Safer at Home order and as Wisconsin's economy slowly grinds into its new normal, the future of events and our third spaces remains unclear. At the time of this writing, positive cases of COVID-19 are hitting new daily total records in Dane County, as the spectre of pandemic-related closures continues to loom large.

GEORGE FLOYD PROTESTS

The murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis by police created yet another name to add to the list of Black men, women, and trans/non-binary people killed by police in America.

"It really came from the frustration I was having about not seeing much from our Milwaukee Pridefest or Pride Parade committees putting anything together, or even taking the opportunity of using what would have been our Pridefest weekend to make a statement in support of the Black Lives Matter movement."

His murder is galvanizing a new generation of activists who say that police, who are guaranteed a qualified immunity from murder charges, are a part of a law enforcement system that does the opposite of serve and protect our community's most vulnerable.

The call for accountability and reevaluating the role of police sparked protests in cities around our state and nation, including massive marches locally in cities as large as Milwaukee and as small as DeForest. It's not a coincidence

that direct actions in support of the Black Lives Matter movement in Wisconsin have been led by queer and trans Black leaders, primarily women. They say that the same unjust system that fails to protect Black trans women from violence also creates state-sanctioned murder at the hands of the police.

In Madison, groups including Freedom, Inc., led a major march on May 30 that closed all of downtown, including the site where Tony Robinson was killed by MPD officer Matt Kenney, who still is employed by the MPD. The march ended, but protestors lingered and rioted, breaking storefront windows on State Street and looting stores. Police in riot gear responded with pepper spray and tear gas. A curfew was issued by Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway, and several nights of conflict with police ensued.

For several weeks, Freedom, Inc. not only led marches and direct actions, but also held online education sessions aimed at explaining why they wanted to defund police, gain community control over police, and why the queer roots of pride and the history of civil rights in America have always been intertwined.

PRIDE FOR BLACK LIVES

In Milwaukee, thousands of activists gathered at the Henry W. Maier Festival Park on Sunday, June 7 in solidarity with those protesting the police murder of George Floyd. It was also an act of reviving the Pride Parade that was originally scheduled to take place that day, and transforming it into support for the Black Lives Matter movement.

With a Facebook event created just days before the gathering, Broderick Pearson, known in Wisconsin's queer nightlife as Montell Infiniti Ross, organized the **March with Pride for Black Lives Matter**. "It really came from the frustration I was having about not seeing much from our Milwaukee Pridefest or Pride Parade committees putting anything together, or even taking the opportunity of using what would have been our Pridefest weekend to make a statement in support of the Black Lives Matter movement," Pearson said. "I reached a point where I was like, if it's not going to happen, then why don't I just use what I know and put it together on my own?" Speakers at the event included local non-binary musician Lex Allen, trans rights activist Elle Halo, and Chair of the Milwaukee County Democratic Party Chris Walton. Rally speakers talked about how much the Black Lives Matter movement and the movement for LGBTQ+ equality have in common and the urgency to address police brutality.

In Madison, **Pride for Black Lives** was a street protest turned drag ball. The protest rally on June 12, hosted by Freedom Inc., *Our Lives*

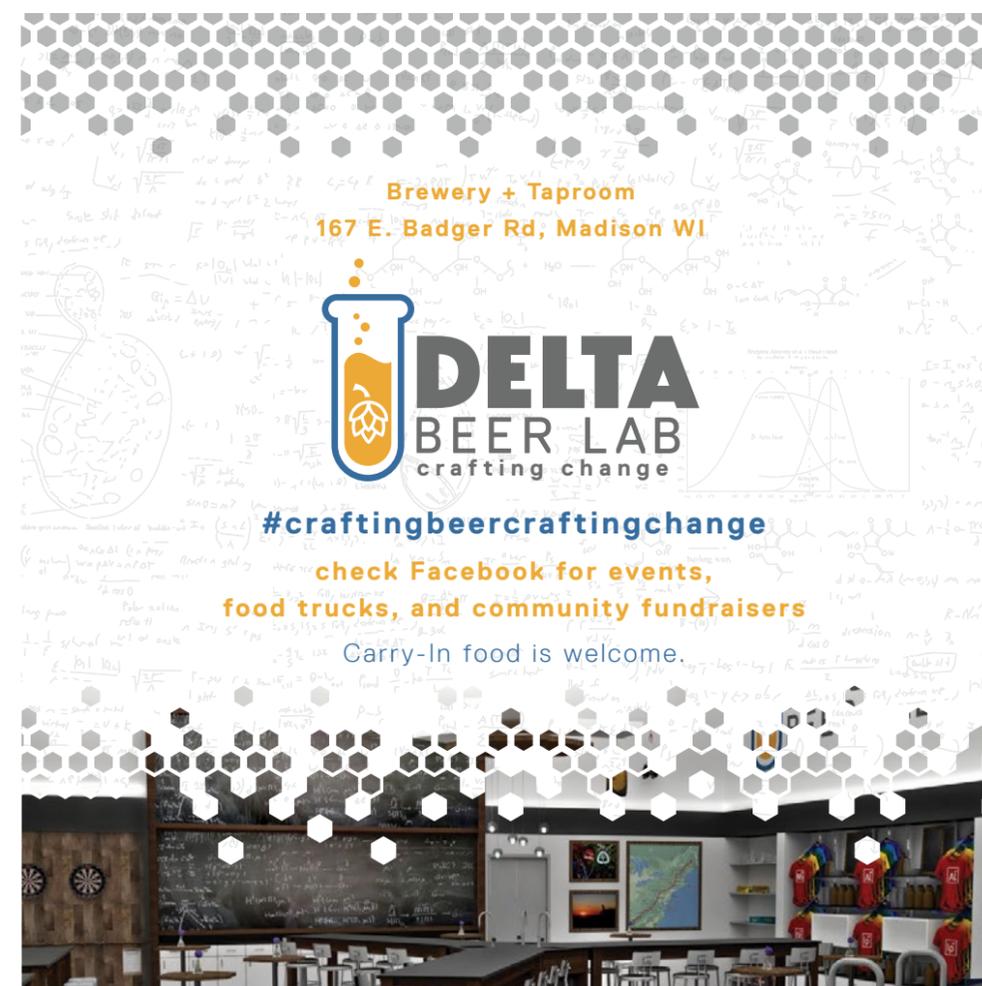
FOR THE LOVE OF PAPER AND DESIGN.

MAYDAY PRESS IS A MERCANTILE OF MODERN (YET PRACTICAL!) SUPPLIES FOR YOUR DESK, HOME, AND BEYOND.

- ✓ LETTERPRESS STATIONERY ✓ ART & DESIGN BOOKS
- ✓ WRITING TOOLS & SUPPLIES ✓ DESKTOP ACCESSORIES & ORGANIZATION
- ✓ POUCHES & TOTES ✓ GIFTS & TOYS

MAYDAY PRESS

213 HIGH STREET » 608.553.0227
WWW.MAYDAY-PRESS.COM



Brewery + Taproom
167 E. Badger Rd, Madison WI

DELTA BEER LAB
crafting change

#craftingbeer craftingchange

check Facebook for events, food trucks, and community fundraisers

Carry-in food is welcome.

JUNE 7 Milwaukee's March with Pride for Black Lives Matter



magazine, OutReach LGBT Community Center, the Party for Socialism and Liberation, and Urban Triage, began where most rallies do on the Capital Square at the head of State Street. Freedom Inc. beside local drag performers led the protesters from the square to the courthouse with chants and speeches. Ending on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, the protest became a dance party with drag and musical entertainers of color, Kilo aka Skitzl, Anya Knees, Mettah-Droid, Cyrus K. Stratton, and Jasper Madison. UW-Madison Gender and Women's Studies professor, Dr. Sami Schalk, was the emcee who called the drag ball where dancers embracing their own "Protest Realness" showed off their moves down an impromptu runway in the middle of the street.

Other spontaneous Madison Pride events went virtual in June. Black queens had worked with FIVE Nightclub to use the club's stage for a virtual show to raise funds for Freedom, Inc. Performers Anya Knees, Jasper Madison, Malaiya Marvel, Amethyst von Trolenberg, and Mimi Sanchez raised more than \$1600. On June 20, Liquid's resident DJ, Cameron Butler, invited drag queens, hip hop dancers, and other local DJs to perform at **MadPride 2020 Virtual Festival**. DJ CAM played clips of young Madisonians talking about what Pride means to them, and DJ Boyfrriend mixed beats under Freedom, Inc.'s co-director M Adams' words.

LA PRIDE CONTROVERSY

The events in Milwaukee and Madison show what happens when the history of the Stonewall riots and the social unrest of today push the LGBTQ+ rights movement into a more equitable space. That push played out most visibly in Los Angeles.

Pride in LA has been organized by a group called Christopher Street West in Hollywood. This year would have been the 50th anniversary of Pride in the district, but large-scale events were canceled due to the pandemic. People wanted an All Black Lives Matter march and Christopher Street West announced they would be holding one.

Black-led groups, however, weren't consulted and when they learned that CSW would be coordinating with police on logistics, Black leaders spoke out about the problems with working with the very entity they were protesting against. The march ultimately happened on June 14 under the leadership of Black leaders in the Black LGBTQ+ Activists for Change organization. But the disagreements in planning the march put a spotlight on long-standing failure of gay, white leaders in centering and

lifting queer and trans people of color.

PRIDE WILL LOOK DIFFERENT IN THE FUTURE

If the experiences of people of color weren't truly prioritized in Pride celebrations in the past, they will be in the future. There's a reason why we've had mixed feelings about celebrating the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision barring employment discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals, or by the symbolism of raising the Pride flag over the Capitol this year. It was ethically challenging to celebrate and draw attention away from the urgency and momentum of the Black Lives Matter movement.

White queers and allies have an opportunity to step aside and let that momentum pave the way for leaders of color to continue the work

NEWS BRIEFS

MULTIPLE LGBTQ CANDIDATES ANNOUNCE THEIR CANDIDACY FOR THE STATE LEGISLATURE

SOME MEMBERS OF the LGBTQ+ community launched campaigns for elected office this spring and will appear on the ballots this fall.

On April 23 Madison resident **Jason Vangalis** announced his candidacy for Wisconsin State Assembly District 48, currently held by Rep. Melissa Sargent who will be running for longtime Senator Fred Risser's Senate District 16 seat.



With a platform that focuses on economic development, jobs and health care, Vangalis is emphasizing his progressive policy stances and has a campaign logo with rainbow, trans and black and brown stripes.

On May 7, **Richland County Board Supervisor Shaun Murphy-Lopez** declared his candidacy for Wisconsin State Assembly District 49. The seat is currently held by Republican Travis Tranel who is also running for reelection this fall. As a sign of his dedication to rural

Wisconsin, Murphy-Lopez made his declaration of entering the race at the clerk's office in the Village of Yuba (population 70) which is near the 80-acre grass farm where he lives with his husband.

"I am hopeful for our community—that we can begin to grow again—reversing decades

for equality and justice that began at the Stonewall Inn. When white queers and allies stop centering themselves, Pride can be transformed into events, education, and a movement for more equitable inclusion.

This summer, we're celebrating signs of progress, from the positive SCOTUS decision about employment discrimination, to seeing more companies and government buildings flying rainbow flags in support of the LGBTQ+ community, and more of us running for office or serving in powerful political and judicial positions. But we are also experiencing an historic moment where we have an opportunity to lift up the leadership of Black queer and trans people, embrace the Movement for Black Lives, and let our solidarity reflect the true diversity of our community. ■

of losses in farms, school enrollment, and population," said Murphy-Lopez. "I'm running for the state legislature because current legislators aren't solving those problems."

On May 18 **Milwaukee County Democratic Chair Chris Walton** announced his candidacy for Wisconsin State Assembly District 17, currently held by David Crawley who is also serving as Milwaukee County Executive and who will not be seeking reelection to the Assembly. Walton was the youngest person to lead the political party in the county and would be the first out candidate elected to the seat.

Born and raised in Milwaukee, Walton worked on campaigns for President Barack Obama and Milwaukee Alder Chantia Lewis. He serves on the Black Male Achievement Advisory Council for the City of Milwaukee and is a Community Outreach Liaison for the Milwaukee Mayor's office, focusing on serving Milwaukee's African-American, LGBT, faith-based, veteran, and labor communities.

RIVER FOOD PANTRY PRESIDENT AND CEO CHARLES McLIMANS NAMED NEW CEO OF HOLY WISDOM MONASTERY

CHARLES MCLIMANS IS the new CEO of the Holy Wisdom Monastery in Middleton. The Benedictine Women of Madison Board selected McLimans due to his leadership and service in the Board of Directors, his experience leading nonprofits, and his involvement as an Oblate at the monastery.

McLimans has served as the CEO of The River Food Pantry in Madison since



"GLASSES ARE JEWELRY THAT YOU WEAR ON YOUR FACE, SO PICK FUN ONES!"

Sandy Eichel, financial advisor at Northwestern Mutual, professional speaker and facilitator.



ULLA EYEWEAR

HILDALE SHOPPING CENTER
562 N Midvale Blvd
MON-SAT 10a-9p : SUN 11a-6p
www.ullaeyewear.com

Chiropractic Care for our LGBTQ+ Community



Fix the CAUSE of your symptoms!!

Specializing in:
Chiropractic
Physical Rehabilitation
Sports Injuries
Extremity Adjusting
Nutrition & Supplementation



608-273-2222

newhealthmadison.com

2690 Research Park Dr., Ste A
Fitchburg, WI 53711



funding wisconsin's LGBTQ+ communities since 1984

RAISING MONEY

tax-deductible donations, community fundraising events, workplace contributions, and planned giving

GIVING BACK

awarded over \$375,000 to organizations promoting LGBTQ+ rights, services, culture and community development in Wisconsin

contact us to learn how you can make a difference

info@newharvestfoundation.org
www.newharvestfoundation.org

PO Box 1786
Madison, WI 53701-1786



CONNECT → OUR NEWS

OURLIVESMADISON.COM

2017 and has dedicated his career to hunger relief and anti-poverty organizations in Wisconsin and near Chicago.

"For many years I have been yearning and searching for a way to integrate my faith and professional lives," said McLimans in a Facebook post. "Now I am overjoyed to commit all I have to this place I call home."

GSAFE NAMES 2020 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

GSAFE, the nonprofit that works to create safer schools for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning students of all identities in Wisconsin, held their annual Celebration of Leadership on May 30. The event was held virtually due to the COVID crisis.



Javier



Hemmerich

Students who received scholarships include **Daniel Croake**, **Blue Bernstein**, and **Yuliana Nava**.

Gabe Javier received GSAFE's Special Recognition for Educational Leadership award.

SJ Hemmerich of Randall Elementary School was recognized as Educator of the Year. Mx. Hemmerich and their GSA students were among the winners of Teaching Tolerance's #USvsHate challenge.

Throughout Teacher Appreciation Week in May, GSAFE recognized many teachers nominated for their supportive classes and mentorship through school clubs such as gay-straight or gender and sexuality alliances.

MARIO WHITE APPOINTED DANE COUNTY JUDGE

On June 2 Governor Evers appointed **Mario White** as a judge who will serve on the Dane County Courts. White is the first out Black judge to serve on the County bench. In a state-



Judge Ellen Berz, Judge Mario White, and Judge Rhonda Lanford at White's investiture on June 22.

ment Evers said the criminal justice system needed a top-to-bottom change to address systemic racism and that Judge White was a highly accomplished public defender who would help ensure we have judges who understand and reflect the communities they serve.

Before his appointment, White served as a Dane County Court Commissioner, an assistant state public defender, and an adjunct professor at the UW Law School.

Our Lives magazine readers may also recognize White from when he was featured on the cover of the 2018 QTPOC Pride issue.

MADISON MAYOR SATYA RHODES-CONWAY IN HOT WATER OVER MPD VIDEO

Madison Mayor **Satya Rhodes-Conway** sparked a sharp rebuke from city residents after an internal video message to the Madison Police Department was leaked by a pro-law enforcement blog. In the video, Rhodes-Conway gave a deeply empathetic message of support to police officers after days of protest included rioting and looting on State Street.

Members of the National Guard joined police officers from Madison and surrounding counties to quell the protests with pepper spray, tear gas, and projectile weapons. Some of the Mayor's critics pointed out that the Mayor's

private message to police was a stark betrayal of the LGBTQ+ community members who joined the protests that were an effort to unify against systemic abuses by law enforcement against communities of color in the wake of a Minneapolis Police officer's murder of George Floyd, an unarmed Black man.

Mayor Rhodes-Conway has since apologized for the video message to police, but criticisms from the public continued in the following week's City Council meeting where people expressed a lack of confidence that the Mayor could work objectively with the police department.

CAPTAIN BILLS AND MANNA CAFE BECOME PANDEMIC CASUALTIES

The COVID crisis led to the closure of two more Madison restaurant institutions.

Manna Cafe & Bakery's last day of operation was June 28. The cafe had its roots in the Collins House bed and breakfast that was famous for its oatmeal pan-

cakes. In 2005 **Mike and Barb Pratzel** expanded the restaurant by moving to a new location on Madison's north side. Since then, Manna has been a go-to place for breakfast, elected official's coffee hours, poetry writing, and a place to pick up copies of *Our Lives* magazine.

Captain Bill's seafood restaurant also closed this summer. The restaurant was owned by **Robert von Rutenberg** and his brothers, Jack and Bill, who also manage other von Rutenberg ventures including the Mariner's Inn and

Nau-Ti-Gal waterfront restaurants and the Betty Lou Cruises. The family plans to stay in the restaurant business despite the challenges with a slow reopening to stop the spread of the coronavirus, and two Betty Lou boats will be on the lakes this summer.

Robert von Rutenberg talked about his experience in moving back to Madison and stepping into the helm of his family's restaurant business in the May 2010 edition of *Our Lives* magazine. ■

JUNE 12 Madison's Pride for Black Lives



Out Professional Engagement Network

LEARN ABOUT OPEN



OPEN provides education and information resources regarding issues of gender and sexual diversity and other issues of professional concern to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBTQ) individuals who live in the Madison and Dane County, Wisconsin area.

MISSION

OPEN welcomes diverse LGBTQ+ and allied professionals to share perspectives and experiences in connecting, developing, and building a vibrant community.

VISION

OPEN believes in demonstrating personal and professional leadership as stewards of an inclusive community where all are equal and valued.

JOIN ONLINE AT

[OPENMADISON.ORG](https://openmadison.org)



Sustainable Renovations Since 1992



If You Value...

- Accurate Pricing
• Professional Design Assistance
• Empowering Project Development
• Comfort and Durability
• A Respectful and Communicative Team...

Then contact Chads Design Build for your next home improvement!

ChadsDesignBuild.com

(608) 221-1799



One Remodeled Home at a Time



CONNECT -> OUR ORGANIZERS

OURLIVESMADISON.COM

QTPOC UW-MADISON CHINESE-SPEAKING SOCIAL

MadRainbow Keeps it Low-key

This self-described anti-social social club for Chinese-speaking queer students thrives on no-pressure gatherings. Outreach board president Jill Nagler connects with its organizer, Steven Wang.

HOW DID MADRAINBOW COME INTO BEING, AND WHAT IS THE ORGANIZATION'S MISSION?

I came across the idea to found a social group for Chinese-speaking queer folks during a chat with friends three years ago. We were complaining how introverts like us had a difficult time fitting into the "gay circle" here in Madison. There was supposedly a very vibrant social scene for LGBTQ communities, but as non-white foreigners, we did not see our place there.

One of our founding members invited a graphic designer friend to create a beautiful logo with rainbow strokes and calligraphic characters. We were all inexperienced (and even a little bit timid) to organize an event at the beginning. We still don't have a large crowd after three years, but it sort of matches our original goal to create a low-key, informal, and safe space for queer folks who may not subscribe to the whole out-and-proud narrative.

We don't have a formal mission statement. I put three slogans on our posters—"queer needs not extra cool," "no closet shaming," and "love is inclusive." These do not necessarily represent all our members, but sort of describe my vision when starting MadRainbow. Visibility of queer people tends to concentrate toward two extremes—either those leading a spectacular life or those undergoing grave misery.

WHAT ARE SOME ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS THAT MADRAINBOW HAS PARTICIPATED IN AS AN ORGANIZATION?

The main thing MadRainbow does is monthly gatherings that have included hotpot parties, dining out, board game nights, and chats over tea. The idea is to make these gatherings accessible and light-hearted. I



think of MadRainbow as a social platform where Chinese-speaking queer people get to know one another without too many presumptions or fixed expectations. People can just socialize and make friends. We want to have an open space to express ourselves, but there is not too much pressure to impress someone in certain ways.

IS MADRAINBOW CONNECTED TO ANY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS REGIONALLY, OR GLOBALLY?

We are a pretty small group representing a niche population. Madison does not have a large Chinese-speaking population outside of the university and most of our members are students. We have some ties with the Gender and Sexuality Campus Center. MadRainbow is a member of Qouncil, a coalition of queer

organizations on campus. We sometimes cross-post events with other organizations, and MadRainbow members are also encouraged to explore queer life on campus. In February, 2020, MadRainbow members went to Kalamazoo to attend the Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Asexual College Conference as part of the UW-Madison delegate.

Moreover, we have an informal partnership with Chinese Rainbow Network (CRN), the largest LGBT organization serving Chinese nationals in North America. I contacted CRN early on, but their network doesn't cover the Midwest other than Chicago. Most Chinese people reside in big cities along the coasts, while there is little-to-no Chinese presence in local community organizing in other places.

WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES THAT YOU AND/OR MADRAINBOW EXPERIENCE?

Expanding our member base is one of the challenges. We've been exploring different ways to reach out to potential members. Queer spaces in Madison are somewhat white-dominated, while Chinese nationals do not fit perfectly into the "minority" label in the context of U.S. racial politics. So, it is hard to locate Chinese people who are LGBT-identified or to convince them to participate in community organizing.

This is not necessarily a problem, since I am pretty happy about the small size of our group. With all the commitments to teaching, research, and other stuff that keeps life going, I have very limited capacity to organize for MadRainbow. Our members have requested more frequent meetings and programming with more specific focuses, but I am currently not able to meet those needs. A related issue is the sustainability of groups like ours. It is likely that MadRainbow will become inactive after I graduate and move away.

HAVE THESE CHALLENGES BEEN INTENSIFIED BY THE CURRENT PANDEMIC?

The inability to have in-person meetings has been quite a blow. MadRainbow is supposed to be a social platform alternative to online ones like dating apps, and we make an attempt to downplay the (sometimes undue) importance of digital first impressions in

LGBT social life. It is also more difficult to reach out to new members and build trust with them without face-to-face encounters. I've found more success in hosting online sharing sessions. We had one in May, and the theme was intimate relationships. I got some positive feedback and scheduled two more sessions for the summer (one on sexual labels; the other on family relations).

HOW CAN THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY AND ALLIES LEARN MORE ABOUT MADRAINBOW AND HELP SUPPORT YOU IN COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY?

Jasbir Puar proposed the concept "homonationalism" to describe how LGBT politics was reappropriated to legitimize the state power of Western countries like the United States. This concept helps to understand the experience of Chinese LGBT people here in Madison. We are sometimes treated as outsiders from a "barren" place with no LGBT culture. Yes, the Chinese government is overtly anti-LGBT, but this does not render our life experience and identities as sexual minorities invalid.

DO YOU HAVE ANY EVENTS/ACTIONS/PROJECTS THAT MADRAINBOW IS WORKING ON/PLANNING AND/OR WAYS THAT FOLKS CAN GET INVOLVED WITH MADRAINBOW?

We originally planned a mini-forum on LGBT family relations in April and invited a speaker who was an activist and researcher based in New York. We co-organized this event with QLaw, and got funding through Qouncil. Unfortunately, this had to be pushed back due to the pandemic.

Advertisement for Alexander Einsman, MS LMFT, at Atlas Counseling. Includes contact info: ATLASMADISON.COM, 608.535.9285.

Advertisement for Ryan Funeral Homes & Cremation Services. Tagline: Guiding families through the process of grieving with neighborly concern and professional care since 1938. Includes photo of two men.

HAVE YOU SHARED YOUR WISHES WITH YOUR FAMILY?

- Relieve loved ones of emotional decisions
• Personalize according to your wishes
• Tomorrow's funeral at today's cost

608-249-8257

Madison | Verona | DeForest
RYANFUNERALSERVICE.COM

5NINES CYBERSECURITY



5NINES has been securing Madison business computers, infrastructures and networks for 18 years.

Visit security.5nines.com to learn how we can protect your business from costly downtime or disaster.

security.5nines.com



CONNECT → OUR ADVOCATES

OURLIVESMADISON.COM

LGBTQ YOUTH HOMELESSNESS QTPOC THIRD SPACES

Shelter From the Storm

Recognizing the disproportionate need LGBTQ youth have for long-term housing, **DaMontae January** is taking steps to bring Casa Del Rainbow to life. Much like the Courage House in Milwaukee, it would become Dane County's first home for displaced LGBTQ youth.

FOR THE PAST 15 YEARS, DaMontae January has had a dream of opening a shelter for LGBTQ youth. Now his dream is starting to take shape.

DaMontae's journey is an unconventional one. Originally from Illinois, DaMontae attended UW-Whitewater, where he graduated with a degree in Social Work. While in college, he saw friends who struggled with homelessness after they came out to their families. According to a recent study from Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, LGBTQ young people are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than non-LGBTQ youth. DaMontae saw himself as being lucky since his family was accepting when he came out as gay, but he never forgot how the lack of acceptance by the family members of his friends impacted them for the rest of their lives. He continued his education, receiving a Master's at UW-Platteville in Counseling Psychology. While he understood that the mental health of LGBTQ people was important, meeting the basic need of housing was first in his mind.

The idea stayed with him while he went on to take a job at the then-UW-Marquette as the student housing director. In this role he also saw students struggling to support themselves, especially those who were on their own with no family support.

"Then life happened," as he said. "I got married, I got divorced." He moved around, taking different jobs. Most recently, DaMontae started two new jobs during the pandemic,



DaMontae began to look at what Madison had in terms of shelter, finding only one option for youth, but not on a long-term basis. "If you're 16 and on your own, that's two years until you are old enough to sign a lease."

one of them as being the membership coordinator for Madison Community Cooperative, a group that owns 11 cooperative housing residences. His second job is being a customer service rep for U-Haul.

"I turned 34 last year and wanted something to do that's not work." Seeing an article about the opening of Courage MKE, a shelter in Milwaukee for displaced LGBTQ youth, reignited his dream. DaMontae began to

look around at what Madison had in terms of shelter, finding only one option for youth, but not on a long-term basis. "If you're 16 and on your own, that's two years until you are old enough to sign a lease." He also cited that young people are only allowed to work a certain number of hours since they also need to attend school. Additionally, youth who couch surf often feel like they are overstaying their welcome at a friend's house, and as a result are highly mobile. Many end up on the street, turning to human trafficking as a way to survive, he concluded. DaMontae also thought about the stories of LGBTQ youth ending their life and wondered what could have been done in those situations where there was a lack of acceptance at home.

DaMontae called Brad Schlaikowski, co-founder of Courage MKE, in January to get guidance on next steps for creating a shelter. The dream now had a name: Casa Del Rainbow.

Next, DaMontae registered with the state as a nonprofit in order to raise funds for the house. "It takes a village, and I needed to start finding that village." DaMontae enlisted the help of Deanna Havey and Sebastian Hassell. He readily acknowledges that they have been essential in making this dream a reality. Deanna, who set up the Gofundme page, talked to people in finance on becoming a nonprofit and

getting loans. Sebastian helped by mapping out what could happen once the doors open, namely how to support the youth residents in getting through school and life.

DaMontae sees his mission as meeting the basic need of housing first so that youth can begin to access counseling and build a support system. He envisions having mentors so youth can see the other side of life and begin to imagine their own futures. "The end goal is to make sure our future generations feel like someone cared about them. I want to get them ready to go out into the world and change it. They are already starting to." He pictures a young queer youth with great ideas, but due to a bad situation, they have nowhere to go with it. The shelter would provide that stability so that they could reach their dreams.

Just as DaMontae was building momentum in getting his vision off the ground through planning fundraiser events, COVID-19 and the Safer at Home orders began. The inability to create an in-person event was not only a barrier for fundraising, but also in lending visibility to the project. DaMontae continues to search for grants and other potential funding sources in the meantime, reaching out to local organizations for partnership. A Gofundme page for the project can be found under the name "Casa Del Rainbow Group Home" in Madison, WI. ■

At Goodman's, *love* is the most important thing!



GOODMAN'S Jewelers
The Diamond Store of Madison Since 1933

In This House...
ALL STILL MEANS ALL

First United Methodist Church
Sunday Worship
9 & 11:15
203 Wisconsin Ave
Madison, WI 53703
608.256.9061
fumc.org



HAPPY HOMEOWNERS

"The design you came up with is a wonderful marriage of beauty and function." **CHAD & DALE**

Looks like it's...

TIME 2 REMODEL

time2remodel.com



GAY, LESBIAN, BI, TRANS, STRAIGHT.
Honestly, the only label we care about is **FAMILY.**

The Wisconsin Fertility Institute is proud to help gay and lesbian couples create the family of their dreams. Schedule your private consultation today, 608.824.0075.

wisconsin fertility INSTITUTE

wisconsinfertility.com
3146 Deming Way, Middleton

photo: bornarchivalco.com



BOOKS: FANTASY TRANSGENDER HIJRA REPRESENTATION

The Heroine We Deserve

In her first book, *Stealing Thunder*, Madison author **Alina Boyden** delivers a literary first: A fantasy novel with a trans protagonist set in the culturally rich world of the hijra.

I'M NOT GOING TO LIE—the first few pages of *Stealing Thunder* were difficult to get through. The reader is introduced to a whole new vocabulary, that, if you're not as familiar with Indian culture as the author, you'll find yourself needing a dictionary to even get through it. Names blurred with nouns blurred with nicknames, and it was a struggle to keep characters distinct in my mind, even when there were only a handful. I had to reread sections in order to make sure I was understanding properly. It assumes a level of competence from the reader that at times can be unforgiving.

There was one word I was very familiar with, though: hijra. It's been a long time since I've heard that word, but it centered the story very quickly: this is the story of a trans woman.

The beginning may have been a little shaky, but by chapter two, I was sold. The main character, Razia Khan, delves into topics that we trans women have been struggling with our entire lives: The inability to live the life we're told we're supposed to live and how many of us reach a breaking point where it is impossible NOT to live as a woman. Razia is forced to abandon her former life, just as many trans women have to do in order to live their truth. The inability to talk about our childhoods, because either we lie and say we were little girls, or we mislead and misdirect and hope no one asks pointed questions. Learning these social skills are taught in Trans Women 101, a class we all take, whether or not we become courtesans like Razia. And then, the moment of panic when someone sees through who we are and realizes who we used to be, and the fear of what will happen when someone has that knowledge.



The prince reassures her that nothing will happen to her, and he will protect her—and I was crying by the end of chapter two.

You're going to read this as a fantasy novel, but these are things I experience in the real world. There are daring heists and dragons and armies and sultans, sure, but the core of Razia's experience—the disgust she faces from others, the sistership she forms with her fellow hijra, the fear she'll never find love—these elements are not fantasy. These are the things trans women face every day. We deal with the frowns and stares of people who can't tell which box we fit into. We share excited glances of recognition when we see another trans woman on the street. And on low days, we struggle to understand how anyone could love someone who has walked in two worlds like we have.

Stealing Thunder starts in the middle, and that caught me off guard. In a story with a trans protagonist, you expect to see their journey start in their former life, their struggle with their assigned gender, the breaking point, and then follow their changes to be the person they want to be. This book? Nope. That's all long past. Razia has been living as herself for years already. This isn't a book about "the struggles of a trans woman finding her identity"—this woman knows who she is, and she's got more important shit to do. It's refreshing. I am tired of that formula—I see it so often, it's become rote. I want something new, and this book provides it.

The execution is not flawless. Some of the plot twists are easy to spot, and Razia can at times seem willfully ignorant. She's often more worried about her past being discovered than the obvious consequences of her recent actions—that mob of people is angry because something valuable was stolen, not because her private and uneavesdroppable conversation was eavesdropped on. I won't begrudge the woman her fear, because I've felt that fear too, but she can be more short-sighted than is characteristic for her. And some of her dialogue with other characters comes across as improbable, and only as a vehicle to deliver a particular punch line. It only happened once or twice, but it was enough to pull me out of an otherwise compelling and immersive story.

But the rest of the book is not improbable. *Stealing Thunder* executes a style of storytelling that I hold in very high regard: "it follows." Razia steals a valuable object from a party the prince attends. It follows that he declares he'll catch the thief to appease the host. It follows that when she must steal again, the prince tries to apprehend her. She escapes, of course, but it follows that she's torn about hiding her secret life as a thief from the prince she's falling in love with. Nearly everything fits together in a tightly woven, cause-and-effect sequence of events that I find both incredibly difficult to pull off and extremely rewarding when done well. *Stealing Thunder* does this exceptionally well. When the book moves on to the geopolitical scheming part of the narrative, the storytelling really starts to shine. Razia's razor-sharp wit will have you shouting out loud in glee as she dances metaphorical circles around her adversaries. Watching her outmaneu-

ver her over-confident and chauvinistic opponents with her exceptional tactical skill is both empowering and incredibly gratifying. She boxes her father, the sultan, into a corner with such mastery that even he is forced to concede.

Razia wins. She wins, and wins, and wins. The book moves at break-neck speed, and at every turn, she comes out on top. At every encounter, she outsmarts her opponents, and uses her wits to turn things in her favor. She wins back everything she lost, and then some. Do you know how rare that is for a trans woman? It doesn't happen. We aren't that lucky. We don't get to live blessed lives like Razia. We have to fight, tooth and nail, for everything, and some of us will still lose.

And that's why having stories with characters like Razia is so important. They give us hope. They give us someone we can pretend to be. When the government is stripping us of our rights and actively trying to harm us, these stories give us a place to escape to. They set the benchmark for what we should strive for—that the sky's the limit, and that there's a chance we will have our fairytale ending. They give us hope.

Despite its flaws, *Stealing Thunder* gave me something I've never had before: a protagonist that was like me. A protagonist that had the same worries and hopes, a protagonist that I could relate to on a deep and spiritual level. I've always identified with the girl in stories, even when I was a kid and everyone thought I was a boy. And as much as I envied the heroines of those stories, Razia gave me something else, something more, something closer to home: she gave me representation. ■



RANDI HAGEN is a proud trans woman, storyteller, geek, programmer, athlete, feminist, sister, mother, and Slytherin. She's an avid fantasy/sci-fi reader and enjoys writing in her free time. Randi plays hockey with the Madison Gay Hockey Association and the Dread Pirates. She has completed two marathons and is training for an ultramarathon in the fall. Black Lives Matter. 🌈🏳️‍🌈

THE NEXT STEP IS THE ONE THAT LEADS TO YOUR VERY *Own* HOME.

LET SUMMIT HELP YOU SEE WHAT'S POSSIBLE, WITH:

- Down payment options as low as 3%¹ – yes, really!
- A FREE preapproval, so you know how much house you can afford
- The right loan for you – so you can live comfortably with your mortgage payment
- Homebuying tools and videos in our online Mortgage Resource Center, and free educational events
- Plus, \$500 off closing costs!²

The distance between wanting a house and owning one might be shorter than you think. Let's find out where you're at. Give us a call or schedule an appointment online today.

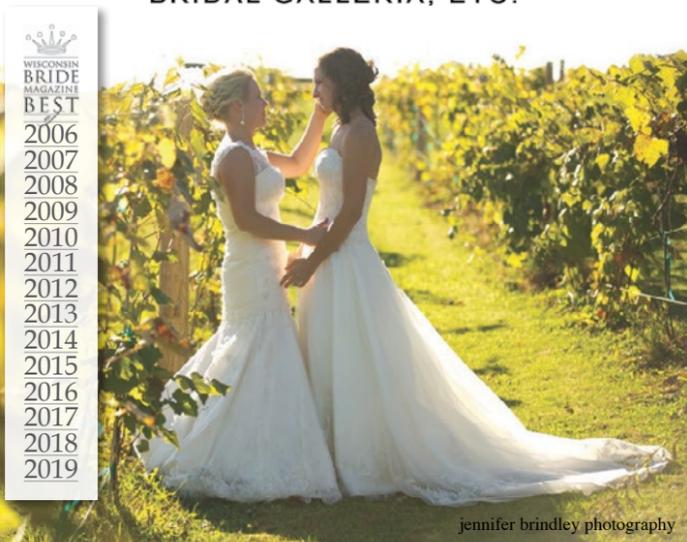
SummitCreditUnion.com | 800-236-5560 | 608-243-5000

¹ Owner occupied, primary residence only. 97% maximum LTV (Loan-To-Value). Mortgage insurance premium is required and increases loan cost and monthly payment. Restrictions may apply depending on loan program selected, including: homebuyer education courses, minimum credit score, sales price limits, income limits, property restrictions, and program borrower restrictions (for example: being a first-time homebuyer or Veteran). Not all applicants will qualify. ² The following loan programs are not eligible for the closing cost credit: Federal VA, FHA, Rural Development, WHEDA, Investment Property and Construction loans. Offer valid on home purchase applications submitted from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 where the loan's interest rate is locked by December 31, 2020. The \$500 closing cost credit cannot exceed the actual amount of closing costs, prepaid interest and escrow reserves. This includes if the credit is combined with a seller closing cost credit. First mortgages only (offer does not apply to second mortgages or home equity lines of credit). The credit will be applied at the time of the loan closing and will be reflected on the closing disclosure. Not valid with any other offers. 3 #1 mortgage lender based on number of mortgages recorded with Dane County register of deeds. © Summit Credit Union 2020.

Experience Our State-Of-The-Art 12,000 sq ft Salon!
Over 600 Bridal Gowns • Over 1000 Bridesmaids
Just 20-25 minutes from Madison in New Glarus
(608) 527-4436 • brandisbridal.com

Brandi's

BRIDAL GALLERIA, ETC.



jennifer brindley photography



#1 MORTGAGE LENDER IN DANE COUNTY 10 STRAIGHT YEARS

summit CREDIT UNION

TREAT YOURSELF TO A UNIQUE PET STORE FEATURING ALL-NATURAL PRODUCTS & GROOMING



EARTHWISE Pet
Nutrition Center & Wellness Spa
Locally owned and operated.

nglcc Certified LGBTBE
(608) 284-9007
3260 University Ave
Madison, WI 53705

QTPOC LOVE ART PHOTOGRAPHY

All of the “Ships”

Photographer **Cammie Nicole** set out to capture Queer Black Love in all of its “ships,” and in the process created a beautiful piece about representation.

LAST OCTOBER I was talking to my fiancée about yet another random idea I had. This time it was a vision that I wholeheartedly believed in. As a Black queer woman in Madison I started to notice that there wasn’t a lot of visual representation of Black love anywhere here, and I wanted to do something to celebrate that and to show that not only are there Black people here, but this is what Black love looks like, contrary to what the media and movies like to depict. I made a Facebook post saying I wanted to do a black and white photo-series of Black Love that focused on all “ships,” not just romantic, and that was inclusive to all identities. I asked if anyone would be interested in being a part of it and, surprisingly, I got a lot of interest. As things progressed, it turned into something even more meaningful and beautiful, thus was born Queer Black Love: A Photo-Series. It’s an ode and celebration to my queer Black friends in Madison and Milwaukee. This series represents Black trans folx, different types of abled bodies, fat bodies, lesbians, two-mama households,

Being Black and queer in Madison you don’t see a lot of yourself in anything here outside of your own tribe—if you’re even lucky enough to find that.

gay men, married couples, engaged couples, couples who have to keep parts of themselves hidden because they aren’t out to family yet as expressing their love for each other in different intimate ways. It really is near and dear to my heart, and as my first project I couldn’t have asked for a better set of muses. Being Black and queer in Madison you don’t see a lot of yourself in anything here outside of your own tribe—if you’re even lucky enough to find that. So, to be able to do this with my friends and folx I admire was an honor.

Once I calmed down from the shock of folx actually being interested and wanting to be a part of it, I asked my partner Duke, who is a professional photographer, if I could use her expensive camera, and if she wouldn’t mind assisting me (I really enjoyed the role reversal



here lol). The process for getting the series together was a mixture of fun and challenge. A lot of the challenges I faced were in my own head; being confident in my vision, asking for help when I needed it, not doubting myself, and remembering to have fun with it.

Most of the muses are my friends and favorite couples; however, I did Instagram stalk one couple that I had never met before to ask them if they wanted to be in the series, and to my surprise they said YES! They are now in what I call my tribe. I then laid out a timeline of when I wanted to start scheduling shoots; got everyone scheduled about a week or two into November and was able to schedule all of my Milwaukee couples for the same weekend. By the end of December, I had everyone wrapped and was ready to start editing. Initially I wanted to have it completed by the end of the year, so we could kick off 2020 with some Blackity Black Black Joy, but the universe had better plans and made it to where we were able to end Black History Month with images of Queer Blackity Black Black Love instead.

Since this was my very first solo project, having complete creative control, and being the photographer, I made sure I was intentional on what and how I wanted to capture and portray intimacy within the project. Being obsessed with the way black and white photos evoke emotion and thoughts is why I chose to do the entire project that way. I wanted to capture intimacy in different forms not just the “regular” ways we usually see it. I didn’t always focus directly on faces, but instead showed hands touching, bodies intertwined,

not showing faces of some because they couldn’t be shown, and little things like that.

Editing down the pictures was the hardest thing to do because there were so many I loved. Also, editing in general was the most tedious part of the process. I second-guessed myself so many times, I would do an edit and be happy with it, and then step away just to come back and start over. It took me a good two-to-three weeks to be completely satisfied with everything. Once the series was complete, I knew I wanted to do a showing of some sort—something small and intimate with the muses and a few friends and family. Originally it was planned to have it at our apartment, but due to the amount of people who showed interest in wanting to see it, I had to enlist some outside help (shoutout to Patrick from *Our Lives* for connecting me with Warren at UW-Madison’s Gender and Sexuality Campus Center). I had about 12 canvas prints made from the series and had my very first Gallery event Queer Black Love: A Photo-Series hosted by The Gender and Sexuality Campus Center on February 28, 2020 where I sold 7 of 12 prints.

I had no idea the series and event would be received by the public so well, and I am beyond grateful and humbled to everyone that was involved, my muses, and especially to my love Duke V for always believing in me and all my many visions and ideas—and for affirming me when I was frustrated and wanted to throw the whole series away after things happened that were out of my control. I love you! I’m not really sure what I hope to do with the series next, but I think it serves as a great reminder that Queer Black Love is beautiful, it’s needed, it deserves to be seen and celebrated, and that we need more of it!

Asé! ■



do you dream of a



but you only have



Christie Olsen, MSN, NP

forwardfertility.com • christie@forwardfertility.com
608-217-7511 • Madison, Wis.

EGG DONATION AND SURROGACY
PROVEN RESULTS IN THIRD-PARTY FERTILITY



Dutcher

PHOTOGRAPHY
SINCE 2002

robandsamphoto.com



RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE QTPOC MILWAUKEE

She's Our Winner, Baby

2019's Miss Gay Madison is now your current reigning

"America's Next Drag Superstar"

from RuPaul's Drag Race.

Jaida Essence Hall chatted with *Our Lives* Publisher Patrick Farabugh, just before she was crowned, about life in Milwaukee and her new global stage.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DOING DRAG?

I've been doing drag for 10 years, 11 in the fall. Child, a long time.

ARE YOU FROM MILWAUKEE ORIGINALLY?

Yes, I was born and raised here. Haven't left because I love it.

HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR WAY INTO DOING DRAG?

Literally, I would watch Drag Race sometimes. I would watch the show, but didn't really know much about drag. I would even go out to the bars and see the local shows, but it still wasn't something that I was interested in doing. And then one time there was a turnout show here, which is where you kind of try out drag just for one time. It was the most random thing. It was at a park in the winter, and the snow was so bad that day. I went for the \$500 prize they were offering. I was like, girl, I don't really want to do drag, but \$500 is \$500. So I tried out, but I didn't even get to do it! My backup dancers dropped out at the last minute! After that I was like, well, I bought all this stuff. I'll just wear it to the show anyway. And now I'm a drag queen professionally. It's crazy.

WHEN DID YOU FIND YOUR WAY INTO THE LOCAL DRAG COMMUNITY?

I felt like it was kind of then. A lot of people already knew who I was because I would go out all the time. I became obsessed with the drag here, because everybody was so good. I would tip the entertainers. I guess you could say I was a super fan.

HOW ABOUT THE NAVIGATING THE GAY COMMUNITY IN GENERAL?

Sometimes it can seem very catty to navigate the gay scene, especially when doing drag. But I think because of Drag Race we now see so many different versions of drag and so many different styles of drag. People have become more accepting of what other people do when they're in drag. But back in the day—Honey. It was hard, especially being a queen of color.

I say this a lot, and I think a lot of people of color are so used to being oppressed that we are used to always fighting for what we want. I know it's not always easy to have to fight for stuff, but I know at the same time that it's kind of built into us. Cause even when things are not going the way that they should, you just have this fighting spirit in you. And I'm thankful for that because a lot of times it's worked out for me. I wish it was not always that hard, but baby, it is about breaking down barriers and wanting so much for so many. That's really why I'm so glad I made it on the show. I think a lot of people, people of color, who see me on the show think like, "Wow, she's doing it. She's making it happen, and she's authentically being herself. She's not trying to change who she is or trying to be a different person than from where she grew up." It's showing them that they can be who they are and still be successful.

HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED IN MILWAUKEE'S WIDER LGBTQ COMMUNITY?

You know what? Before I did drag, I was always a super-quiet person. I mean, yes I'm loud, but also very, very, very shy. It might seem hard to believe, but I would be nervous about going out and meeting new

people. So for that reason I didn't really do a lot of community work. But after I started to do drag, I realized that if people look at you as an inspiration in their community, then it's your job. I mean, if you don't want to then, I guess you don't have to, but it's partially your job to be involved as much as you can. Like, even when I did competitions and pageants, I ran for Miss Courage MKE. We raised money to buy a house for displaced LGBTQ+ youth. That's something I'm really proud of. It's crazy to know the power of drag. A lot of what was done was heavily centered with a lot of the local queens raising money by doing a lot of shows to help raise awareness. And now there's people here who after being thrown out on the street will have a place to live partly because of the help of local drag queens. I'm thankful that Courage Milwaukee saw the need for it and filled that need.

WHAT MADE YOU APPLY FOR DRAG RACE?

It's so crazy. The first season, I watched the show and I was like, "Oh, this is cute." I wasn't even doing drag. Then I was like, "I could do this show. I would go in there, and I would be slaying, and I would let these



girls have it." Of course that's the cocky, young, stupid person talking who has no idea about any of that stuff. But then, before I was even doing drag, I thought the idea of Drag Race was so unique. It was so cool. The opportunity was really nice, but a lot of people kept saying I should try out. I thought it was a really good opportunity, but I didn't really, to be honest, want it. I was so afraid and wondering, "What if I do it and what if I'm not ready?" I was still so wet behind the ear. But after a while of just watching the show, then I was like, "Okay, I'm getting a little bit better with my drag. I think I could probably do this." That was around the time that Trixie (Mattel) and I both auditioned. That was the first time I auditioned, and I didn't receive a callback. Trixie made it on. I was like, "Oh well girl, as hard as you are working, maybe you need to step it up a little more." And again, after another five years, everybody was telling me I should try again. I kept feeling like I wanted to because other people kept telling me I should, but something was holding me back.

I think a lot of people, people of color, who see me on the show think like, "Wow, she's doing it. She's making it happen, and she's authentically being herself. She's not trying to change who she is or trying to be a different person than from where she grew up." It's showing them that they can be who they are and still be successful.

Well, the year right before I auditioned, I did a fashion show. This was something I

always dreamed of doing. I was like, "Oh my God, I finally did one thing that I've always wanted to do." And that dream came true for me. That made me think that maybe it's time for me to stop being afraid of doing Drag Race and of possible rejection and grow the hell up and audition. At that point, I felt like it was truly something that I really, really wanted for my career. If somebody is going to invest or take a risk on me, or a chance on my success, it would have to be me. Thankfully I did. I would probably not have been on the show if I didn't just trust in myself.

FROM SEEING YOU PERFORM AT PRIDEFEST FOR YEARS BEFORE YOU MADE IT ON THE SHOW, IT ALWAYS FELT LIKE YOU WERE AS MUCH OF A STAR AS ANY OF THE DRAG RACE GIRLS THAT WERE HEADLINING. DID YOU EVER FEEL THAT WAY?

It's so crazy because I tell people that all the time. People looking at me say stuff like, "You're so strong and confident." Child, I'm just like



everybody else. People look at drag and they think it's a horrible thing if we ever have a moment where we don't feel confident. We have nerves and fears like, "What if I'm not good enough?" That was one of the things that I had to break myself of in order to be successful or make it to the show. I was literally always stuck there wondering, "What if I audition, and I'm not good enough? What if I'm not ready?" And it's one thing for people to see you and think that you are amazing. It's another for you to have to see what other people see in you.

LET'S TRANSITION TO THE SHOW. YOU WALK IN. WAS THAT CONFIDENCE THERE?

Oh my God, it's so weird. It's a mixture of so many different things. Like how your mind will think something, but it thinks so fast that you don't even remember that you thought it. At the same time it seems like time almost slowed down. When you hit that corner right before you walk into the Werkroom, it's like, "Oh my God, thank goodness. All the hard work has paid off." And then it's also like, "Oh my God, I'm walking into the Werkroom."

I'm like, "Let's go in here and let's get this game started." It's like I'm ready for war. But I'm also afraid and wondering who's going to be in this room? It was a mix of everything in like 30 seconds. The producers are right there and say, "We're going to count you down and you're going to walk in." And when you walk in, it's like "Here we go!" But for me, the main thing that I thought was that there's so many people at home who know and love me. And I felt like instead of thinking, "I'm gonna give this version or this idea of what people expect from me," I was like, "I'll just go there and be who I am." Hopefully at the very least, or at the most, people will love me for being myself. If the people back home watch the show and say, "Wow that's the Jaida I know and love," then I've done my job.

DID YOU HAVE ANY PERCEPTIONS OF HOW IT WOULD BE?

I always thought that it would be really hard. Even when I did competitions, I would prepare as hard as I can just to be the best that I can. So I was like, as long as I'm giving my best, then I know I'm doing it right. But even though you know that it will be intense, there is no way you can be ready for Drag Race. Even the girls going back for All Stars... there's no way that they can be fully ready. And I always said to myself, "If I go, I want it to be a season where every single queen is fierce and everybody is amazing." Then you get there and walk in and it's like, "Oh my God, these queens are amazing." Be careful what you wish for.

DID YOU RECOGNIZE ANYONE?

I came in with the second group, but yes. I recognized Jan. And Dalia. I knew both of them because we'd done videos a while back for Cosmo. I also heard a lot about Dalia. And I heard that Jan was an amazing singer. I was like, "Oh girl, here we go." I knew for a fact that I'm not good at singing. Some people are like, "It's in you," and I'm like, "Girl, it's not. Not at all. That's what the auto tune is for." Thank goodness for the musical producers on that last challenge, because Honey.

LAST QUESTION: HOW HAS THE PANDEMIC IMPACTED YOU? WHAT WILL YOU DO ONCE THE WORLD OPENS UP?

The pandemic is absolutely awful, but I think one of the best things to come out of it is the way that we connect with the people who support us on social media. Everything like that has changed so dramatically. It's allowed us to showcase who we are a lot better. I'm really hoping that when all of this is done, that I can go out on the road and meet all these people that I've made friends with and gotten so much support from. That's really what I've been looking forward to when this is all done. ■

ALL CAUSES HAVE **ADVOCATES.**

BUT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV ONLY **A CHAMPION** WILL DO.

Momentum
DENTAL PLANS

Personalized insurance plans
for individuals and families.

Expansive network
of dental clinics.



Call 608.729.6500 today!
MomentumPlans.com
Locally owned and operated in Madison

New American Center Clinic

(Just outside of Sun Prairie)

Now Accepting New Patients



ORTHODONTISTS

Dr. Alsamawi & Dr. Schasker

FAMILY DENTISTS

Dr. Schwitters & Dr. Kolker



**DENTAL
HEALTH
ASSOCIATES**
dhamadison.com

Sun Prairie • East • Downtown
Fitchburg • West • University

Supporting the Madison Community since 1969

Introducing Vivent Health, founded on the combined expertise of AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin, Rocky Mountain CARES and St. Louis Effort for AIDS. And steadfastly dedicated to serving anyone and everyone affected by HIV through our comprehensive prevention, care and treatment programs. **Learn more at ViventHealth.org**



viventhealth

thrive. together.



The

World Builder

M Adams has become one of the most prominent and effective organizers for racial and gender-based justice in Madison through her work with Freedom, Inc.

QTPOC RACIAL JUSTICE TACTICAL PROTESTS

ONE OF M ADAMS' MOST IMPACTFUL childhood memories is of her grandmother teaching her how to properly dispose of soda cans.

Don't crumple the metal. Thoroughly rinse out the can. Place it, along with any others, in a paper sack and leave it in an easy-to-reach spot in the back alley of her grandma's home on Milwaukee's north side. Neighborhood folks who were without homes or without enough income knew to come by and pick up the bag of cans and other scrap metal, to be dropped at the recycling center to make a bit of much-needed cash.

"It was a show of respect, she saw their dignity," M explains. "My grandmother was phenomenal. She's who I really learned the human rights framing from. She wasn't a 'movement' person, just a simple woman, as she called herself. But she would always say, 'It doesn't make sense

that people have to be homeless. It doesn't make sense that police are out here killing people.' And she showed that through her actions. The radical vision came to me from my grandmother."

That radical vision is something M carries into her work as Co-Executive Director of Freedom, Inc., the Madison-based nonprofit at the forefront of many prominent protests of racial and gender-based injustices in and around the city. There's a lot more to Freedom, Inc. than their public face, of course, and the same is true of M. Anyone who spends even a little bit of time listening to M speak or in conversation soon becomes keenly aware of the boundlessness of her heart, and the deeply thoughtful and tactical mind that keeps its rhythm.

DEEP ROOTS

M's childhood neighborhood in Milwaukee was almost entirely Black and she attended mixed public schools. There were hardships at home and all around. Her mother was single and raising four kids on minimal income. M's father has been in prison for most of her life, though she experienced his 'presence' through the many impacts of domestic violence. On top of that, their neighborhood lived under the constant specter of police harassment and violence.

"A lot of times, the people who are creating the change are not beloved within the communities they're serving. They're directly challenging the people in that area."

"We had days where there wasn't a lot of food, we had trouble with rent, we'd been evicted," she remembers. Just as important, though, is that her community was one of "great love...great camaraderie. We helped each other out."

"I still talk to many of the folks I grew up with. It was a really family forging time," M says. It was that example of people coming together to help each other out in creative and loving ways—not always in the nuclear family format—that M credits with helping her develop her sense of self (including the queer notion of chosen families) and how she connected with others. "I get to benefit from radical queer imagination, and also of wise and sage Black cultures that are thousands of years old."

Those early lessons left a lasting impression and helped instill within M the drive and dedication needed to do her life's work. She earned a scholarship through the PEOPLE Program to attend UW-Madison and initially studied bacteriology. As a child, she'd sought ways to "change the world." Becoming a doctor or scientist seemed then like the best options.

"Science helps us understand the world," she says. "I wanted to use science to help people."

Her experiences at the UW quickly showed her the more systemic issues at play in her life and that of her community. M became acutely aware of the differences between her and most of her classmates, from being one of the only Black students in her science courses to the access to resources others often took for granted. She recalls that almost everyone else had a computer or laptop, whereas she came to college writing papers by hand. "My mom made maybe \$12–13,000 a year," M says. "She did her best...we lived below the poverty line. I'd never owned a computer."

"It wasn't until I left Milwaukee that I really, in a very clear way, got to understand the systemic issues," M explains. "I could easily point to stark differences between the opportunities I and my friends had growing up. Like access to the environment, for instance. In Milwaukee we never went to the lake, because it was where the white people live. But suddenly, at UW, my front door at the Elizabeth Waters dorm was right on the lake!"

The experience made the unfairness and inequalities crystal clear for

HINKLEY PRODUCTIONS

LIVE STREAMING & VIRTUAL EVENT production provides assurance that your event can continue as planned. Hinkley Productions is an LGBT owned business with thousands of broadcast hours and a 100% success rate since 2007. We aren't jumping on a trend, we're leading the way. Learn how at hinkleyproductions.com/live

► CONFERENCES ► FUNDRAISERS ► AWARD SHOWS
► PRESS CONFERENCES ► CONCERTS

nglcc **WOMEN OWNED** HINKLEYPRODUCTIONS.COM | 608.819.6022

HANDMADE IN MADISON

JEWELERS WORKSHOP

391 N. SHERMAN AVE 608.251.7795 JEWELERSWORKSHOP.COM



LEFT: Adams leading the Black Lives Matter protest on May 30. ABOVE: Kabzuag Vaj and Adams signing the papers to purchase the building at 2110 Luann Lane for Freedom, Inc. RIGHT: Freedom, Inc. paints DEFUND POLICE in front of Madison's City County Building.

"A queer politic is about not seeking to become normative but seeking to be transformative."

M. "Why couldn't my people live like that? We were not worse people, we were not bad people, we were people who deserved it, too. That really got me to understand systems in a different way."

The problems on campus galvanized M into getting involved in several student organizations. She heard from friends in the social sciences about "terrible things" other students said in class and experienced for herself racist assumptions and microaggressions that still plague the campus.

Her campus activism "became my development as a social movement scientist," M says. "I started thinking very critically about how you advance social change at a grassroots level to impact systems."

In that process I started to shift my thinking—if I want to help my folks, a doctor can only help one person at a time so maybe I should go into public health. But that doesn't go as far as it could. Let me think about research, policy, and so on. But then I realized, a lot of these systems just need to be updated."

THE START OF SOMETHING NEW

It was shortly after UW, in 2008–09, that M first became aware of Freedom, Inc. and its founder, Kabzuag Vaj. A now defunct program called the Wisconsin Apprentice Organizing Project paid a small stipend and paired M with the relatively new organization for a six-month stint.

"I came in as this little intern who wanted to help build a queer youth of color program," M says.

What was then called the Asian Freedom Project had initially begun in 1999 to focus on building knowledge and tackling gender-based violence in the Southeast Asian community of Madison's Bayview neighborhood. Then a student at UW and a resident of Bayview, Kabzuag saw that college was affording her with life-changing experiences and information that largely wasn't being made available to her community. She began teaching anything new she learned by setting up shop in a parking lot once a week.

The fledgling group organized (successfully) against everything from a proposed curfew ordinance to deportations.

"They also looked closely at what was happening inside their families,

especially regarding gender-based violence," explains M. "They started laying groundwork for a gender justice program for the Hmong community that still exists today."

In 2003 the organization incorporated and the name changed to Freedom, Inc., with Kabzuag as its director. By the time M joined, they were operating out of a small office in the Bayview Community and mostly serving Hmong and other Southeast Asian women and girls, and LGBTQ young people with support groups. Growing pains were felt immediately.

"As the work expanded, a group of Black girls saw this programming for girls and wanted to come," M says. "When they joined, it was an absolute disaster."

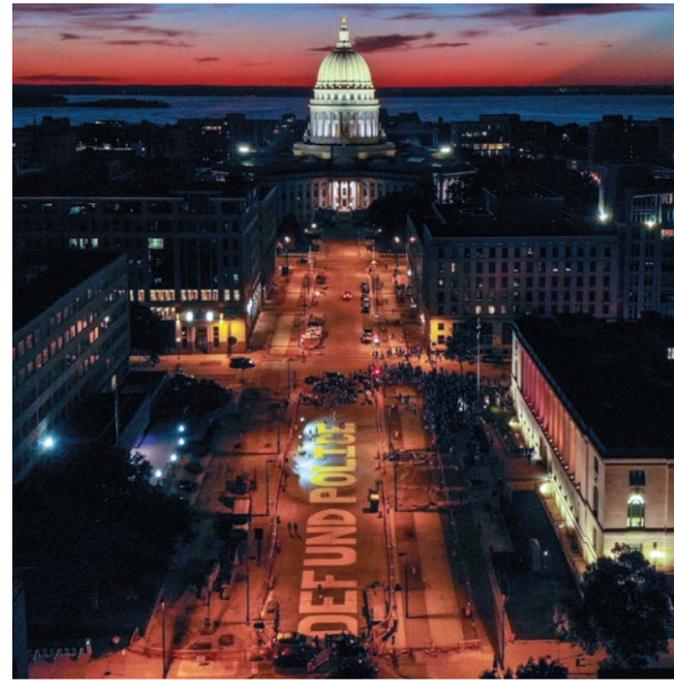
Some of the difficulties were solvable, like language barriers and different styles of communication. Other differences were harder to overcome and negatively impacted both groups of people they were trying to serve.

"How the two groups were experiencing the same root issues looked so different," M explains. "When it came to militarism, for instance, you have refugees and the children of refugees who experienced the Vietnam/American War, living under occupation, violence, and displacement. On the other hand, with the Black girls, they'd talked about how they might go into ROTC when they graduated high school because there weren't a lot of other options for them. The military represents a way out for them because of a failed educational system. Some of them, too, had a father or uncle who was maybe a homeless veteran."

Everything from how to discuss policing and how differences in gender are understood created schisms between the groups. Instead of continuing to try to force everyone to be together in all things, Freedom, Inc. instead adapted, developing their current slate of culturally specific programming.

"Instead of trying to say that it wasn't different or to ignore those differences—which happens in a lot of multicultural spaces—we said let's go into those differences," M explains. "We developed...multiple conversations and spaces. Once we do that then we can build out a shared analysis."

M credits Kabzuag for having "the wisdom to see that there was a need to approach ending violence for all communities."



Since then, M first became the Director of Organizing and now the Co-Executive Director, where she's frequently one of the prominent faces and voices for Freedom, Inc.'s community actions. The nonprofit has made a name for itself with pointed, tactical protests and organizing around everything from removing police from public schools to training youth of color in civic engagement and leadership. But it is through its radical model of culturally specific, community-based programs that has firmly entrenched Freedom, Inc. as one of Madison's essential organizations.

Throughout, M has been a central figure, helping create and build the queer youth of color program begun when she was just an intern. She's become a leading figure in the Take Back the Land movement, which works to block evictions and rehouse homeless people into foreclosed buildings. M has also presented in front of the United Nations for the Convention on Eliminating Racial Discrimination in 2014 and has authored and co-authored (for *Our Lives* and many other publications) several papers on Black community control of policing and how the killing of unarmed Black folks is a queer issue.

LAYING A NEW FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE

M is particularly excited for the potential of a building recently purchased on the south side to house Freedom, Inc.'s staff and programming.

The space represents a considerable expansion from their former offices on S. Park Street, where staff could only meet with people one at a time and there wasn't enough room for their food pantry to operate more than one or two days a week (requiring that it be dismantled in between).

"We are creating a physical political home," M says. "We've grown significantly. We have 18 full-time staff. The need is that great. We look forward to being able to run even more programs, to give our staff their own offices. So much of our work is people work: Safety planning with survivors, support for young or adult queer and trans folks. We need regular meeting spaces for leadership development work, for community celebrations and gatherings."

M envisions a place where community members can plan and hold their own events, like "an elder who wants to lead a Zumba class," art exhibitions, Pride proms, or bingo days for disabled elders. Seeing a lack of places for teens in Madison to go, they're building it out as a safe space

purrrrrsonal matchmaking for every family!



Angel's Wish

WWW.ANGELSWISH.ORG

Pet Adoption • Microchipping • Retail Store
Educational Resources • Volunteer Opportunities

BETHKE
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING, INC

Furnaces • Boilers • Air Conditioners
Humidifiers • Duct Cleaning
Preventative Maintenance Plans

Emergency Service 24/7 251-2222



Locally Owned.
Locally Operated.

FINANCING AVAILABLE
BethkeHeating.com

Queer Power Rising

LGBTQ Leadership at Freedom, Inc.



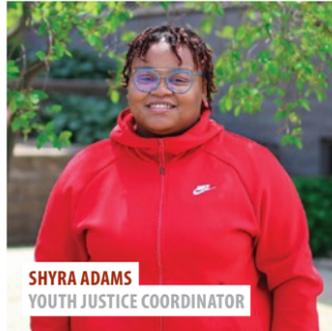
MAHNER DAHNWEIH
COMMUNITY POWER BUILDING
COORDINATOR



ZON MOUA
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH ORGANIZING



KALEB HAWJ
QUEER JUSTICE COORDINATOR



SHYRA ADAMS
YOUTH JUSTICE COORDINATOR

outside the home to congregate, learn, organize, and just be.

M hopes the new building will become a place for gay, queer, trans, and intersex people of color to meet up and socialize, too. “It’s always been, you gotta go to the bar,” she says. “Outside of that there isn’t much else. How do we have more spaces? We’re really building community. That doesn’t really exist right now for queer people of color in Madison.”

The that Freedom, Inc. will have the space to run multiple programs at the same time will be what has the greatest impact, M says. There are many voids to fill: They’re thinking about partnering with public health groups to provide diabetes checks and other pop-up services, expanding their food pantry, and holding dances and other events. They plan to do a lot of listening and to be in conversation with a range of people and groups.

“Community centers can’t be telling people what they need,” M muses. “It has to be an iterative process where the community co-creates it.”

NATIONALLY BELOVED, LOCALLY SUSPECT

The recent explosion of visibility and awareness around racial justice issues has seen Freedom, Inc. and other small, grassroots organizations like Urban Triage and Free the 350 Bail Fund thrust more fully into the mainstream spotlight. Staff and volunteers with Freedom, Inc. have been helping organize and run many of the protest actions happening in Madison, day in and day out, as part of an effort to keep issues of racial justice

at the forefront of people’s minds and push for the kind of change they’ve been fighting for over several years.

That visibility has always been a double-edged sword, M says. While many personal fundraisers on behalf of Freedom, Inc. have popped up in recent weeks and months, M explains that the majority of the group’s funding has and continues to come from national and state-level grants and donations. Locally? Not so much.

“A lot of times, the people who are creating the change are not beloved within the communities they’re serving. They’re directly challenging the people in that area,” M says. That’s certainly been clear in Madison, where Freedom, Inc. has been the frequent target of negative reporting and even racist political cartoons. The criticism isn’t just limited to self-described conservatives, either. Their calls for removing police from schools and for community control over policing have highlighted divisions within even Madison’s most liberal circles. M is clear-headed about why that is.

“We’re directly challenging those with resources right now and right here,” M says. “We’re saying something very directly to people: If you’re for queer people of color, for Black and brown people, you gotta dislodge this relationship with the police. That challenges people!”

A QUEER POLITIC

M is hopeful, though, that this heightened moment will act as an invitation, “a nudge, even a direct challenge” to white folks—especially including white queer people—to get involved and support the work.

“White mainstream LGBTQ people are the beneficiaries of radical Black queer work,” she notes. “‘The first Pride was a riot’ is not just a tagline, that’s a history. Black, brown, and trans women were experiencing police violence and fought back against it.”

“We have a plan to sustain the resistance and the vision,” M continues. “Opportunities like this can show a more comprehensive vision of who we are and what we’re about. Hopefully that garners more local support.”

It’s not always clear in how Freedom, Inc. is covered in local press, but they do consider themselves a queer organization and include many LGBTQI staff and volunteers. However, M is quick to point out that it isn’t their personal identities that makes Freedom, Inc. a queer entity.

“What makes us queer is our politic,” she says. “We have a radical way of seeing the world. A queer politic is about not seeking to become normative but seeking to be transformative. How we approach an issue is in a queer way.”

For instance, when they look at the LGBTQI people both running and using the food pantry, they’re thinking about how the entire food system could be reimaged to more fully serve all people. Is it fixing what’s already being done, or is it coming up with something entirely new?

“That is what it means for us to be queer,” M says. “It’s not just who my partner is, though that’s really important. But it’s also how I see the world and how I’m intervening in the world. That’s what ‘smash the binary’ is about. Smash the good vs. bad paradigm when we imagine safety. Break all different forms of binaries that we construct in society: Family vs. not, citizen vs. not, and so on.”

That spectrum approach is a testament to the wisdom M and others have taken from their elders and from each new generation.

“My grandmother really moved from a place of love and community,” M says. “She was the center of gravity for the family and really for our block. People knew that, if she had food, you had some, too. People knew that you could come over any time for a cool drink and a place to sit and talk. She was always very gentle.”

With her actions, her words, and the new building soon to be occupied by Freedom, Inc., M Adams is helping create that same safe place to land for those who most need it—to meet, to organize, and to imagine and build something anew. ■



Compadres Restaurant



The Moua Family

TODAY FOR TOMORROW

A sustainability series as told by the people living it out every day

Livinginbalancemadison.com

NEED A MAMMOGRAM?
LIMITED INSURANCE? NONE AT ALL?

25 Clinics to Choose From **IT'S ALL FREE**

QUALIFYING IS EASY.

Phone: 608-242-6392 www.WellWomanDaneCounty.org

LGBTQ SENSITIVE PROVIDERS AVAILABLE



Barbara's Story



Q T P O C P R I D E

QUEER & TRANS PEOPLE OF COLOR

2020

What does Pride Month mean for us in this moment where our typical celebrations have been cancelled & our access to community through bars, sports clubs, and dance spaces is limited or eliminated? For many of us, the COVID-19 pandemic has required re-defining our community and re-establishing connections at the local level. For some that has meant suddenly spending most of our time with family members who do not honor or respect our gender and sexual identities, for others it has meant dealing with immense loneliness as we self-isolate without family or partners. Some have lost loved ones. Some have lost jobs. Some are living or working in conditions that scare them every day. The challenges of staying at home or being an essential worker vary dramatically, but unquestionably we are all being challenged, living with fear and anxiety, and waiting to see what life will look like on the other side of this global pandemic.

Our Lives magazine's annual QTPOC feature allows us to see the faces of queer and trans people of color across the state, many of whom are doing the essential labor of keeping our communities afloat. This year we may not be able to gather in person, but the faces displayed in these pages remind us that our community is still here and our community is a source of both hope and power. Each face is a person who is living their life as a queer or trans person of color in a time when such identities are increasingly under attack, when our lives feel precarious in multiple ways and yet, we are still here.

If you are reading this, you are still here. You are still alive. You matter. This community matters. So we are grateful for each and every name and face on these pages, especially this year. Take heart, friends, and have a look at the beautiful QTPOCs who are surviving, like you're surviving, all over this state. —Sami Schalk

- Rita Adair
- M Adams
- Shyra Adams
- Cyle Agee
- Sarah Akawa
- Angie Alcorta
- Akiya Alexander
- Lex Allen
- Alnisa Allgood
- Roberto Amezcua
- L. Malik Anderson
- Dupré Armon
- Vaunce Ashby
- Aphro Ashé
- Brian Austin
- Davette Baker
- Ida Balderrama-Trudell
- TeKema Balentine
- Tempestt Ballenger
- Rick Banks
- T. S. Banks
- Vic J. Barrett
- John Bickart
- Jesus Bisoso



The Messenger

Elle Halo is a visible trans Black woman whose mission is to advocate unapologetically and rebel daily against the messages and systems that hold QTPOC back.

I am a LGBTQ Health Equity Advocate here in Wisconsin.

My public work at this time in my life begins with my transition and my own HIV/STI prevention journey, both as an advocate and a young black woman of trans experience. I was introduced to SHEBA (Sister's Helping Eachother Battle Adversity) with Diverse & Resilient early in my personal transition. They sheltered me, helped me navigate and find myself in community work again. Five years later, I am honored to serve there as a member of The Board of Directors. My mentors Ronnie Grace, Kofi Short, and all the ladies of SHEBA have become a huge support system for me. I have made it my mission to bring new visibility to SHEBA.

I was encouraged to apply for work with SAPG (Statewide Action Planning Group) for HIV/AIDS of WI and after two years of service with this amazing group, I have become the first Trans Woman of Color to be Co-Chair Elect. I am a part of the Inclusive Restroom Working Group with The Equal Rights Commission of Milwaukee. We are working to pass an ordinance that all current City-owned, gendered bathrooms become more accessible, gender-neutral facilities and establish a new building code for the future.

I am soon to complete two years of Public Allies MKE service, placed with two incredible feminist organizations: Health Connections Inc, and Planned Parenthood of WI. It has been my honor to serve our city through HIV/STI Prevention Counseling, PrEP advocacy, giving sexual health/trans-affirming health care referrals, leading trainings, engaging youth, organizing events, moderating panel discussions, presenting at conferences, and being a representative of our Black and brown LGBTQ community.

Last year, I was honored with several awards for advocacy, The Gender Reveal Podcast Grantee, Public Allies Class of 2019 Diversity & Inclusion Award, The Bobbie Jean Baker Trans Faith Leadership Award, The Rising Star Award, The Black Trans Advocacy Coalition, and Pridefest MKE Individual of the Year. I also received a mini grant last summer from #MAP4youth with Juvenile Justice to develop queer-centered youth programming in Milwaukee. I have been blessed in my life and work, and those things were envisioned by Marsha P. Johnson many years ago. I won my Pridefest Award on the 50th anniversary of Stonewall.

This community keeps me inspired and willing to be transparent. Last year, I was also an inaugural member of The Black AIDS Institute's Women's

Ambassadorship Of Biomedical Prevention, and last summer I gave a mainstage PrEP presentation at EssenceFest 2019 surrounded by some incredible advocates. Me: a young, Black trans woman from Milwaukee at the biggest African-American celebration in the country, speaking as a professional educator about PrEP defying multiple stigmas!

I have struggled with depression, anxiety, and dysphoria throughout my life. I have struggled with oversexualization, transmisogyny, work access and pay inequality, and my safety in transition. I see myself as an educator; I think my gift and my weapon against injustice is my visibility. It stems from survival, from the constant scrutiny we face as queer and trans people of color. It stems from my upbringing being unapologetically Black and from my faith-based foundation. I talk to people, but I listen, and I carry their stories with me every day in my work.

Coming from a world where visibility is both a sword and a shield, my dream is to see my advocacy align with my gifts. I am an artist, a singer, and a writer. For me, even my presentation as a trans woman—my choice of fashion, makeup, hair, nails—are all an act of rebellion. I use my visibility to show the beauty of Black trans women and to advocate for body positivity and sexual liberation. I use my visibility to challenge the status quo and what you think I can wear, what you think I can say, and what you think I am capable of doing. You do not own me. You cannot put me in a box, and you cannot erase us and the history that is alive in us—the gender-variant indiginous history that affirms us and says that there is nothing wrong with us because of our sexual identity or gender. Queer and trans bodies are natural, normal, beautiful, and whole. You do not control what God has put inside of me, and that is to be a messenger to women and people like me that society cannot stop the gifts and potential that God has put inside of you as well. I call that my personal ministry.

I struggle with financial stability, housing and work discrimination. I struggle out in public. I struggle with my family and friends, and with romance, communication, and safety. I am a sexual assault survivor, and I have faced my assaulters. I'm doing the best I can with myself. I know you are too. I don't know where my personal ministry is taking me, but I know that I'm going to use the opportunities I have to fight—even if that's just being kind eyes in the crowd of someone else's journey so that they can do the work they are here to do.

I want you to know that the LGBTQ community in Wisconsin is strong and smart. I want you to know that QTPOC are brilliant and resourceful. I want you to know that black trans and women and femmes built the pride movement that was co-opted by the white, gay, male establishment. I want you know that the health, social, and criminal justice disparities Black people and Black queer people face are not just statistics and data. Our struggle is not made up or over-exaggerated. I want you to know that we cannot attain feminist agenda items or Black liberation without centering QTPOC. I challenge you to use your talents for yourself and our community. That is my work: turning lights on in the dark rooms we keep ourselves in. ■



Above with Broderick Pearson next to a plywood mural portraying their organizing Milwaukee's March with Pride for Black Lives Matter. Below is from an inclusion series that Halo is working on.





The Community Builder
Gabe Javier, as Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at UW-Madison, is committed to building community and effecting change for underprivileged and underrepresented students.

Gabe Javier moved to Madison nearly 10 years ago to lead the then-named UW-Madison LGBT Campus Center, now the Gender and Sexuality Campus Center (GSCC), part of Student Affairs at the flagship of the UW System.

"I moved here from Ann Arbor," Gabe recounts, "and I thought that the towns were similar enough to make the transition nice and easy. I definitely underestimated how hard it was going to be to find community."

But it happened, he says, albeit slowly. "I absolutely immersed myself in the job and met so many people through those networks, but it was a struggle to find ways to separate my personal life from my professional life."

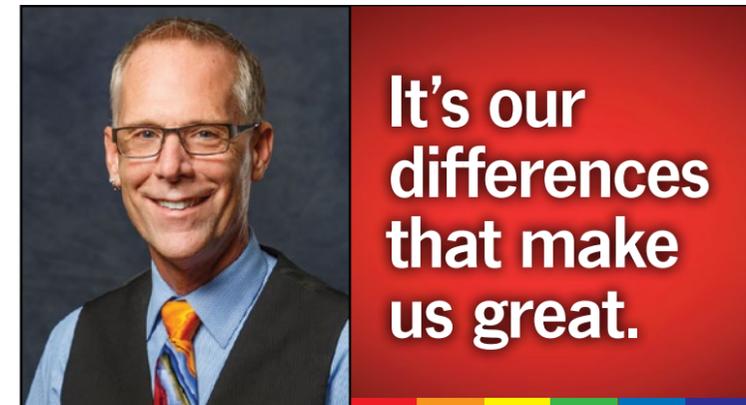
Originally from St. Louis, Gabe's parents immigrated to the United States from the Philippines. His family, including his brother and niece and nephew, still live in St. Louis. "It's a different place than when I grew up there. I was never really 'out' in St. Louis, so re-acclimating to my hometown in this whole new way has been an adventure."

It's opportunities like rediscovering his hometown through a new lens that drives Gabe in his work: "Everyone deserves the right to feel like they belong."

"I am so grateful and privileged that I have the opportunity to work alongside people who are passionate about building community for students to help them thrive at UW and beyond. At our core, that's what we are trying to do—help people build communities around them. And it works both ways—in helping students build community, we get to build community for ourselves."

Gabe just wrapped up his first year as Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at UW, where he supports five identity-based departments, including the GSCC, the Multicultural Student Center, International Student Services, McBurney Disability Resource Center, and University Veteran Services. Prior to his role as AVC, Javier served as director of the Multicultural Student Center.

"From our own 2016 Campus Climate Survey data," Gabe explains, "we know that while most UW students have a positive experience at UW-Madison, students who identify as people of color, LGBTQ+ and disabled students feel less safe on campus, less heard in the classroom, and have fewer places to be completely themselves. I absolutely see it as my job in Student Affairs to join a network of collaborators, colleagues, and accomplices across campus to change that—structurally and at the program level." ■



It's our differences that make us great.

Jim Hartman Ins Agcy Inc
 Jim Hartman, Agent
 5706 US Highway 51
 Bus: 608-838-4171
 Cell: 608-345-4885
 jim@jimhartman.com

No matter what you value, I'm here to protect it with respect and professionalism. **Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.®**
CALL ME TODAY.



1101010.1 State Farm, Home Office, Bloomington, IL

FREEDOM, INC.
 PROVIDER OF CULTURALLY-SPECIFIC DIRECT SERVICES FOR
 BLACK AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN QUEER COMMUNITIES

PEOPLE LIKE US

WWW.FREEDOM-INC.ORG
608.416.5337

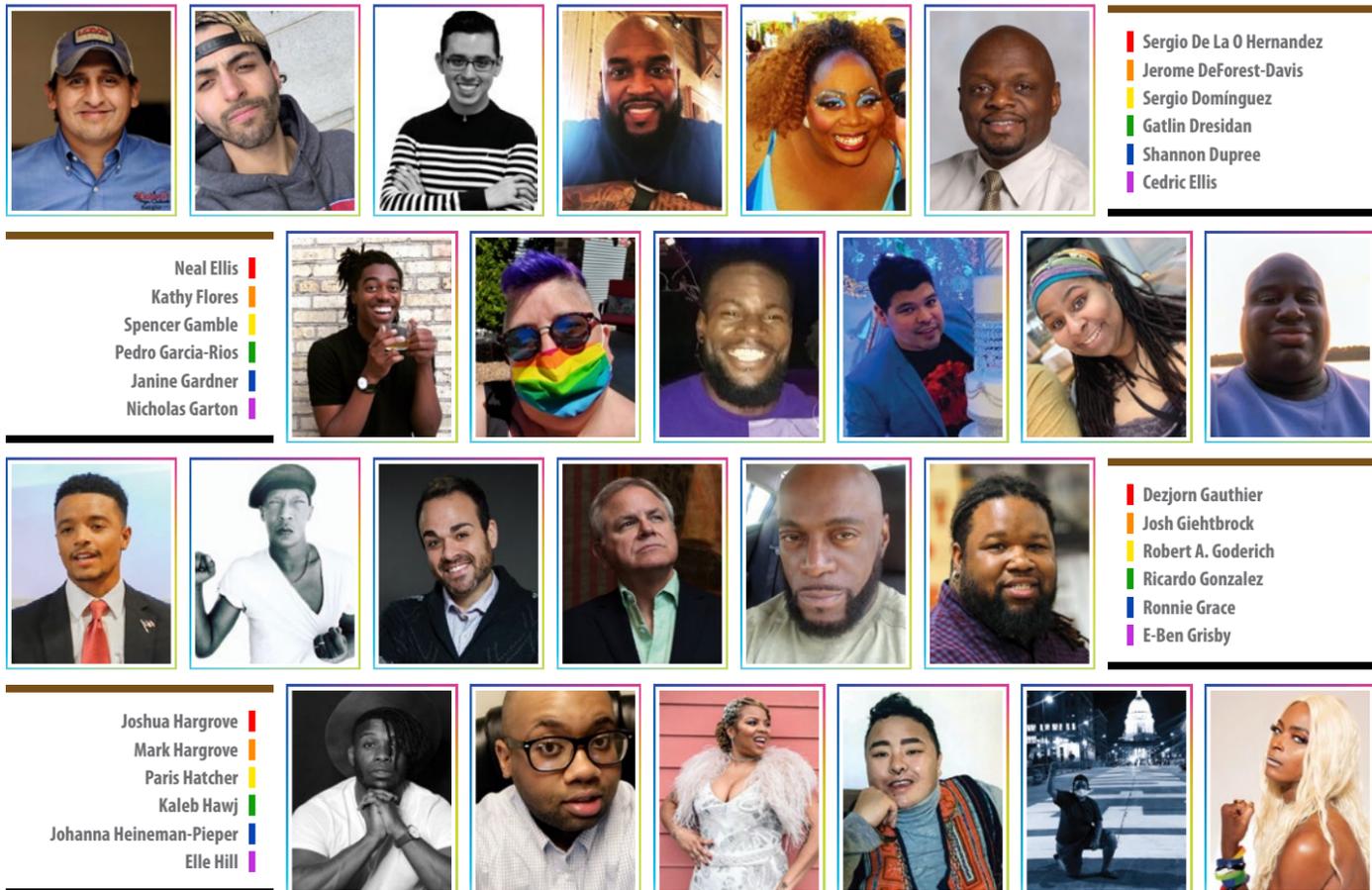
Your Outdoor Living Specialists

FOUR SEASONS® 608-222-7777
 SUNROOMS & WINDOWS
INDEPENDENTLY OWNED AND OPERATED koolview.com

Sunrooms - Pergolas - Decks

Get a New View from **Kool View**

4701 Triangle St. McFarland, WI
 M-F 8-4 Sat. by Appointment



The Advocate
 Amy Orta is Executive Director of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center and works to ensure equitable, inclusive, and diverse health care and resources for all marginalized communities.

I was born on the small island of Puerto Rico, where I lived for the first five formative years of my life. My parents worked hard, and we grew up poor. I come from a large family with 14 siblings, of which I am the youngest and first generation to go to college and earn not only one but two degrees.

My parents moved to Milwaukee before my sixth birthday. I attended Milwaukee Public Schools from elementary to high school. At the age of 15, I lost my brother to gun violence and was harshly made aware of the importance of fighting for justice, which we did not get. It was during this time that I knew I needed to be a part of a solution for a hurting community.

I began working as a social worker helping at-risk families on the northside by providing home visits and services for almost five years. I was later transferred to the southside to provide services for the Spanish speaking community.

I have dedicated almost my entire professional life to helping people find their voices and advocating on behalf of those that couldn't advocate for themselves. I served at Centro Hispano, a non-profit, in various leadership roles providing assistance to the most underserved and under-represented members of the southside community. The issues parents were facing at the time were evictions, poverty, and violence and health disparities.

I became an active member of National Council de La Raza (NCLR), the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the US. In my role as the Director of Early Head Start I was recognized at the national level.

As a leader in the Latinx community with significant management experience, I earned the respect of colleagues at the Milwaukee LGBT Center and community as a whole, when I became a spokesperson and was featured on billboards to encourage and support LGBTQ+ family and friends. During my 20 years in social services and nonprofits, my vision has always been to address and work collaboratively with others to dismantle disparities, racism, and violence. I have always had a passion for social justice, serving the LGBT community, and advocating for Human Rights.

I was appointed Executive Director of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center in October of 2018. I am the first Latinx, person of color to serve as an executive director for an LGBT center in Milwaukee as well as Wisconsin. ■



The future of Wisconsin's health begins with you.

The *All of Us* Research Program is asking lots of people to join. Participants are from different races and ethnicities, age groups, and regions of the country. They are also diverse in gender identity, sexual orientation, and health status.

Many groups of people have been left out of research in the past. By studying data from a diverse group of people, researchers can learn more about what makes people sick or keeps them healthy.

To learn more, or to enroll:
 Visit: allofus.wisc.edu/ourlives
 Call: (888) 294-2881

DESIGN, FRAMING & INSTALLATION EXPERTS FOR HOME & OFFICE

MONROE STREET FRAMING

Locally Owned & Operated For Over 30 Years

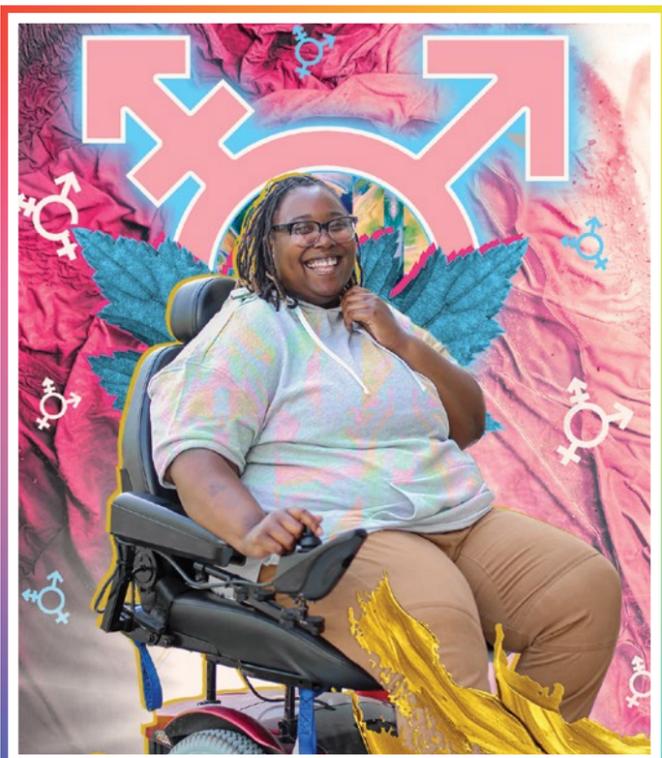
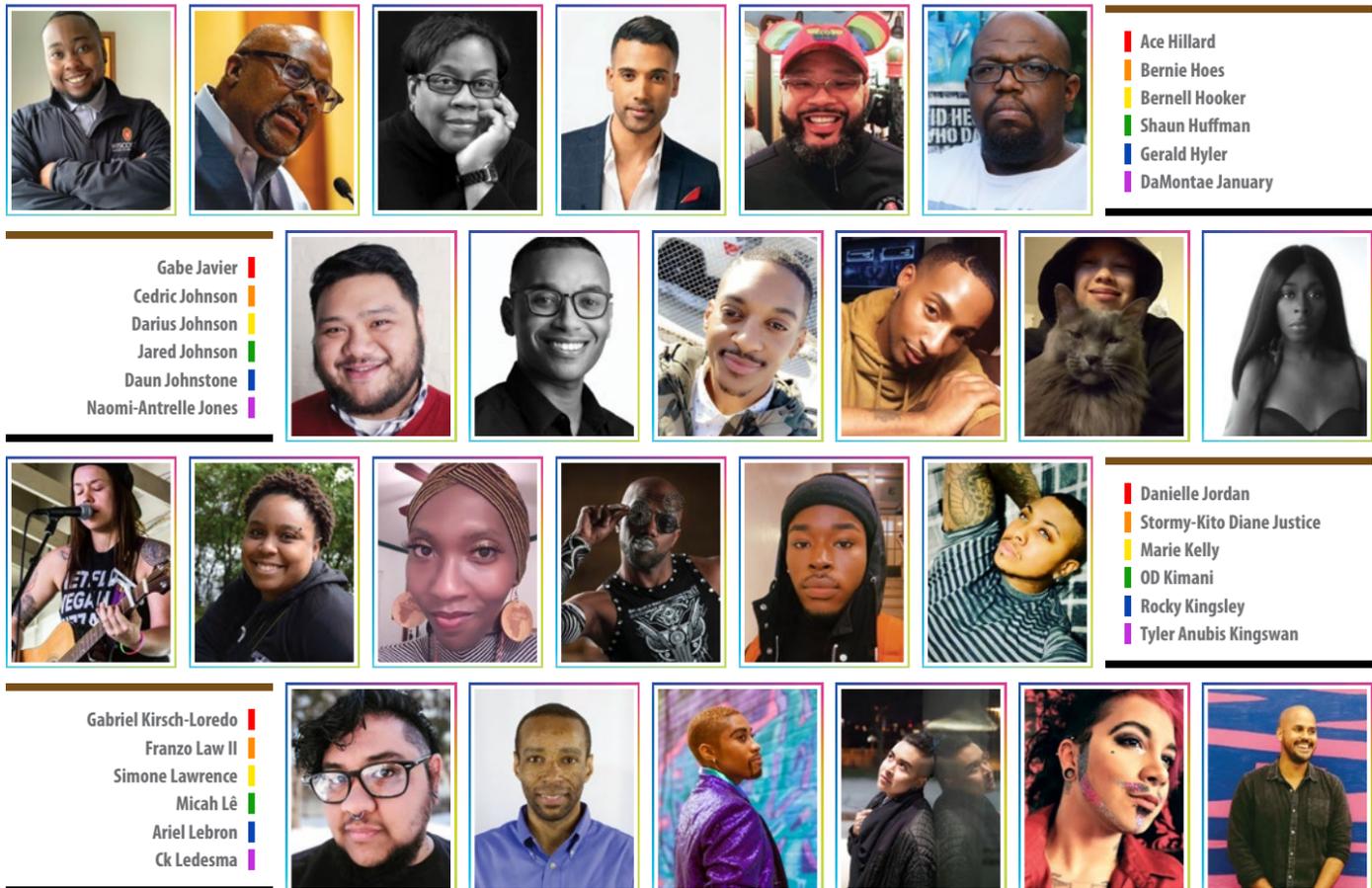
- ◆ Archival, museum quality framing done on premises by professional picture framers
- ◆ Unique selection of frames, including leather, welded steel & locally sourced barnwood & hardwoods
- ◆ Delivery & installation for home & business throughout Wisconsin

Mon-Wed, Fri: 9-6 • Thurs: 9-7 • Sat: 9-5 • Sun: 12-4

1901 Monroe St., Madison, WI 53711 (free customer parking behind shop) • 608.255.7330
www.monroestreetframing.com • info@monroestreetframing.com



All of Us, the All of Us logo, and "The Future of Health Begins with You" are service marks of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



The Writer
T. S. Banks is a QTDisabled community organizer, poet, playwright, and disability justice advocate.

T. S. Banks has always noticed what he and many other Madison-based organizers call “the tale of two Madisons”: “I don’t understand how I could be living in what white folks would say is the best city or one of the best cities to live in,” Banks says. “I’m not seeing that here when there is food insecurity at home, not when sometimes I am wondering what shelter I’m gonna have, and as I became disabled, how could this health care system fail me, why are these institutions trying to kill me?”

Banks is known for his play *We the 350: Stories of Racism, Incarceration, and Poverty in WI* (2015), a critique of mass incarceration in Dane County. His first volume of poetry, *Call Me Ill* (2017), was received with enthusiasm and acclaim. *Call Me Ill* explores living chronically ill with a sharp and compassionate perspective. He released his second volume, *Left*, in 2018. *Left* centers on survival, healing, and liberation. Banks recounts his experiences with the racist medical industrial complex, writing impressions left on mental wellness, body, safety, and the right to self determination. He has showcased his work through the TransLiberation Art Coalition, and is also a teaching artist for Arts + Lit Laboratory.

Banks’s writing has been recognized with numerous awards, including Out-Reach’s Courage Award (2019), Queer Pressure’s Dopest Writer and Wellness Advocate in the Land Award (2018), and the Wisconsin Network for Peace, Justice & Sustainability’s Dennis Bergren LGBTQ Advocacy Award (2015).

In 2019, Banks announced his partnership with the Broom Street Theater to produce the Loud ‘N Unchained Black Theater Festival, focusing exclusively on producing the works of Black artists. Due to COVID-19, the 2020 Loud ‘N Unchained Black Theater Festival was postponed, and will return in 2021.

Currently, Banks serves on the board of Disability Pride Madison and Leadership Council for Neighborhood Organizing Institute and is deeply involved in community organizing for Black, Trans, Queer Liberation & Disability Justice. He co-owns CocoaBean Skin Care with his partner Alix.

Banks’s work and life are rooted in his overwhelming and deep love for Black people: “The only way I can fully live is being creatively me and seeing everyone create around me. And I’ll be there with my pen, documenting, what love and truth and life looks like.”

#DefendBlackLife #DefundPolice #CommunityControl #FreeEmAll ■

meow offering online ordering

Shop online, call, or email bark@baddogfrida.com to place your order for curbside pickup.

442.6868 baddogfrida.com 2094 atwood ave. m-f 10-6, sa-su 10-4

Do you want to lose weight?

Lose weight and feel great!

This nutrition and weight loss study may be a good fit if you:

- are 18 - 74 years old
- are currently overweight
- are not pregnant or breastfeeding
- live with a spouse or life partner who is willing to participate with you
- you and your partner have separate smart phones and e-mail addresses

Join our paid research study!
 Earn up to \$360 per couple

This 2-year UW-Madison weight loss study includes group classes starting in September 2020 to help you lose weight and keep it off! We are enrolling couples starting on July 1st, 2020.

For more information:
www.partner2lose.com

The Sow's Ear

Needles and caffeine - Feed your addictions!

125 S. Main Street • Verona • knitandsip.com
 608-848-2755

CAFE & BAKERY
 Fresh, Daily Lunch Menu Items

ARTISAN COFFEE
 From Ancora and Kickapoo

SMOOTHIES
 Fresh Fruit, Chocolate & Espresso

KNITTING
 Yarns, Accessories & Classes

We use local produce and cheese



DANE COUNTY CREDIT UNION

www.dccu.us
 608 256-5665 • 800 593-3228

COMMUNITY SHARES OF WISCONSIN
 Proud Sponsor



- Chris Lee
- Tiffany Lee
- Matthew Lewis
- Vicente Lezama Morales
- Vivian Lin
- Caitlyn LoMonte



- Ashli Lyles
- Travis Lynch
- Jasper Madison
- Jeanette Martin
- Kells Martino
- Brian Maulana-Ponce



- Clyde Maybury
- Petrovnia McIntosh
- Ray McMahan
- James McMaster
- Ananda Mirilli
- Glenda Mitchell



- Zon Moua
- Ali Muldrow
- Carmen Murguia
- Justice Muse
- Nibiiwakamigkwe
- Jinx Oge



- Micah Ogé
- Jacquez Orr-McKinney
- Amy Orta
- Cameron Overton
- Solana Patterson-Ramos
- Broderick Pearson



The Artist
Dupré Armon was born to express himself, first through fashion, then through a blend of graphic design and photography.

Hi, Hello, Hola!! Dupré Armon is the name. I'm originally from Milwaukee where I was raised in a single-parent home in the inner city and the fourth of six children. Of course, going through the tough motions while living in a single-parent home as a young gay black boy was extremely difficult, but those struggles did not steer me from finding my life's purpose, which is the expression of the arts.

It all started with my love for fashion. At the beginning of my high school experience in late 2008, I made it my mission to explore greater depths of the fashion industry. I wanted to create a distinct look so when people saw me, they knew who I was. Combining different styles in multiple ways became super-fun for me and allowed me to create innovative looks. From this, I began to notice others grasp inspiration from me, which I absolutely adored!

While on my fashion journey in high school, I was then introduced to graphic design, which I fell in love with. Graphics has been an outlet that allows me to explore what I was physically creating through my fashions, then led me to implement those skills to the digital art world. Still to this day, I believe graphic design led to my newfound passion for photography, but besides that, unbeknownst to me, photography has been an interest of mine since I was a young'n.

I was always the sibling that didn't miss a candid moment to capture whether it was with a point-and-shoot camera or someone's cell phone. I began my professional photography journey in early 2016, right before dropping out of college to pursue my love for entrepreneurship. It is the greatest feeling experiencing genuine responses and reactions from the individuals I work with. Actively being the person that puts a smile on whoever's face literally brightens my day! My overall mission is to instill confidence with a sense of value into every person that passes through my lens.

Nonetheless, art has always been a part of my life's story. Being a well-rounded artist reinsures that I don't have to prove anything to anyone. I only have to follow my heart and concentrate on what I want to create and share with the world. ■



The Unifier
Lex Allen's music unifies and promotes equality and worthiness.

As a young queer Black kid growing up in one of the most segregated cities in the United States, I could've easily strayed to the streets or I could use the talents instilled in me to cultivate unity and bring people together. I chose the latter. Now I'm here—older, wiser, and braver than I've ever been in my entire life—as a non-binary singer/songwriter and photographer. I am bringing to life those once distant dreams of my seven-year-old self with art that speaks to every gender, age, and ethnicity. The powers of my voice, my Blackness, my queer identity, and my talents shine brightly together because of the difficulties and opportunities I've had in my life.

In a recent partnership with the amazing Diverse & Resilient, I've had the honor of building the multi-faceted "Colors In Bloom" campaign from the ground up. We created billboards and an original song, and I performed at the closing ceremony at the Creating Change conference in Washington, DC. With this campaign, we reminded our LGBTQ+ family doing their part to build a stronger community that they are beautiful, loved, and worthy, just as they are.

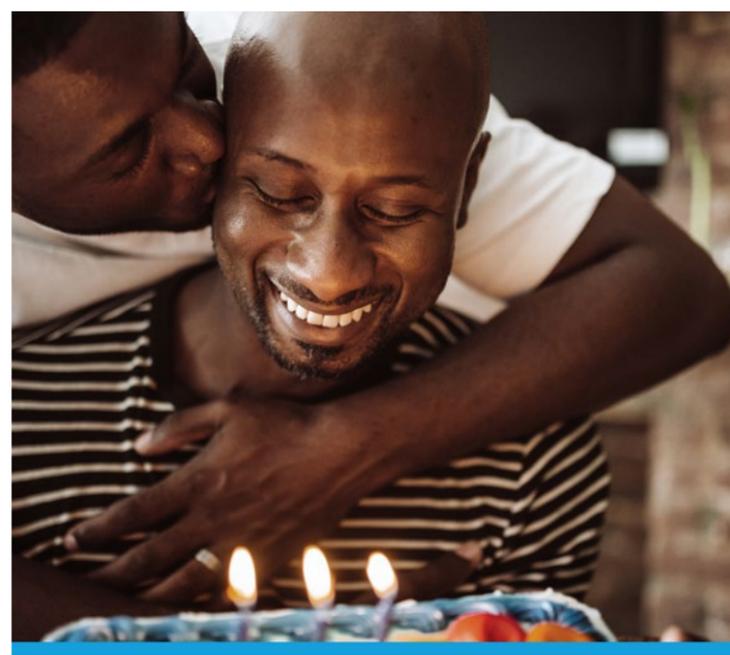
This next chapter of Lex brings about a new mission—one that promotes equality and gives a voice to the voiceless with new songs and imagery that bring about hope and awareness to the injustices that marginalized people face every day. I'm tired, we are tired, and the world is tired. I can't wait for the day when we won't have to say a person's name because they lost their life because of the color of their skin, their gender identity, or who they love. Until then, SAY THEIR NAMES, and say them loudly.

We say George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, Oscar Grant, Eric Garner, Philando Castile, Samuel Dubose, Sandra Bland, Walter Scott, Terrence Crutcher, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray, Ahmaud Aubrey, Christian Cooper, Bothem Sean, Atatiana Jefferson, Johnathan Ferrell, Renisha McBride, Jordan Davis, Aiyana Jones, Alton Sterling, Nina Pop, Serena Angelique Velázquez, Johanna Metzger, Valera, Monika Diamond, Yampi Méndez Arocho, Alexa Luciano Ruiz, Dustin Parker, Tony McDade, and so many more.

Now is our time to come together, now is the time for art to speak, and now is the time to show that we will not stand for injustice anymore. It's time for small voices to make loud noises. ■

ANTHOLOGY'S BLACK LIVES MATTER STICKER PACK:
20 ARTISTS + 20 STICKERS + 20 ORGANIZATIONS

AVAILABLE IN STORE AT 230 STATE STREET, MADISON
OR ONLINE ANTHOLOGYMADISON.COM/SHOP/PROTEST



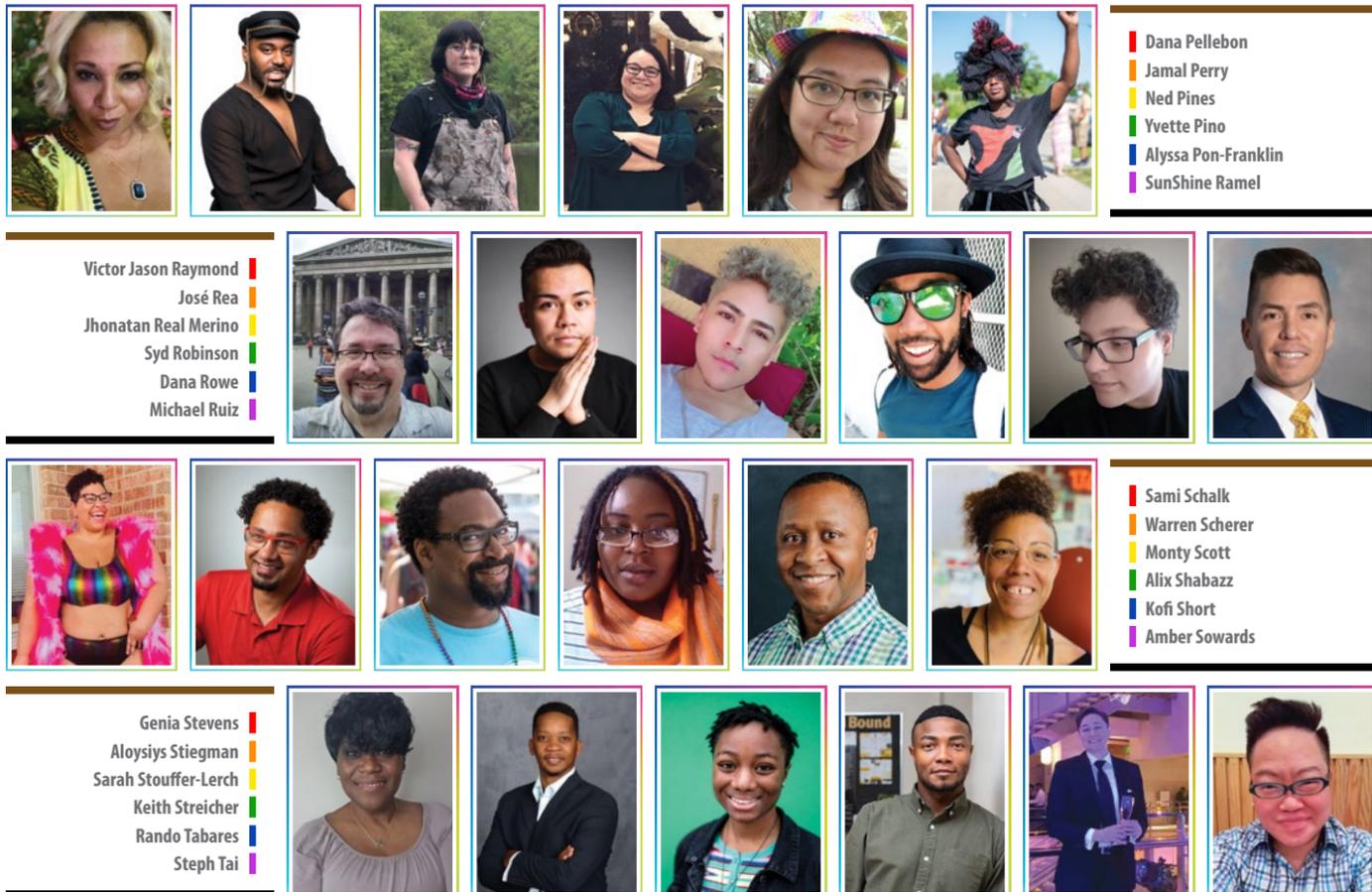
Stay PREP'd Up
It's Worth It

#StayPrePdUp / stayprepdup.com

DON'T SETTLE FOR AVERAGE.
Unless you're in the market for it.

JASON FOWLER
REALTOR®
608.438.5056
jason@c21affiliated.com
www.JasonTFowler.com

CENTURY 21 Affiliated



First Congregational.

Embracing Diversity.

Building Community.



First Congregational
United Church of Christ



Come Worship, Sundays at 10 am
University at Breese Terrace | 608.233.9751 | firstcongmadison.org



The Pioneer

JoCasta Zamarripa is one of four Latinos in the Wisconsin legislature and one of five openly LGBTQ state legislators, but she doesn't let this stop her from being a voice for the communities she represents.

JoCasta Zamarripa has been many "firsts"—the oldest in her family, the first in her family to graduate college, the first Latina in the Wisconsin Legislature, the first out, openly LGBTQ woman of color in the State Assembly, and this year, she was elected as the first Latina and the first openly LGBTQ Alderperson on Milwaukee's Common Council.

These are firsts that she wears proudly as a leader in her community.

"I've gotten pushback for mentioning I was the first Latina or openly bisexual woman to hold these offices, but I've never backed down," said Zamarripa.

"Growing up, I almost never saw people like me in leadership roles. It's vital for young people today to see leaders who look like them, who share similar lived experiences. It's also important to point out as it illuminates how far we have to go. I'm the first Latina to represent districts that are majority minority communities—these barriers should have been broken long ago."

She is now just one of four Latinos in the legislature and one of five openly LGBTQ state legislators in the 132-member body.

Alderwoman Zamarripa was born and raised on the near southside of Milwaukee as the oldest of four siblings and raised by a single mother. Her grandmother, Alicia Zamarripa, was a migrant farm worker who moved the family to Wisconsin for better opportunities.

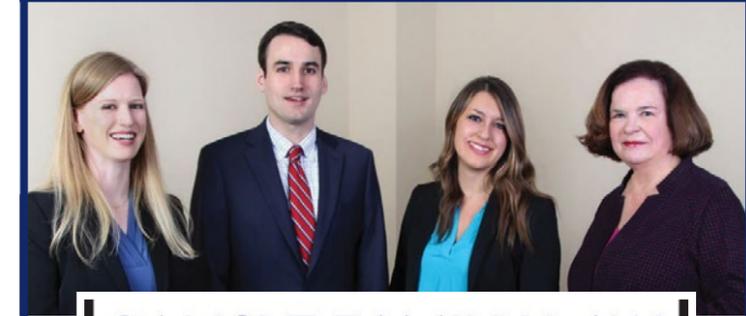
"I'm honored to be a voice for Latino Wisconsinites—there are many of us who speak Spanish with a heavy Midwest accent. I owe my passion and drive to my grandmother. She toiled in the fields to provide for her family and hoped for better things for all of us. As a state representative, I fought for immigrants with stories just like hers, from my work as Chair on the Migrant Labor Council to fighting for drivers' cards for undocumented Wisconsinites.

"I wish she could have been there to see the very first celebration of Chavez Day in the Wisconsin State Capitol, which was just last year, under the leadership of Governor Tony Evers!"

Alderwoman Zamarripa has had a career rooted in activism. She worked for both Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin and Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin and as an organizer for Fair Wisconsin. She also served as a board member for 9to5, National Association of Working Women. As a Common Council member, she's ready to be a resource to her constituents in need as the pandemic disproportionately affects her district.

"This is my home, and I'm going to do everything I can for my community." ■

A team of experienced lawyers committed to the rights of the **LGBT Community**.



BALISLE FAMILY LAW
LEGAL COUNSEL, S. C.

Linda S. Balisle, Attorney | Lindsey E. Cobbe, Attorney
Nicholas O. Yurk, Attorney | Ashleigh M. Hacker, Attorney

Our mission is to ensure that your rights and best interests are protected as you navigate the complexities of the legal system.

- Divorce
- Power of Attorneys
- Partnership Agreements
- Wills
- Marital Property Agreements
- Child Custody Disputes
- Non-traditional Families
- Mediation

608-259-8702 | balislefamilylaw.com
131 West Wilson St., Madison, WI 53703

2016 National & Regional award winner NARI basement under 30k
2017 Regional award winner NARI kitchen under 50k
2016 Angie's List Super service award



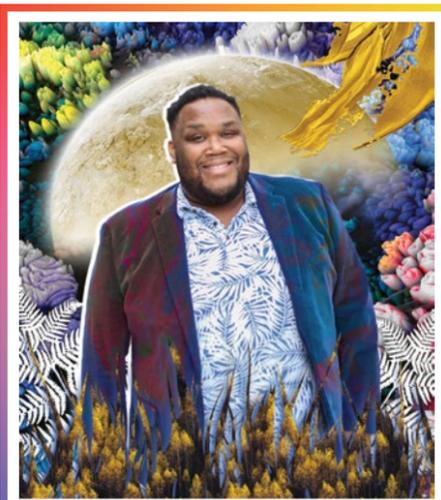
HAPPY HOMEOWNERS

"It has been great to know that I could refer to my husband without fearing that weird look people get on their faces when they aren't expecting that." **CHAD & DALE**

Looks like it's...

TIME 2 REMODEL
time2remodel.com





The Transformer

Ricardo Wynn currently serves as the Capacity Building Coordinator for the Wisconsin Department of Public Health HIV Program.

Ricardo Wynn is from Milwaukee and comes with a plethora of experience in the world of nonprofits. His leadership began while attending University of Wisconsin-Parkside, where he became a mentor and summer advisor for their Upward Bound program. Throughout that experience, he has also worked with disenfranchised and at-risk youth and first-generation students and minority college students, helping them address urban trauma, education, health care, and mental and behavioral health uses.

In 2010, Ricardo started his HIV advocacy to ensure that people of color and other Black Same Gender Loving (SGL) men who are disproportionately affected by HIV could see other SGL men like themselves thriving in the field of public health. Since 2010, Ricardo has served in an advisory capacity on several community-based organization initiatives, and continues to do so from time to time.

In 2016, Ricardo transitioned into government. He became an HIV Prevention Specialist for the Wisconsin Department of Public Health HIV program. Then later he became an HIV Capacity Building Coordinator for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, HIV Program in partnership with the Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health (MATCH) Group at the UW-Madison Population Health Institute.

In his role, he implements capacity-building initiatives to help build leadership among LGBTQ communities of color in Milwaukee. Ricardo is also responsible for providing support and technical assistance to agencies combating the HIV epidemic in southern Wisconsin. Prior to his work with the Wisconsin HIV Program, Ricardo served as a State Ambassador with the Statewide Action Planning Group, which is responsible for identifying and cultivating community-focused and generated solutions to the HIV epidemic in Wisconsin. In addition, Ricardo holds a Bachelor of Arts in organizational communication and a certificate in leadership. Ricardo received his master's degree in Public Administration from Capella University.

Ricardo said, "My leadership and advocacy allow people like me to see they can be more. While beating the odds, my efforts will open doors for others like me, as others have done for me. People should know that my lived experience is my degree. My academic degrees are just a way to professionalize my experience; which have allowed me space to contribute to the transformation of my community." ■



#BlackLivesMatter
#BlackTransLivesMatter
#BlackQueerLivesMatter



Diverse & Resilient

STATEWIDE ADVOCACY WITH OFFICES IN APPLETON & MILWAUKEE



STONEWALL GAY ACTIVISM LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

David Carter's Madison Roots

Historian **Richard Wagner** profiles the late author and organizer, linking his Stonewall research and documentation back to his activist days in Madison.

THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY recently mourned the passing of David Carter, aged 67. He was an historian of our community with his outstanding book *Stonewall: The Riots that Sparked the Gay Revolution*. His definitive book was the basis for the PBS American Experience film *Stonewall Uprising*. The stories of his death from a heart attack noted his brother recalled the role as an activist in Madison in the late 1970s.

From Southeast Georgia, David Carter's bachelor's degree was from Emory University with majors in theology and French. In 1978 he earned a master's degree in South Asian Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. While in Madison, Carter



David Carter was one of several people who helped organize the new Madison Gay Men and Lesbians United or The United for short.

became involved in the gay rights movement and helped organize a dance that raised more than \$1,000 to support the Dade County, Florida gay rights group that was fighting a campaign by anti-gay advocate Anita Bryant to overturn their local gay rights ordinance which had been adopted in early 1977.

NON-DISCRIMINATION ORDINANCE

Since Madison had passed a local ordinance on non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in 1975, Mayor Paul Soglin sent a letter on April 14, 1977 to the Dade County Commission indicating the Madison had success with its own ordinance now in

operation for several years. Soglin wrote, "The addition of this protected class has not had the negative impact feared by some citizens." For the mayor, "Protecting the basic rights of Madison's minorities, including gay people, has been beneficial to all residents of this city." Soglin urged the Dade County Commission not to back down.

REPEAL EFFORTS

Carter and Madison in the 1970s realized that the defense of our community everywhere against attacks like Bryant's was crucial to our strategic position. In addition to the dance, there was an Anti-Anita Bryant Bash in the Great Hall of the Memorial

Union. Speakers at the rally included out Madison Alderman James Yeadon, Assembly Representative David Clarenbach, and Mayor Paul Soglin. The Bash was endorsed by Renaissance, the head of the Madison Chapter of the National Organization of Women, the Green Lantern Eating Co-op, A Room of One's Own Bookstore, Gay Law Students, the Wisconsin Student Association, the Committee Against Racism, and the Young Socialist Alliance. Unfortunately, Bryant was successful with her repeal campaign in Dade County which sparked a whole raft of successful repeal efforts around the country.

All of the early local ordinances which were targeted for elimination had been adopted by the votes of local governmental bodies in liberal urban areas, just like Madison's ordinance. The Bryant-type attacks were to seek repeal by a popular vote to overrule the local governmental bodies. The appeal to prejudices against the LGBT community was clear in the themes like "save our children." This played to a false stereotype that a greater percentage of pedophiles were gays. Despite the valiant efforts of the LGBT communities and their allies, repeal efforts succeeded in the nearby state capitol of St. Paul, Minnesota and in university towns like Eugene, Oregon. Such successes put the Madison LGBT community on alert.

THE UNITED

When local conservative ministers in Madison raised the possibility of full or partial repeal of the ordinance, David Carter was one of several people who helped organize the new Madison Gay Men and Lesbians United or The United for short. The United would lead the fight to preserve the Madison gay rights ordinance. More than 200 people showed up for the organizing meeting at St. Francis House, the campus Episcopal Center. Grid Hall, an out gay man on the city's Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) said "We don't allow discrimination in Madison." The support of many mainstream clergy in defense of the Madison ordinance was organized by St. Francis pastor Fr. Thomas Woodward.

Formal action came when a petition was presented to the Madison City Council from the Dane County Association of Evangelicals to Permit Discrimination on the Basis of Sexual Orientation. The petition was referred to the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC). The petition had 17 typed names but only 11 signatures. It stated, "We oppose the acceptance or promotion of homosexuality." And further, "We especially believe that homosexuality should not be promoted as an acceptable life-style in the public school system."

KILL IT

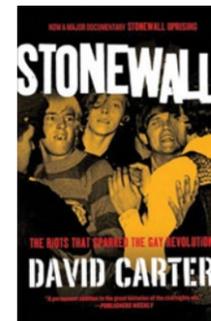
On Dec. 14, 1978 the EOC recommended in a 23-page report to the city council the petition be placed on file (i.e. kill it). After a lengthy review of the law on non-discrimination and the city's efforts, the words of the EOC were, "Thus, the Equal Opportunities Commission recommends that the City Council take no action which would in any way reduce the rights of homosexuals to be free from employment discrimination." Madison had a successful community defense effort.

Carter moved to New York to work as an editor. In 1994, during the 25th anniversary of Stonewall, he began his work researching the riots and related events. In the meantime, he also was involved in publishing a collection of interviews with gay poet Allen Ginsberg called *Spontaneous Mind: Selected Interviews 1958-1996*. Carter met Ginsberg when the poet was in Madison doing a reading, and he served as editor for the Ginsberg interviews published in 2001 (after the poet's death).

STONEWALL NATIONAL MONUMENT

While working on his Stonewall research Carter in 1998 helped prepare the material to place the Stonewall site on the National Reg-

ister of Historic Places which was achieved in 1999. One year later, the site was elevated from just a listing on the register to a National Historic Landmark. Later it was placed even higher in recognition as a National Monument, again with David Carter's help.



Carter's book *Stonewall: The Riots That Sparked the Gay Revolution* was published in 2004. The book portrays the Stonewall Riots as a community fighting in defense of itself. Carter also highlights the role of the New Left and activism in building the movement post-Stonewall. His Madison background would have helped in placing the context for Stonewall.

A NEW PHASE

In 2019, Carter spoke to the U.S. Civil Right Commission said, "The Stonewall uprising was historic." The reason, "It inspired the creation of a new phase of the movement for the rights of gay men and lesbians and later for bisexuals and the transgendered, and this new phase, the gay liberation movement, created a mass movement, making the gains over the past five decades possible."

Carter's New York apartment was in Greenwich Village, and he walked the very streets of the riots. This led to one of his re-

search tools which was a map of the Village upon which he placed the locations of all the eyewitnesses who had done interviews of the events. This database let him reconcile some of the seemingly competing views of the riots. Carter himself did interviews with 91 people and found another 15 written accounts from 1969.

He also obtained the New York Police Department files on the riots. He was a thorough investigative historian.

Carter also was excellent in his analysis. He gave credit to the earlier gay and lesbian organizing pre-Stonewall and cited efforts of Mattachine Society of New York as creating the possibilities for places like Stonewall to exist and for the Gay Liberation Front to emerge from the riots. His research showed "the action encompassed everyone." He found roles of people of color, the trans community, lesbians and gay men. "The way I see it, there is plenty of credit to go around." ■



DICK WAGNER (rrdickwagner@gmail.com), openly gay former Dane County Board Chair and co-chair of Governor Earl's Commission on Lesbian and Gay Issues, is the author of *We've Been Here All Along: Wisconsin's Early Gay History*.



HAPPY HOMEOWNERS

"We loved working with Curt and Janean. The results are enjoyed aesthetically and functionally every day!" **PAULA & ANN**

Looks like it's... **TIME 2 REMODEL** time2remodel.com



Your financial needs are unique.

Whether you want to provide for your loved ones, support the organizations that are important to you, or plan for your own comfortable retirement, I can help you plan for your goals. I'll look at all aspects of your finances, then find solutions that are right for your unique needs. I'll be there to adjust your plan as life unfolds. When you have the right advisor, life can be brilliant.



Shannon M. Anderson
CFP®, ADPA®
Financial Advisor
Eventus Wealth Advisors
A private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.

608.819.0520
2501 West Beltline Hwy, Ste 301
Madison, WI 53713
shannon.m.anderson@ampf.com
ameripriseadvisors.com/
shannon.m.anderson



Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards Inc. owns the certification marks CFP®, CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and CFP (with flame design) in the U.S. Investment advisory products and services are made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., a registered investment adviser. © 2019 Ameriprise Financial, Inc. All rights reserved. (08/19)

HEALTH CARE | ADVOCACY | COMMUNITY SPACE

Off to a Healthy Start

Dr. Kathy Oriel launches **Out Health**, a nonprofit dedicated to connecting LGBTQ individuals with culturally competent health care providers, resources, and events.

JUST OVER ONE YEAR AGO, I looked up at the discolored water oozing from the office ceiling and ducked to avoid hitting my head against a drenched ceiling tile ready to fall. The rancid smell of decades-old carpet, now soaked and even filthier, was a clear message that providing any medical care in that space would be impossible. Have asthma or allergies? Come on in—we'll make you worse! I don't know much about medical marketing, but if not abjectly unethical, it seemed a poor approach to providing care. I knew exactly how I needed to proceed: It was time to quit. What a relief.

In retrospect, it was pretty brazen to think I could open a solo family medicine practice to care for people the way I longed to: time enough for conversations, knowing well the people entrusting me with their care, keeping sensitive details disclosed in the sacred space of the exam room confidential. When I'd resigned

All humans are welcome at Out Health Inc. As we get up and running, making Out Health your medical provider helps fund and support our other work.

in protest because of the way I'd been instructed to care for trans and non-binary people, I felt righteous and powerful. Now, in the hot and humid detritus of an old office building, I felt only disgust and defeat. My only concern at that point was how I was going to tell my fierce nursing colleague Melisa that she no longer had a job. She'd left a fine position with good benefits and delayed additional educational opportunities to join me in the dream of a small practice where people of all identities could feel heard and safe. I was reluctant to share my thinking, but she likely already knew.

That same day, having witnessed the devastation in the office, Candice and Nolen Layman

started a crowd-funding effort to “protect LGBTQ+ Health.” Over \$15,000 and some 70+ donors later, I asked them to put a hold on those fundraising efforts. People donated significant amounts. I knew some of them did so over other essential needs and myriad other deserving causes. If people were to give so generously, I wanted to make sure those donations were tax-deductible and avoid any potential appearance that I was pocketing those contributions.

After a routine office visit, a retired executive director taught me more about nonprofits and how one might work for a health care advocacy organization. Attorney Melissa Scholz, of Scholz Nonprofit Law tolerated my repeated questioning during a car ride to and from Chicago with our daughters. A remarkable group of individuals agreed to serve on the board of this fledgling startup, offering perspective and expertise. An anonymous benefactor who heard of the physical space debacle offered a donation to support the work and assist in securing new space.

Together, we created a mission: *OUT HEALTH is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the health of individuals identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ+). OUT HEALTH recognizes the unique health needs of LGBTQ individuals and connects them with the most appropriate healthcare providers, resources, and events. OUT HEALTH strives to better educate health care professionals and the community at large regarding best practices for LGBTQ+ individuals.*

One board member arranged coffee with a Madison Metropolitan School District advocate, myself, and someone I did not know: Joy Stieglitz. Director Lee Young knew Joy as a fierce ally who had outlined plans for a similar nonprofit advocacy organization to protect LGBTQ+ youth and their families. Three meetings and numerous discussions later, Joy signed on to be Out Health's executive director and very first employee.

As I write this, I sit in Out Health's new home. Though there is not yet a sign for our space at 5231 University Avenue, this is everyone's space and everyone's work. There are beautiful floor-to-ceiling windows with natural light. The rooms are airy and open with



Board of Directors

- Kathy Oriel, MD, President
- Patricia Kehoe, CPA, Treasurer
- Olivia Arndt, Secretary
- Devyn Brown, RN, Director
- Richard Kilmer, RPh, Director
- Nolen Layman, Director
- Anna Macgregor, Director
- Matt Mason, Director
- Michele Perreault, JD, Director
- Elizabeth Poi, MD, Director
- Tamara Packard, JD, Director
- Lee Young, Director

- Joy Stieglitz, Executive Director
- Melisa Arndt, LPN

Kathy Oriel, Melisa Arndt, and Joy Stieglitz.

brand-new flooring, paint and ceilings. The exam rooms are exam rooms, but we're told they feel more comfortable than most. No one—not even we healthcare professionals—like sitting in those rooms. Once it's safe to do so again, there is space for groups to hang out, for volunteers to lend a hand, and for people to know that this is more than an office: This literally feels like safe space. This is your space. Thank you.

For now, the medical practice component of Out Health remains as “Oriel Medicine,” but over time, medical services will be provided through the nonprofit organization Out Health Inc. Staff are currently applying to different health care insurance providers to ask that those health care insurance companies cover medical services to be provided by Out Health. As Out Health obtains contracts with insurance providers, a list of those providers will be continuously updated on our website outhealth.org

All humans are welcome at Out Health Inc. As we get up and running, making Out Health your medical provider helps fund and support our other work.

Over the next few months, in the safest way possible given COVID concerns, we will enroll new patients and provide people with the medical care they deserve. To make a donation which furthers the mission of Out Health and supports the care of those who could not otherwise access it visit: outhealth.org/donate. ■

WE ALL PLAY
A PART IN
DRUG POISONING
PREVENTION

Don't share your prescription opioids with others • Don't take someone else's prescription medication • Store your prescription pain relievers and other medications securely • Safely dispose of expired, unused, or unwanted prescription medications

GO TO

<https://SaferCommunity.net/Drug-Poisoning>

- Find out more
- Get a FREE medication lockbox for home use
- Find MedDrop locations for safe disposal

SaferCommunity.net • 608-441-3060 • 2453 Atwood Ave, #210 Madison, WI

Introducing the New 2020 MINI family

THOSE WHO DEFY LABELS, DEFINE THEMSELVES

MINI of Madison
310 West Beltline Highway
Madison, WI 53713

608-729-MINI (6464)
MINIOFMADISON.COM

© 2016 MINI USA, a division of BMW of North America, LLC.
The MINI name, model names and logo are registered trademarks.

Alicia Stevenson

MINI Motoring Advisor

608-729-6442

Mon 8:30 AM to 8:00 PM
Tues 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM,
Thurs 8:30 AM to 7:00 PM
Fri 9:30 to 6:00, Sat 8:30 to 4:00

Phil Keller

MINI Service Manager

608-729-6421

Mon - Fri
7:00 AM to 6:00 PM



QTPOC RACIAL JUSTICE BLACK LIVES MATTER PROTEST SUPPORT

Center the Movement, Not You

Good intentions still cause harm. **Nibiwakamigkwe** looks at a few ways white queers can be better allies both during the protests and in their daily lives.

BLACK LIVES MATTER. This is not debatable. And most of you reading this know that. You're hashtagging it, wearing shirts with it, chanting it. You're donating, marching, sharing. And that is good, so good. I'm doing it, too. As a non-Black Native and Latine person, it's my duty to show up and support Black folks right now. But also, as a non-Black Native and Latine person, I'm seeing plenty of white people acting foolish and centering themselves in attempts to help. So, in this edition of Dear Queer White People, we're gonna go over how not to do that. These points are Tee Jop (Madison) specific, but they'll work elsewhere too. Ambe!

LOWER YOUR VOICE

Sometimes literally. I mean that. Showing up to protests is a big way to support and uplift Black voices and needs. Your voice should never carry over theirs. I saw several white folks unaffiliated with the march organizers bring bullhorns and use them for themselves instead of passing them on to Black leaders whose own equipment was failing. With their personal amplification, they led their own chants independent of the same leaders in the front of the march. Two separate chants led to crowd confusion and many stopped following out of confusion. I know we make jokes about white folks not finding the beat, but dang, it was stolen entirely. Worse still, the march was robbed of the symbolic unity for combating systemic racism and injustices. So listen and follow.

Lower your voice and lower your profile. Take a few big steps back. White folks don't need to be physically leading marches, holding front banners and interrupting Black excellence. Despite the best intentions, this ends up looking like a photo opp or extreme virtue signaling. It designates you as a leader, which you definitely shouldn't be in this movement. Black folks routinely face questions on their leadership abilities (please see every comic Phil Hands has done for the Wisconsin State Journal), and biased media and politicians will turn to white folks they assume to be leaders over their Black colleagues. This isn't to say



Do they employ Black faculty or staff, and do those employees stay? They are not an ally if their organization keeps hiring and then firing or losing BIPOC workers.

you shouldn't be involved, but technical, financial, and organizational support is more needed than vocal leadership.

Reporters are going to want to talk to you. A local NBC reporter asked me to speak on camera the first night of protests here. I declined and said that I was there in support. Reporters cannot interview you without first notifying you that you're on the record, so use that time to send them in the direction of community leaders or someone whose voice needs to be heard. I saw a couple dozen interviews with white folks: each one basically said "I'm here to support," which is pretty obvious because they're already at the rally. Create space for Black voices by removing your voice from positions of power.

Looking to contribute art? Instead of co-opting Black motifs, make your own regular artwork and auction it off. I'm a beadworker, and one of my favorite pieces was a fully beaded patch of a burning cop car. The artist sold raffle tickets and raised over \$1000 for BLM-affiliated orgs and asked other beaders to do the same.

Don't create your own groups and events for BLM activism. Freedom, Inc. and Urban Triage have that covered (donate to them, too!). The short-lived New Path Forward and other organizations and events steal momentum from the underappreciated work these groups have been doing for years. Running separate demonstrations means each protest loses support. Share existing events, amplify existing groups' work, and volunteer your time with organizations that

already have the infrastructure in place.

Our world is steeped in whiteness and white supremacy. Exclusively Black folks taking the lead very likely will feel unnatural and wrong because we have been conditioned to associate whiteness with validity. Fight that feeling, show up, listen, and learn.

CRITICIZE YOUR INSTITUTIONS

Every Madison government office, non-profit, and business seems to be posting about BLM. But as we've seen from our own queer mayor's private message to Madison police, that doesn't actually mean they're supportive.

SO HOW DO WE SUPPORT THE GOOD WORK?

Check to see if the organization is minority-owned/led. This is their lives, and they know how to support their communities.

Do they employ Black faculty or staff, and do those employees stay? They are not an ally if their organization keeps hiring and then firing or losing BIPOC workers. That's likely the result of dangerous working conditions for non-white folks.

Are photos of BIPOC actually taken at location or are they stock photos? This is a very real thing, and it's gross. Visiting the location and looking for social media congruence can sort out the fakers.

Are people of color regular contributors to content on their social media accounts? Do they engage with BIPOC outside Juneteenth, recent BLM activism, Black History Month, Indigenous Peoples Day, and so on? We exist every day the rest of the year, and token activism is demeaning and harmful.

If you're looking to support nonprofits, what does their board look like? Again, if it doesn't have diversity, then they probably don't value it much either. Take your donations and support elsewhere.

And finally, are they actually paying BIPOC for their work? While we will often work for free (I'm guilty of this), organizations using our lived experiences for social or monetary benefit is exploitation and contributes to the massive wage and capital gaps amongst communities of color.

The recent plywood murals across the city provide glaring examples of meaningful versus empty support. What should be a beautiful chance to appreciate Madison's amazing Black artists is dotted with hopefully well-intentioned white folks missing the point entirely.

A particularly misplaced design has white-skinned and black-skinned hands clasped in a traditional claddagh design. It seems like a nice

symbol of unity, but this interpretation fades at any scrutiny. The white hand is clasped over the Black hand in a dominant position, and so more of the hand is seen. It is physically larger and extends well past the center of the mural. Worse still, the artist physically raises it above the Black hand that drops off into the lower right corner. The skin on the Black hand appears ashy and unnatural, and the cuff detail is straight out of Dutch colonial Africa. The artist has then tagged their Instagram handle to that cuff, taking up more space with whiteness in an already limited region. Were these artistic choices intentional? Probably not. Would a Black artist have made them? Absolutely not.

Much of the remainder of white artists' murals can be categorized as "Pastels with Platitudes." These light, bright colors, imbued with physical and metaphorical whiteness, literally paint an alternative reality. They void the messages of the movement to cover the hurt and pain that created it. Their sugar-coated centrist sweetness makes them particularly enticing for social media likes, news coverage banners, and pedestrian photo opps. They cover Blackness and uphold white fragility over greater change.

Support businesses that support Black artists and Black workers.

UNDERSTAND YOUR BIASES

Cut off your dreadlocks, cover up dreamcatcher or headdress tattoos, stop talking about that trip you took to Africa and over-pronouncing Spanish. It makes us uncomfortable. It's weird. It's cringey. Just, stop. Each of those behaviors happened during BLM marches in this city and were perpetrated by folks who want to help but can't address their own bigotry.

Most racial biases are less obvious. Check your microaggressions, microinvalidations, and racial gaslighting. In the workplace and classroom, protect and validate BIPOC peers.

If a person of color says something is racist, it is. Blaming us for the racialized statement, questioning our interpretation of the event, and whitewashing our narrative to your own comfort are all further abuses on top of the initial incident. Believe us the first time.

Do not demand peaceful protests or say that looting is wrong and unnecessary. If theft and broken glass halt your support, then you were never a supporter to begin with. Petty crimes, witness to a crime, or imagined association with crime have been a death sentence for Black people. I've now seen multiple Madison-focused social media groups happily reporting sellers of looted goods back to the police, completely unaware of their role in continued state oppression.

And stop saying this police brutality is unprecedented. We saw it at Standing Rock

four years ago and Ferguson six years ago. BIPOC have been fighting for so long, and your surprise is exhausting: it means that you haven't noticed how much work we've been doing and forcing us to question our ability to create change.

It is absolutely impossible for you to understand racism. It is not something you have experienced in your body. Phrases like, "I understand" and "I totally get it" aren't needed right now. Try offering support through consensual communication, financial donations, food, and standing up to racist behavior.

While few of these actions explicitly harm Black folks or other people of color, they all wear on Black emotions. Cause Black pain. Erode Black comfort. Realize that we live in a racist and anti-Black world, so the only options to combat these injustices are to be anti-racist and pro-Black in every decision.

Right now there is so much good, positive attention on Black community leaders (another plug for Urban Triage and Freedom, Inc!). Follow what they say and know that the work isn't done until they say it is.

Stay strong, keep learning, and keep fighting, white queers of Madison! ■

Like this? Follow me on IG @weteearthwoman or drop some bannock money to my PayPal at weteearthwoman@gmail.com.

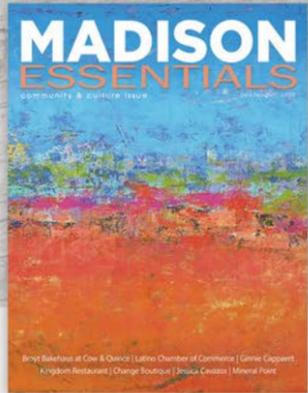
Dogs
by Melanie Renee
Photography
www.DogsbyMRP.com
Photography Services
for dogs and their people

- OPEN 24 HOURS
- Locally owned since 1983
- Shop Online 24/7
- Free delivery available!

PROUD TO SUPPORT AIDS NETWORK COMMUNITY SHARES

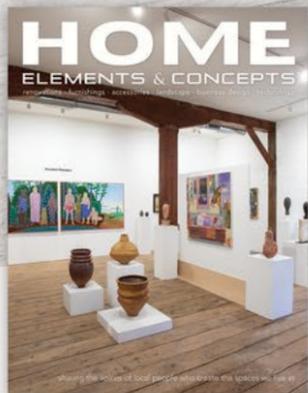
111 N. BROOM ST. • CAPCENTREMARKET.COM • 608-255-2616

YOUR Local COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS



A bimonthly magazine that serves as your guide to local restaurants, shops, and sights.

madisonessentials.com



A quarterly magazine with great ideas to transform your living space.

homeelementsandconcepts.com



Semiannual magazine and resource guide for seniors, families, and professionals.

journeyofaging.com



IMPROVE → OUR RIGHTS

OURLIVESMADISON.COM

LAW & POLITICS SCOTUS WORKPLACE PROTECTIONS

Unpacking the Employee Rights Ruling

What the Supreme Court said about **LGBTQ+ workplace protections**, what this means for other cases, and what we still need to do.

ON JUNE 15, 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a momentous decision on LGBTQ+ employee rights, determining that the protections of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 applies to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender employees. The case, known as *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia*, is thrilling news. This column will unpack the Court's decision, explore how it may affect other legal protections for LGBTQ+ people, and discuss how we as community members and allies must still remain active in protecting LGBTQ+ rights.

SCOTUS GETS IT RIGHT WITH BOSTOCK

First, let's talk about the Court's decision. *Bostock* actually addressed three consolidated cases, involving (1) Gerald Bostock, a child welfare advocate who was fired for being in a gay softball league, (2) Donald Zarda, a skydiving instructor who was fired for being gay, and (3) Aimee Stephens, a funeral home employee who was fired for transitioning. All three employees alleged that their firings violated Title VII, the federal law that makes it unlawful for employers "to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." (Emphasis added.)

The statutory language of "because of ... sex" in Title VII matters. The Court had to decide whether discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or for being transgender is discrimination because of sex. (If not, then the employment protections of Title VII would not apply.) Writing for a six-member majority of the Court, Justice Neil Gorsuch answered yes.

In reaching its decision, the Court agreed with arguments made by the employees' attorneys, as well as arguments made in a "friend of the court" brief filed by a coalition of Wisconsin advocacy organizations and written by one of this article's authors. First, the Court reasoned that "it is impossible to discriminate



Aimee Stephens

In reaching its decision, the Court agreed with arguments made by the employees' attorneys, as well as arguments made in a "friend of the court" brief filed by a coalition of Wisconsin advocacy organizations and written by one of this article's authors.

against a person for being homosexual or transgender without discriminating against that individual based on sex." Suppose, for example, an employer fires a man for being gay—that is, a man attracted to men. Because the employer would not have fired the same employee if she were a woman attracted to men, the employee's sex necessarily plays into the employer's discriminatory motivation. Second, the Court noted that principles of judicial "textualism" and "originalism" compelled the result. What matters, Justice Gorsuch stressed, is what the text of the Title VII meant when it was originally enacted—not what Congress or the public intended or expected the consequences of the statute to be. And third, the Court added that its earlier cases interpreting Title VII mapped a legal trajectory that embraced the ruling for which the employees advocated. Ultimately, the Court concluded that "[a]n employer who fires an individual merely for being gay or transgender defies the law."

What does the Court's decision mean for our community? It means that those who are fired because of our sexual orientation or for being

CHARLES WILLIAM KELLY / ACLU

transgender can indeed argue that those firings violate Title VII. But it goes further than "just" covering firings. It also means that if an employer fails or refuses to hire us, or otherwise discriminates against us (including workplace harassment) with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, we can also raise Title VII claims.

BOSTOCK WILL HELP IN WITH OTHER AREAS OF LEGAL PROTECTION

While *Bostock* applies directly to employment discrimination, it will likely have far-reaching effects on other areas of law. This is because Title VII is not the only law that prohibits discrimination "because of . . . sex." Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, for example, states that "[n]o person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance," in areas of higher education, with a few listed exemptions. The Affordable Care Act also prohibits "any health program or activity, any part of which is receiving Federal financial assistance" from discriminating against individuals "on the basis of . . . sex." And the Fair Housing Act also prohibits discrimination in the context of rental or housing sales "on the basis of sex."

This is not to mention the many state statutes that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex. Here in Wisconsin, for example, state law bars motor carriers from "any practice, act or omission which results in discrimination on the basis of . . . sex." State law also prohibits financial organizations from discriminating "in the granting or extension of any form of loan or credit, or of the privilege or capacity to obtain any form of loan or credit" "on the basis of . . . sex." And Wisconsin state law bars K-12 "courses in physical education or physical training" from discriminating "on the basis of sex in the provision of necessary facilities, equipment, instruction or financial support, or the opportunity to participate in any physical education or training activity." And this is just an incomplete list.

Nor is *Bostock*'s potential impact limited to anti-discrimination statutes. The U.S. Constitution and many state constitutions also prohibit sex discrimination at the hands of the government. To that end, *Bostock* may ultimately lead to enhanced protections for LGBTQ+ individuals in the context of military enlistment, identification documents, public restrooms, and prisoner healthcare, among other issues.

Bostock, in other words, opens the door for plaintiffs who have been discriminated against either for their sexual orientation or for being

transgender to raise discrimination challenges in those contexts, using the Supreme Court's precedent as support. This does not mean that such plaintiffs will necessarily win, since courts analyze such challenges on a case-by-case basis. But it does mean that our community now has an additional powerful tool for advocating against discrimination.

In particular, *Bostock* may help advocates challenging recent regulations coming out of this federal administration. For example, on June 12, 2020, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a rule stating that "sex discrimination" (under the Affordable Care Act) does not protect people from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. This rule runs exactly counter to the Supreme Court interpretation of the "because of . . . sex" language in *Bostock*, and legal groups challenging that rule will likely point to *Bostock* for support.

POST-BOSTOCK ADVOCACY

As lawyers, we also recognize that legal victories, while exciting, are not always sufficient to help actual folks in our community. A sober reminder of this is how Aimee Stephens, one of the plaintiffs in the *Bostock* consolidated cases, died on May 12, 2020, a month before being able to see her legal victory. Another sober reminder is how—even in states with

strong protections against sexual orientation and transgender discrimination—actual folks still do suffer from significant discrimination. This is because legal, on-the-books protections do not always end up protecting people on the ground. Hiring attorneys to protect one's legal rights requires resources, and the most disadvantaged members of our community will not have those resources.

So we must remain otherwise vigilant, both for ourselves and for our community. We must work—both through community efforts and political efforts—to build the world we want to see. Stay strong, stay active, and keep doing whatever you can to lift each other up. ■



STEPH TAI is a professor at the University of Wisconsin Law School. They have actively advocated for the interests of the LGBTQ community at UW-Madison. Steph serves on the executive board of Trans Law Help Wisconsin, which provides aid and training with respect to name and gender change procedures.



JOSEPH S. DIEDRICH is an appellate attorney at Husch Blackwell LLP in Madison. On behalf of a coalition of Wisconsin advocacy organizations, he authored an amicus curiae brief in *Bostock* in support of the employees, with one of the amici being Trans Law Help Wisconsin.

Achieve the dream of home ownership

To find out how you can get into the home of your dreams, call Mike today.

- Buyer's Edge® – first-time homebuyers program
- Fixed- and adjustable-rate mortgages
- New construction loans
- Refinancing
- Providing statewide support to the community



Michael Fumelle
4402 East Towne Blvd.
608-259-4263
Michael.Fumelle@
AssociatedBank.com
NMLS ID: 523546



Subject to credit approval. Equal Housing Lender. Associated Bank, N.A. is a Member FDIC and Associated Banc-Corp. (4/12) 1336

[AssociatedBank.com](https://www.associatedbank.com)

We are here for you and your family when you need us most.



At Quartz we understand you deserve the care you need when you need it, it's the reason we create health plans with you in mind. We're here to help you and your family in the most important moments of your life. We provide you with support, resources, and access to high-quality medical care through UW Health and UnityPoint Health – Meriter. **Quartz cares for you when you're sick while aspiring to keep you healthy.**



QuartzBenefits.com



FOOD & DINING | MICHAEL'S FROZEN CUSTARD | QTPOC | IMMIGRATION

Homecoming

Unwavering support helped **Sergio De La O Hernandez** and **Michael Dix**, of **Michael's Frozen Custard**, triumph over a turbulent immigration battle.

THIS IS A FOLLOW-UP to a story from September, checking in on Sergio De La O Hernandez & Michael Dix, two men from our local LGBTQ+ family. Michael is the Founder/Owner of Michael's Frozen Custard and his husband, Sergio, is the business's General Manager. The two were married in 2015. As you may recall from the *Our Lives* story (Sept/Oct 2019), Hernandez returned to Mexico in August of 2018 for a visa interview and at that time, his visa request was denied. Subsequently, he was not allowed to re-enter the United States.

That denial began a challenging and lengthy process for Dix and Hernandez, working with an immigration attorney, Jessica Slind, to bring Hernandez back into the U.S. A hardship waiver was filed on Hernandez's behalf which laid out the challenges that Dix would endure—everything from mental and physical health concerns to

threats to their livelihoods—if Sergio was not allowed to return. It's also worth noting that Sergio has no criminal record, as well as a daughter living here who is a U.S. citizen. Even so, his waiver was denied. At that point, their only recourse was for their attorney to file an appeal on Sergio's behalf... and wait.

As stated earlier, Sergio had taken over the General Manager duties of Michael's Frozen Custard. As such, Dix felt he had no choice but to close down their Monroe Street location on September 9, 2019. In fact, he chose to close down his Atwood location as well, at least temporarily, to wait out this ordeal with Sergio in Mexico, despite concerns for their safety there as a gay couple. The couple chose to make lemonade from the lemons, taking a break from their "regular" lives to be together in Mexico, and then later in Canada. "It was too hard being apart all that time" said Dix, "we had to find a way to stay strong together, which meant actually being together as a couple."

Through all of this, the couple's community, family, and friends rallied around them. More than 200 letters of support, many handwritten, were delivered to Attorney Slind, and she in turn was able to provide them to the embassy in Mexico to show how valuable Hernandez and Dix are to Madison. Dix made sure to mention that there were also many who made phone calls of support for bringing Sergio home. Months passed, but everyone's tenacity and hard work paid off. Sergio's visa was approved in December, 2019. Then it was back to playing the waiting game while all of the official proceedings went through due process. On May 7, Sergio was finally granted his visa. He took an Uber to the border, then literally walked himself and four suitcases back across the border.

Thankfully, theirs turned out to be a story of love, tenacity, community support, and triumph. It also shines a very bright and poignant light on the injustices of our current immigration system.

As we're acutely aware, families are routinely torn apart, with no thought given to the hardships they will have to endure. My own sincere hope is that Michael and Sergio's struggle stirs us to action when it comes to matters of immigration reform. To quote the great Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the stri-

The couple chose to make lemonade from the lemons, taking a break from their "regular" lives to be together in Mexico, and then later in Canada. "It was too hard being apart all that time" said Dix, "we had to find a way to stay strong together, which meant actually being together as a couple."

dent clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people." Dr. King penned these words in 1958, but here we stand, 62 years later, still working on these enormous social issues. Good readers, let's not be *that* silence. Let's not be *those* good people. Instead, let us be the people who use our voices and our strengths to ensure that freedom is something which is applied unilaterally to every person...

...because every person deserves it. ■



JEANNE MOE was raised by the best humans on the planet in a small, rural community in northern Wisconsin. Her heart still resides on the shores of Lake Wissota, but the rest of her put down roots just south of Madison, in the village of McFarland. She has owned Simply Served Personal Chef Service for nine years. Her family of three consists of herself and her two dogs (they are the best!) who are always up for the next great adventure.

Online shopping and delivery!

Order online and have your groceries delivered, or pick up at any of our stores.

See shop.willystreet.coop

(Online store not currently available on mobile devices.)



willy street co-op

Check out any of our three locations!

- 1 WILLY EAST
1221 Williamson St.
- 2 WILLY WEST
6825 University Ave.
- 3 WILLY NORTH
2817 N Sherman Ave.

www.willystreet.coop



Everyone Welcome!





LAW & POLITICS | ACTIVISM | PROTEST | DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

Don't Just Rock the Boat, Flip it Over

At 18 years old, Democratic Socialist **Max Prestigiacom** recently became the youngest person ever elected to Madison's Common Council and its newest LGBTQ alder. The political positions he holds may offer insight into the future of the Progressive movement.

SOME OF THE MOST pressing problems—racial justice, climate action, housing—have been a part of political discourse for years with no headway. Like every generation before us, we're still marching in the streets to demand change. I'm frustrated, and I'm exhausted. It seems that the payoff for fighting day and night is the occasional minor concession. Anyone would burn out, especially BIPOC.

As I'm writing this, protests continue in Madison. As I joined my community out in the streets, I was thrown into a space of deep self-reflection. How does my position as an elected official impact my involvement yesterday, today, tomorrow? What does it mean to be a white cis man at the protests? I've especially asked myself what my identity as an LG(B)TQ+ person has on my role in fighting white supremacy. I didn't find answers to these questions at the protests, and I am not sure if I will find any perfect answers. The best I can do, I've realized, is continuously ask myself in hopes of moving closer to accountability.

For non-Black LGBTQ+ co-conspirators, an important reference point to what has happened in the wake of George Floyd's murder is Pride.

While society seems to be intent in convincing us otherwise, it is important to remember that the first Pride was a riot. Violence, property damage, no matter the nomenclature, are a form of protest—indeed a natural response to oppression and suppression. Both the violent and non-violent actions we've seen in Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and Madison these past few weeks mirror aspects of Stonewall. What we're seeing is an uprising against our inherently oppressive political and social systems with the goal of liberation, of freedom. It sounds familiar, doesn't it? (It's important to note that while the struggle of Black Americans should be viewed with respect to the movements of social justice of the past, we must give it its own consideration and weight. As non-POC LGBTQ+, we need to be careful not to co-opt or reduce these protests.)

Non-Black LGBTQ+ people have the responsibility to follow through and show solidarity. Showing solidarity means actively dismantling white supremacy and oppressive behaviors within ourselves first. The first step is recognizing our own shortcomings. I admit I am not perfect; I've made mistakes in my life. At times I have not been the best ally and might have harmed BIPOC. Since then, I have acknowledged and apologized for my actions and understood that self-criticism is inherent to being anti-racist.

What's equally important in the struggle for self-actualization, is what should be a knee-jerk tendency to question everything. This mandate extends to Democrats, Progressives, Socialists, and everyone in this political struggle. Accepting the status quo, and the delusion that we cannot change it, is akin to complacency. And complacency breeds complicity.

We need to remember that the political ideology we subscribe to does not guarantee our place in a movement. More so, it does not guarantee the value of our intersectionality. The measurement of our anti-racism within these political circles is only in the action we take to better ourselves as allies and to fight a racially unjust system.



Moreover, we need to look beyond the status quo and truly assess the deep inequities within our governing institutions and how we uphold them. We've created a politic that allows the continued disassociation of words and actions. We let our politicians say as much rhetoric as they want, but turn a blind eye when they do nothing to back up their words of pseudo-solidarity. Our community understands exactly how having an LGBTQ+ politician does not guarantee their support for our community; indeed we must hold all of those who represent us to a higher standard of service to the Black community.

My own experience as a member of the Madison Common Council has shown me deliberate and inherent inaccessibility in niche city policy. As a young person, there are many hoops I have been made to jump through to have any voice on the council. And I am a cis-white man—I cannot imagine the obstructionism that exists for Black and POC people. We need to elect leaders of different identities and lived experiences. Electing status quo politicians who are too afraid to rock the boat has gotten us nowhere. We need to flip the entire boat over; replace reactionaries who dread upsetting the status quo with young, diverse activists who care more about structural change than trading political capital.

I'll leave you with this prescription for the white supremacy we each have embodied in the LGBTQ+ community: We once, led by Black trans women, held a violent protest to overthrow brutal oppression ingrained in our systems. We need to remember that the freedoms we enjoy now, to live and love who and how we want, would never have come to be without the leadership of our Black community. We must actively remember this and work to be truly anti-racist—that is the least of which is owed.

Solidarity. ■



Home Equity Helps You Get Out Of Your Home What You Put In.

Start enjoying the benefits of homeownership with a home equity line of credit from UW Credit Union. Our low introductory rates allow you to quickly and easily access up to 100% of your home's equity, so you can get the funds you need, for just about whatever you need—including home remodels, debt consolidation, or school tuition. Apply online or talk to one of our experts today, and discover what possibilities your home could be hiding.

Open A Heloc Today | uwcu.org



Make the outside of your house a HOME.



QUIGLEY Decks

Enhancing your backyard retreat by building beautiful outdoor living spaces.

We Specialize in:

Decks- Cedar, Ipe, or Composite

Cable Railings- Indoor & Outdoor



NOW BOOKING PROJECTS STARTING IN JULY

FREE ESTIMATES FOR READERS OF OUR LIVES MAGAZINE!



It's difficult to put into words what Our Lives Magazine has done for my business, and more importantly than that, the quality of the people I have met through advertising here. Thank you to the readers, staff, clients and friends. We'll get through this together!

Tim Quigley, Owner