The First Pride was a Riot

June is Pride Month, a month dedicated to celebrating the LGBTQ+ community and commemorating the civil rights struggles it has faced over the years. There are parades, festivals, parties, drag performances, protests, and memorials for those who lost their lives to the HIV/AIDS epidemic or bigotry. It is a time to uplift queer voices. This year, we have an opportunity to reconnect with the origin of Pride and recognize the impact Black and brown voices have had on the community, especially the voices of trans women of color.

We celebrate Pride in June to honor the Stonewall Riots, also known as the Stonewall Uprising, that occurred on June 28, 1969. Police raided the Stonewall Inn, a well-known LGBTQ+ bar in Greenwich Village, New York. Police violence and harassment of LGBTQ+ folks were common occurrences in the 60s and fed up, patrons and neighborhood members started a riot that extended into nearly a week of protests. At the head of these protests were trans women of color, including Marsha P. Johnson. The Stonewall Riots are often considered the catalyst for the gay liberation movement. And despite the enormous role transgender individuals played at the beginning of the movement, they were still relegated to the back of the Christopher Street Liberation Day March, or the first Pride march, that was held the year following the Stonewall Riots.

Racial injustice is often considered a separate issue from LGBTQ+ struggles despite the fact that LGBTQ+ people of color are more likely to be victims of homophobic, transphobic, and racist violence. Trans women of color activists like Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, and Miss Major Griffin-Gracy took an intersectional approach to their advocacy, demanding justice for all gender and sexual minorities, sex workers, poor people, and other...
FIRST PRIDE continued

oppressed groups. The pattern of queer people of color and trans communities leading the fight for LGBTQ+ rights and racial justice has continued into contemporary movements, yet so many of their contributions have been minimized or erased by white “allies.”

The first Pride was a riot. It’s important to remember our history as we simultaneously celebrate the strides we’ve made for the

LGBTQ+ community while also recognizing that there is “No Pride for some of us without liberation for all of us.” The increasing commercialization and whitewashing of Pride celebrations are unacceptable. For the first time this year, Denver will also be hosting Black Pride Colorado, a celebration of Black excellence and a reminder that Pride was and will continue to be an act of resistance.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT
FINDING HOPE

Finding Hope: A Community Peer Support Program created by Envision:You consists of a network of LGBTQ+ Peer Community Organizers with lived experience who can provide support to other LGBTQ+ folks in their community. Finding Hope meets virtually in Southwest and Southeast Colorado, and provides the queer community with a series of psychoeducational workshops co-facilitated by Envision:You and trained peer support staff. Starting the week of June 14th, these 90 minute, bi-weekly workshops will create opportunities to learn, grow, and create connections!

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ADVOCATE
REPRESENTATIVE BRIANNA TITONE

This month, we would like to highlight Colorado House Representative Brianna Titone who has always had a passion for advocacy and serving her community. This passion is what drives her politics. She makes it a priority to take an intersectional approach to building community, bringing people together by focusing on what can be done to help. She also provides legislation support at the capital: she helped pass the bill banning the Gay and Trans Panic Defense, and is a current sponsor of the Annual Mental Health Wellness Exam bill which, if passed, would be the first of its kind in the nation. This year Brianna was elected chair of the Colorado Legislative LGBTQ Caucus, where she intends to fight for LGBTQ+ Coloradans. As the first transgender person to serve in the Colorado General Assembly she knows that representation matters, and will continue to advocate for all in her community.

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COMMUNITY PARTNER

This year, Colorado will be having its first Black Pride, “created to celebrate, liberate, and engage our Black LGBTQIA+ folks across our state.” Black Pride Colorado is a sponsored program through YouthSeen, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting LGBTQ+ youth. Hosted in Denver on June 17-20, Black Pride Colorado will have several events, including a black excellence ball at the Denver Botanic Gardens, a silent disco, and a drag gospel brunch. You can support Black Pride Colorado by donating here.

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For more information on Envision:You visit our website, envision-you.org or contact us at info@envision-you.org