

CELEBRATING PRIDE MONTH



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In 2019, the Meriam-Webster Dictionary announced "they" as their [word of the year](#), referring to a single person identifying as nonbinary. This small honor is indicative of a larger trend: our society is becoming more inclusive. Last year, a new [Pew Research Center survey](#) found that a growing number of U.S. adults say they know someone who is transgender or who goes by a gender-neutral pronoun. These monumental changes are a result of the persistent activism of the LGBTQIA+ community over the years.

On June 28, 1969, the New York City police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay club in Greenwich Village, because of discrimination and harassment towards the LGBTQIA+ community. The raid caused a riot as police roughly hauled employees and patrons out of the bar, leading to six days of protests and violent clashes with law enforcement. The Stonewall Riots catalyzed the gay rights movement worldwide with [Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera](#), both BIPOC transwomen and activists, at the front lines. The first Pride parades took place in the U.S. in 1970, recognizing the riot from the year before.

As you flip through television channels or any streaming service, you'll notice an increase in LGBTQIA+ characters. According to [Nielsen's "Being Seen on Screen: Diverse Representation & Inclusion on TV"](#) report, members of the LGBTQIA+ community increasingly see themselves and their stories represented and celebrated in media. The report found that 26% of the top 300 programs included at least one cast member identifying as LGBTQIA+.

To kick off his administration, President Biden issued an executive order directing all federal agencies to recognize that existing federal bans on sex discrimination also protect against LGBTQIA+ discrimination. He also repealed the transgender military ban enacted by the Trump administration.

While progress should be celebrated, there is still a long road ahead. 2021 [set a record](#) for the most anti-LGBTQIA+ bills passed during a legislative session. Over 100 laws were proposed; some banning medical care for trans youth and others making it increasingly difficult for trans people to get accurate state IDs. Black transwomen are killed at a disproportionate rate to the extent that the American Medical Association declared it an [epidemic](#). In 2019, 91% of transgender or gender-nonconforming people fatally shot were Black women, according to the Human Rights Campaign.

Recently, Boston University has taken action to make our community more welcoming. Supported by BU Diversity & Inclusion, the [LGBTQIA+ Faculty & Staff Community Network](#) launched in 2020 and seeks to promote a deeper sense of affinity and celebrate LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff across BU. In 2021, following LGBTQIA+ Taskforce recommendations, the Office of the Provost opened the [LGBTQIA+ Center for Faculty & Staff](#). It's a space where staff and faculty can network, share experiences, engage in intellectual interchange, and find community. Earlier this year, the University gave students the ability to [change their names](#) in the school directory which particularly supports transgender and nonbinary students by no longer having to be identified by their dead names. Last month, the Queer Activist Collective student group and the LGBTQIA+ Center for Faculty & Staff hosted [BU's first-ever Lavender Ceremony](#) celebrating the accomplishments of LGBTQIA+ undergraduate students.

It's essential to recognize that the University's progress results from the tireless work of student groups that consistently provide safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ individuals on campus. Below, we highlight the inspiring work of these student organizations and their recommended resources. We encourage you to celebrate the resilience and accomplishments of the LGBTQIA+ community through various events hosted by the Pride Committee is [on campus](#) and other gatherings in the [Greater Boston area](#).

Happy Pride!
-The SDO Team

LGBTQ+ ACTIVISM ON CAMPUS

The [Queer Activist Collective \(Q\)](#) is Boston University's largest LGBTQ+ student organization dedicated to ensuring the awareness, visibility, and full inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community. They are committed to creating uplifting and affirming programming for all LGBTQ+ community members.



WHAT THEY ARE UP TO:

- This February, Q launched a [Gender-Affirming Product Program](#) that helps students gain access to expensive gender-affirming products from trans vendors at no cost to them. The program also offers consultations with gender-affirming product experts and spreads awareness of gender-affirming products.
- Q advocates for inclusive and accessible housing for transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex students on campus. They've [identified 10 barriers](#) that prevent students from accessing safe and inclusive BU housing, along with solutions to address their concerns.
- Q has created comprehensive and frequently updated [resource guides](#) related to mental health, sexual health, housing instability issues, and financial needs.



The [Center for Gender, Sexuality, and Activism \(CGSA\)](#) strives to be a safe space for people of all genders and sexualities. Using a social justice framework, the CGSA aims to end gender oppression and violence and advocates for the full equality and inclusion of women, queer and trans students.

WHAT THEY ARE UP TO:

- CGSA won 2 seats in the Student Government Senate for the '22-'23 school year.
- The CGSA senators will focus on getting more and better gender-neutral bathrooms on campus and supporting survivors of sexual assault.
- They also announced the creation of a Gender-Affirming Room for Belonging (GARB) at CGSA. The GARB will be a private safe space for students to use gender-affirming products such as clothing, binders, makeup, nail polish, hair products, etc., to explore and affirm their gender identity and presentation.
- CGSA is currently raising funds and applying for grants for the GARB and have already raised over \$1,300 during BU Giving Day. They hope to launch the GARB in the fall.

SUPPORTING THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

Members of BU's LGBTQ+ community share their thoughts on what people can do to raise awareness of important issues impacting the LGBTQ+ community.



Kaylan Comenole (They/Them)
Director of the Center for Gender, Sexuality, and Activism, CAS'23

"We need to focus on going below the surface and move towards cultural shifts in how we think, talk about, and interact with queer people. Doing things like teaching yourself to always ask for people's pronouns, using gender-neutral language, committing to learning about queer history and theory, or deconstructing the cis and hetero-normative standards you impose upon queer people are important things. If you hear someone use the wrong pronouns for someone, speak up! Doing these little things are actually very big things."



Nathan Quinter Brewer, PhD, LICSW (He/Him/His)
Director of the Sexual Assault Response & Prevention Center at Boston University

"I think a great way to raise awareness is to learn something new about the queer communities in Boston, including the nonprofit organizations that do amazing work. For instance, check out [The Network/La Red](#), which is one of the few domestic violence organizations in the country that focuses on the needs of queer survivors of intimate partner violence. This work is so important given that [LGBTQ folks](#) are more likely to experience violence in their romantic and sexual relationships."