



# EMPOWERED

Colorado LGBTQ+ Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Initiative

## 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 →

## 5 HEALTHY TIPS

...for approaching intersectional conversations as an LGBTQ+ person of color.

- 1 **Consider your well-being and safety** first and foremost. Create ground rules and a safe space.
- 2 **Prepare** by thinking about how you feel and what you hope will come out of the conversation.
- 3 **Focus on your experience**, and remember that you are the expert and your experience is valid.
- 4 **Don't put pressure on yourself** to have an "effective" conversation.
- 5 **Take time to decompress**, and then reflect on the outcome.

Read a full guide from the Trevor Project, including a guide for authentic allyship.

## FRESH PRESS

This year **Denver Pride** is going to be a hybrid event, with in-person and virtual opportunities to participate. Activities will include an in-person and virtual 5K race, a virtual parade, and the introduction of "Pride Hubs" throughout the city. These Pride Hubs provide an in-person option for those who want to gather in person while still limiting size. You can find a list of the hubs [here](#).

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**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+ folk 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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