

For example, within the LGBTQ+ community, which should be accepting of queer people of color (QPOC) based on shared sexual orientation, QPOC often feel marginalized. It is common for QPOC to report feeling invisible and marginalized within the LGBTQ+ community. Pride parades and festivals themselves often exclude the history, experiences, and presence of QPOC.

Amira Caluya, Stonewall Youth's Program Co-Director, writes, "my sense of pride as a queer person of color would have been so different if I knew when I was growing up that the first pride parade was called 'Christopher Street liberation day', and it was held to remember that working class queer and Trans people of color decided to fight back against police brutality. What would my 'pride' have looked like then if I knew that the tactics that the gay liberation movement used were modeled after civil rights tactics? That the Gay Liberation Front raised funds to bail out and help with legal fees for Black Panther Party activist? When I talk to youth I work with about Pride I tell them that it was a riot against the state, not a parade. And while celebrating is good, knowing our histories is how we learn about ourselves."

Stonewall Youth's work is rooted in social justice and anti-oppression values which we actively strive to apply in all of our work. We are engaged in the continuing fight for collective liberation; we cannot be free until everyone is free. Stonewall Youth strives to recognize how intersecting systems of oppression influence our community members' ability to live as their genuine selves, worthy of love, respect, and dignity. **We draw strength from many queer heroes who have led the way, including those who were involved in the Stonewall Uprising such as Miss Major Griffin-Gracy, Sylvia Rivera, and Marsha P. Johnson.**



Miss Major Griffin-Gracy with Stonewall staff members Amira, Seb, Masa and friends in 2016. A leader in the Stonewall Riot, Miss Major continues to be a leader in the trans rights movement who among other things served as the Executive Director for the Transgender GenderVariant Intersex Justice Project, a group of transgender variant and intersex people—inside and outside of prisons, jails and detention centers—creating a united family in the struggle for survival and freedom.

Sylvia Rivera in the "gay homeless camp" in NYC (2000). Rivera was a founding member of the Gay Liberation Front & the Gay Activists Alliance. With her close friend Marsha P. Johnson, Rivera co-founded STAR in 1970. She was a Latina trans woman who in later decades continued to be a strong advocate for drag queens, drag culture, people of color and trans folks, and decried the white, middleclass, gay-male-dominated movement that promoted assimilation into the heterosexual majority and focus on issues like military service and marriage equality. Rivera died from cancer in 2002. Rest in Power.



Marsha P. Johnson in 1970. After being the first person (or at least one of the first) to fight back against the police at the Stonewall Inn, Johnson was a gay and trans liberation street activist for decades. She organized with ACT UP, & along with Sylvia Rivera, was the cofounder of the Street Tran Actions Revolutionaries (STAR) House, which supported young drag queens, trans women & other street youth. When asked what the "P." in her name stood for, Johnson often said "Pay It No Mind, which became her trademark. She died in 1992 of what is now considered to be a hate crime. Rest in Power.