

# Activity Ideas from the Field: "Queer I Am" Youth Leadership Summit

<b>CONTACT:</b> Maureen "Mo" Black, Student Support Interventionist at CHOICE Alternative, Shelton School District (360)426-7664 mblack@sheltonschools.org		<b>ACTIVITY NAME:</b> "Queer I Am" Youth Leadership Summit at South Puget Sound Community College (SPSCC)
<b>AUDIENCE:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All Students <input type="checkbox"/> All GU Students <input type="checkbox"/> DREAMers <input type="checkbox"/> English Language Learners <input type="checkbox"/> Families <input type="checkbox"/> First Generation Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Schools <input type="checkbox"/> Students with Disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Underrepresented Minorities <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Experiencing Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Youth In Foster Care <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  <b>GRADE LEVEL:</b> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 11 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  <b>SERVICE TYPE:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> College Applications <input type="checkbox"/> College Goal Washington <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Visits <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive Mentoring <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling & Advising <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational Field Trips <input type="checkbox"/> Family Events <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Aid & Financial Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Job Shadowing <input type="checkbox"/> Rigorous Academic Curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> Student & Family Orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Summer Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Tests & Test Preparation Workshop <input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring & Homework Assistance	<b>THEME:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Advisories <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Career Exploration <input type="checkbox"/> CCSS <input type="checkbox"/> Collective Impact <input type="checkbox"/> College Bound Scholarship <input type="checkbox"/> College match/selection <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College-Going Culture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community College <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Retrieval <input type="checkbox"/> Dropout Prevention/ Reengagement <input type="checkbox"/> Early Warning Systems <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equity <input type="checkbox"/> Essays <input type="checkbox"/> Family engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Games <input type="checkbox"/> Graduation Requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Guest Speakers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health/Wellness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership for college readiness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnerships <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarships <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social & Emotional Learning <input type="checkbox"/> STEM <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting undocumented students <input type="checkbox"/> Test preparation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Using data and evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Working in rural schools Other: _____	<b>GOAL:</b> To support, motivate, empower, and educate LGBTQAI+ youth, and introduce students to high-quality queer friendly/safe local community college culture.  <b>ACTIVITY OVERVIEW:</b> The first annual "QUEER I AM" youth leadership summit was hosted by the Diversity and Equity Center at South Puget Sound Community College to support, inform, empower, connect, listen to, and plan strategic advocacy for LGBTQAI+ youth (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Asexual, Intersex, and Straight Allies.).  The conference was a one-day event from 8AM-10PM, with educational workshops from 8-6PM, and fun safe space for evening social activities. The event included keynote speakers, such as: Dr. Tim Stokes, president of South Puget Sound Community College and one of less than 10 currently openly gay college presidents in the US. Other speakers included queer indigenous poet, Fabian Romero, who spoke about topics as diverse as first-gen college issues, the intersection of queer and Latino/a identities, abstinence from substances and intersection with the queer rights movement's heritage in "bar culture" i.e.: Stonewall riots, etc. Additional workshop topics included: Effective communication about identity, transgender topics, the voices and history of elder lesbians, lesbian identity and culture, leadership in queer community, telling one's story, queer theatre, masculinity in queer culture, systemic social change and progress, allyship, self-preservation through oppression, poetry for the revolution, intersection of queer and Asian identity, interrupting bias and discrimination, and impactful cultural change towards tolerance in school and work environments.  In preparation for the event, students met weekly in the "PRIDE CATS" support group during lunch. Students helped plan chaperones and solicit student interest for attendance. Students also created original artwork representing local CHOICE queer culture and then learned artistic hand-printed screen-printing from local professional artist, Howard Leggett. Students then printed these art pieces on clothing to wear to the conference in proud representation of CHOICE student leadership.  <b>PREP TIME:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mo spent approx. 10 hours in advance of the event planning logistics (student recruitment, field trip paperwork, communication with college planners, finding chaperones, arranging for meals, etc.)</li> <li>• Mo spent approx. 2 hours planning logistics with screen print artist, Howard Leggett.</li> <li>• Howard then volunteered 12 hours of his time, spread out over three sessions, four hours each, to instruct the students about screen print art. Total match value (time and art supplies) over \$515 match value.</li> <li>• 15 hours the day of the event: students arrive at CHOICE at 7:30 AM, returned to CHOICE after the event at 10:30 PM.</li> </ul>

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- 2 adult chaperones
- Pride cats group advisor (staff resource)
- Students supplied their own t-shirts for screen printing
- Transportation to/from SPSCC
- Food for the day
- Empathy, advocacy & an open mind/heart

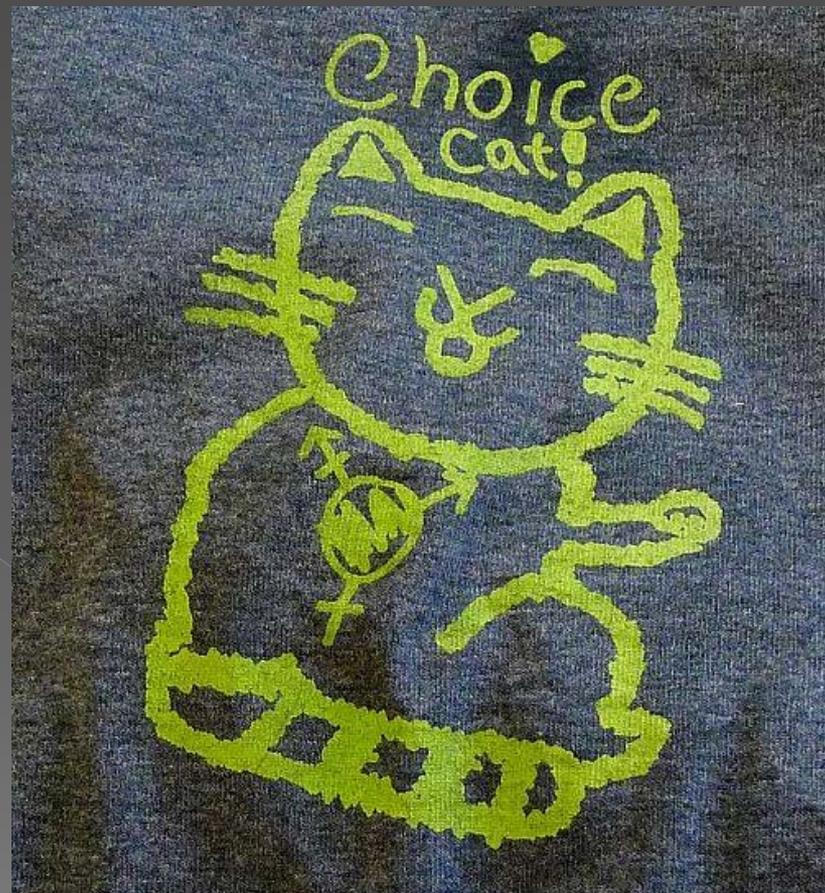
**COST:** Conference Registration fee - \$15; Breakfast snacks – donated by ESD and Mo - \$30 value; Pizza lunch - \$110; Transportation via school bus.

**PROCEDURE:** I learned of the conference in October and began soliciting student interest. All CHOICE Students were invited to attend. All CHOICE students are GEAR UP eligible. Students who regularly participate in the “PRIDE CATS” lunch support group contributed to planning, with one student including their parent as a co-chaperone. 12 students participated in leadership summit; an additional 3 participated in the “art zone” screen printing sessions. On 3/13/15, students met with Howard Leggett to learn about screen print/street art culture and sketch. Collaborative art theory and more sketch instruction on 3/20/13. Hands-on screen-printing on 3/27/15 and attend the conference on 3/28/15.

The event was a total success, increased student attendance and productivity amongst attendees, fostered safer and more inclusive school culture to benefit ALL students, promoted a “Transgender Awareness” school-wide assembly later that month. Could be replicated in any community by partnering with local LGBTQAI+ support groups or other local college diversity offices. CHOICE was the only high school in attendance, most were community college groups. Our students were the only “rural” attendees and were affectional supported as “country cousins” and embraced by the larger group.

We know that LGBTQAI+ youth have significantly increased rates of dropout, homelessness, addiction, self-harm and suicide – this event was community-wide validation of their core human need for acceptance. Many of these students have experiences of feeling ostracized in traditional education systems or have experienced bullying/trauma in school settings due to queer identity. Learning and socializing in queer safe space until 10PM provided invaluable positive school memories for students who might otherwise feel disenfranchised from heteronormative school culture events, i.e.: “prom” etc. All students should have access to both a high quality education and positive high school memories; this was a validating experience for our local queer students, which reminded them that CHOICE is a school where they are welcome and safe, and now they are excited to begin community college and/or university!

# CHOICE Alternative School



“PRIDE CATS” & “QUEER I AM”  
Youth Leadership Conference  
@ South Puget Sound Community College

# PRIDE CATS

## LGBTQAI+ SUPPORT GROUP

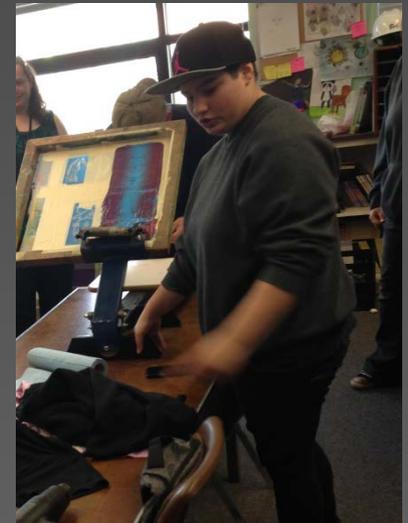
- ◉ POWERFULLY
- ◉ RALLYING
- ◉ INCLUSION
- ◉ DIVERSITY &
- ◉ EQUALITY
  
- ◉ CRUSAIDING
- ◉ AGAINST
- ◉ TRADITIONAL
- ◉ SYSTEMS!



- Supports are always available in individual settings, past groups have dissolved, no group was meeting in Sept.
- Formed out of student request/mandate!
- Small school – responsive to student interest. GEAR UP staff are able to support extracurricular activities we would otherwise be limited in offering due to staff size.
- Weekly support meetings, increased visibility, reinforcing an inclusive & welcoming campus.



# PRIDE CATS @ Art Zone



# “County Cousins” Representing Shelton and CHOICE with PRIDE!



# QUEER I AM

- Student leadership summit focusing on community college students, welcomed local HS participants – CHOICE only HS in attendance.
- Dr. Tim Stokes – less than 10 openly gay college presidents in the US today.
- Focus on intersection of identity; culture, gender, sexuality, generational, and socioeconomic.  
**Validation and belonging on multiple levels!**
- 8AM-6PM Educational workshops.
- 6PM-10 PM Dinner, Open Mic, DJ and dance party.



Dream with PRIDE, live with PRIDE, thrive  
with PRIDE & GEAR UP with PRIDE!



...LEAD BY EXAMPLE

## QUEER I AM COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

### GROWING PAINS

Ignorance is bliss. To go about our lives not knowing that injustices happen is blissful. Awareness and knowledge is power. You will be a better person for going through this struggle. Be committed to your personal growth, despite the probability of discomfort.

### FEEL GUILT

Work from a place of understanding and responsibility for one's actions and empowerment, not from a place of guilt. Acknowledge and articulate the role that guilt has in your developmental process. Feel guilty only if you have done something to feel guilty about.

### EDUCATE YOURSELF

Read books and magazines, see movies, and check out websites that don't have people like you in them. Utilize opportunities within your community to interact with people from different backgrounds than your own.

### IT'S OKAY TO MAKE MISTAKES

Expect to make mistakes – they are learning experiences – but do not use them as an excuse for non-action or to justify wrong doings.

### DO THE RIGHT THING

Do not tell jokes or tolerate prejudiced humor. To initiate, perpetuate or participate is wrong. To say nothing to someone is wrong. Silence gives license.

### WORK WITHIN YOUR WORLD

The only way to eradicate -isms is for people to stand up and say, "This is not right." You need to stand up for those who cannot, but don't assume that because that someone doesn't address the issue they can't speak for themselves.

### BECOME ANGRY

Acknowledge and articulate the role anger plays in your learning process. You may become angry because you've been lied to or uninformed. Accept it, embrace it, and use it to fuel your desire for social change.

### EXPERIENCE ANXIETY

Information can be stressful and overwhelming. Take time to digest and process the information you receive, and use your peers and mentors to help you.

### FEEL EMPOWERED

Everyone has personal power. Embrace it. Use it to create social change.

YOU GET OUT WHAT YOU PUT IT.....

## QUEER I AM COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

### BE YOURSELF

Take time to honor the past and present. Learn about who you are and where you come from. Do not lose your identity in the identity of others. You do not have to be them to understand and empathize with what they have gone through.

### SELF-LOVE

Celebrate culture, beginning with your own. Self-love is most important. Everyone has a culture – it is what makes you who you are! One culture is not better than another – remember that cultures have been used to target and judge people wrongly. Trust your integrity within your surrounding community because it is the right thing to do.

### DEMONSTRATE RESPECT

It is not easy to respect differences, attitudes, lifestyles, experiences, ideologies and languages. So don't expect it to be without ups and downs. Don't be an idealist or a pessimist; be realistic. Show respect for yourself and others.

### SUPPORT SYSTEM

Have a support system of friends, peers and loved ones who will: listen, engage in conversations with you, challenge your biases, understand what you may be experiencing, encourage your learning and motivate you to continue learning.

### EDUCATE OTHERS

Work to educate your surrounding community (friends, school, family, work, etc.) and expect support from other allies. Utilize the people around you to advance your learning – teachers, peers, elders, parents, mentors, etc. Do not expect a particular group to have all the answers.

### DEAL WITH DIVERSITY DAILY

Embrace diversity within your day-to-day life. Do not treat it as if you need to "get done with it." You should bring up topics and interact with people regularly – not just once a year during history months, when something bad happens, or when you have a particular person present.

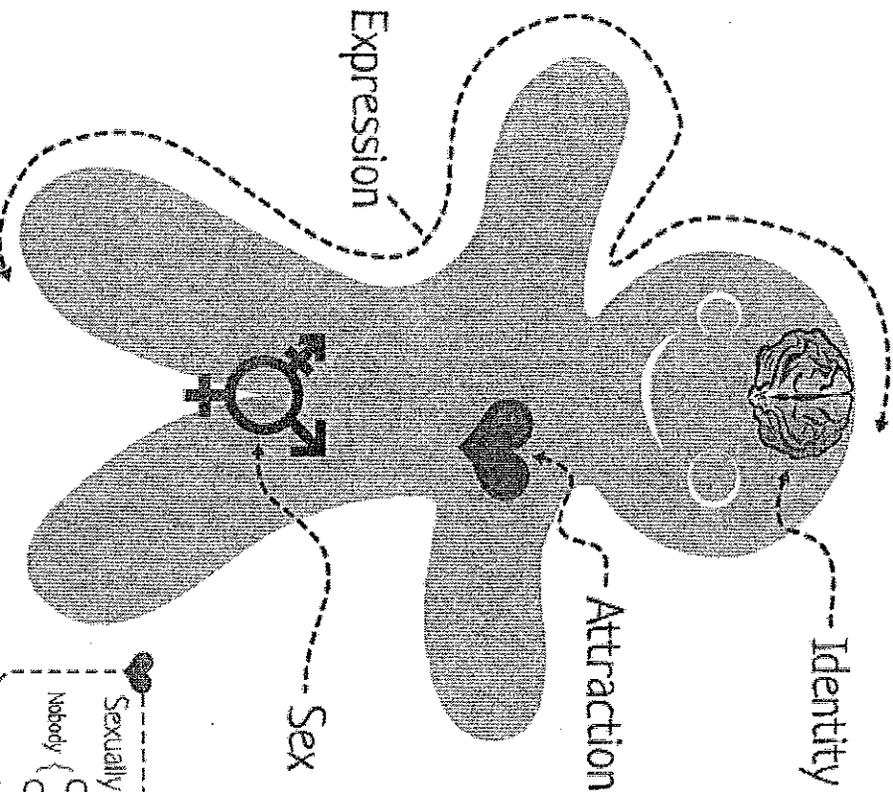
### EXPERIENCE FEAR

Acknowledge and articulate the role that fear has operated in your life – fear of learning about injustices, fear of cultural groups, or fear of the unknown. Racism, prejudice, bias and injustices are learned and can be unlearned.

# The Genderbread Person v3.3

by *its pronounced* [METROsexual.com](http://www.itspronouncedMETROsexual.com)

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like Inception, Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more. In fact, that's the idea.



**Gender Identity**

How you, in your head, define your gender, based on how much you align (or don't align) with what you understand to be the options for gender:

**Man-ness**
 **Woman-ness**

**Genderbread Person**
 **Genderbread Person**

Put a pin in both genders in each category to represent your identity, unlike all my efforts to form your Genderbread.

4 of 1000 possible pin and label combos

**Gender Expression**

The ways you present gender through your actions, dress, and demeanor and how those presentations are interpreted based on gender norms.

**Feminine**
 **Masculine**

**Genderbread Person**
 **Genderbread Person**

**Biological Sex**

The physical sex characteristics you're born with and develop, including genitalia, body shape, voice pitch, body hair, hormones, chromosomes, etc.

**Female-ness**
 **Male-ness**

**Genderbread Person**
 **Genderbread Person**

**Sexually Attracted to**

**Woman/Females/Femininity**
 **Men/Males/Masculinity**

**Nobody**

**Romantically Attracted to**

**Woman/Females/Femininity**
 **Men/Males/Masculinity**

**Nobody**

For a bigger bite, read more at <http://www.itspronouncedMETROsexual.com>

In each category, draw as they apply to you and put a pin, dropping the aspects of gender toward which you experience attraction.