

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LGBTQ Community To March for Racial Justice *Protest scheduled for Sunday, June 7th at 2PM, rain or shine*

South Orange, N.J. — A coalition of New Jersey LGBTQ+ and ally organizations will lead a march and rally in support of #BlackLivesMatter, to protest racial injustice and systemic racism, and to raise awareness that white privilege in the queer community has gone unrecognized, unowned and unchallenged.

Event name: Walk With Us For Black Queer Lives

Date/time: Sunday, June 7th @ 2PM (gathering at 1:45)

March route: Step off from Ivy Hill Park (Mt. Vernon Place and Seton Hall University, Newark), walk down South Orange Avenue to rally at South Orange Village Center

Please note: We will be practicing social distancing. All participants are asked to wear a mask or face covering. Those who want to hold signs can make their own or download them here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yapyhjtr>

Statement from the organizers:

We in the queer community understand that before we can do anything to dismantle white supremacy around us, we need to dismantle white supremacy within us. For decades, white queer organizations from the local to the international level have centered and amplified the voices of white cisgender queer people, while diminishing or ignoring the voices of Black leaders. Yet, the modern queer liberation movement was forged by Black and Brown transgender people through protest and activism, beginning with the bravery of Marsha P. Johnson and Silvia Rivera, who led the Stonewall Uprising 50 years ago.

Despite this, we acknowledge that racism and transphobia exist within the LGBTQ+ community. Far from remembering the origins of our movement as a response to police brutality, many queer organizations have been silent or have gone as far as to partner with police, illustrating a stark lack of awareness of the violent treatment by law enforcement of Black queer people—who are literally dying to be free.

We also acknowledge that to proclaim #blacklivesmatter is to proclaim that the lives of *all* Black people matter, including the lives of Black transgender people, who have been the targets

of violence so disproportionate as to lead the American Medical Association to label the trend “an epidemic” last June. Last year alone, our community lost more than 25 transgender people to violence—the vast majority of were Black women. And the most recent loss of our brother Tony McDade, shot and killed by police in Tallahassee, Florida, painfully highlights the vulnerability of Black trans folks at the hands of both vigilantes and police.

We must turn our mourning into anger and action. At this time, this collaborative group of organizations acknowledges the vital importance of Black voices in queer organizing. Intersectionality in the LGBTQ+ movement must be intentional and it must be an explicit commitment that organizations and individuals make to:

- Address issues of racial justice within our organizations and membership
- Center the lived experiences of Black and Brown leaders and experiences in the LGBTQ+ movement, especially those of Black trans women
- Build structures that support homeless youth of color
- Bring Black and Brown voices to the leadership tables within all LGBTQ+ organizations
- Channel resources to Black queer and trans-focused groups
- Participate in the movement toward demilitarization of police forces
- Create a leadership collective for New Jersey LGBTQ orgs to encourage collaboration and resource sharing.

We march for Tony McDade, Nina Pop, Mya Hall, Dana Martin, Chynal Lindsey, Bee Love Slater, Jazzaline Ware, Ashanti Carmon, Claire Legato, Muhlaysia Booker, Michelle “Tamika” Washington, Paris Cameron, Chanel Scurlock, Zoe Spears, Brooklyn Lindsey, Denali Berries Stuckey, Tracy Single, Bubba Walker, Kiki Fantroy, Pebbles LaDime Doe, Bailey Reeves and the many other Black queer people whose names we may not know. Additionally, we recognize the survivors of violence who have often gone on to participate in the intersectional fights of queer, trans, and racial liberation themselves.

The cisgender, queer white community has been complacent for far too long. Now is the time to stand up and be counted.

Participating organizations:

African American Office of Gay Concerns
Bloomfield Pride
Brick City Mutual Aid
Circle of Friends
Garden State Equality
HiTOPS
HMI:NJ
Newark Gay Pride
Newark LGBTQ Community Center
Newark Pride Alliance

North Jersey Community Research Initiative
North Jersey DSA Queer Caucus
North Jersey Pride
Project WOW
Queer Newark Oral History Project
RAD Family
RU Pride
Rutgers University-Newark Intercultural Resource Center
SOMa Action
SOMa Justice
The PRIDE Center
Unity Fellowship Church NewArk
University Hospital