

PRIDE MONTH MATTERS – NOW MORE THAN EVER

In the early morning of June 28th, 1969, a series of events began that would mark a turning point for the fight for LGBTQ rights. Later known as the Stonewall Riots, these six days of protests sparked a wave of activism for the gay rights movement in not only the United States, but around the world.

At the time, the **Stonewall Inn in New York City** was one of the largest gay clubs in the US that was frequented by homeless LGBTQ teens, trans people of color, lesbians, drag queens, gay men and many others that faced social discrimination elsewhere. People gathered there to be able to freely express themselves without judgement but were commonly met by police raids that ended in violence and arrests. The frustration that came from the unfair police brutality and mistreatment pushed the patrons to band together to fight for their community and there are now annual LGBTQ Pride events and celebrations worldwide, held in June in commemoration of the Stonewall Riots.

Why is an awareness of this history important now more than ever?

As of mid-April there were eight Anti-LGBTQ laws enacted in various states with another ten awaiting governor's signatures. In fact, Alphonso David, Human Rights Campaign President wrote, "*Hundreds of bills have been introduced in state legislatures around the country that attempt to erase transgender people [and] make LGBTQ people second class citizens.*"

HomeFirst Services strives to create a lasting impact in our local communities and prioritizes making it a safe place for everyone; whether that be for our employees, people we serve or other groups and organizations that we collaborate with. We welcome those from all walks of life and strongly believe that all persons should be treated with dignity and respect and without discrimination, regardless of age, sex, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. We recognize the struggle and seek to be part of the solution.

HomeFirst Services employees receive mandatory training surrounding equal access and inclusivity for LGBTQ individuals within the homeless housing and service system. **We celebrate having a diverse workplace as well as diversity within those we serve and will continue to be an ally in support of the LGBTQ community.**

STONEWALL RIOTS



*"No, this wasn't a 1960s student riot. Out there were the streets. There were no nice dorms for sleeping. No school cafeteria for certain food. No affluent parents to send us checks. There was a ghetto riot on home turf. We already had our war wounds. So this was just another battle. Nobody thought of it as history, herstory, my-story, your-story, or our-story. **We were being denied a place to dance together. That's all.***

*The total charisma of a revolution in our CONSCIOUSNESS rising from the gutter to the gut to the heart and the mind was here. Non-existence (or part existence) was coming into being, and being into becoming. **Our Mother Stonewall was giving birth to a new era and we were the midwives.***

— New York Public
Library, *The Stonewall Reader*

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