

Dear OUTWORDS friends,

As always, we hope that you and yours are doing as well as can be expected right now. We've been making some changes here at OUTWORDS, and wanted to share some of our process with you.



But first, I want to share a quote from the posthumous editorial of civil rights legend John Lewis, who died this past July 17th. In his editorial, John Lewis wrote, “You must study and learn the lessons of history, because humanity has been involved in this soul-wrenching existential struggle for a very long time. People on every continent have stood in your shoes, through decades and centuries before you. The truth does not change, and that is why the answers worked out long ago can help you find

solutions to the challenges of our time.”

More than anything I've ever read or said, this quote sums up for me the mission of OUTWORDS — specifically, the belief that answers “worked out long ago” can inform our present pursuit of equity and justice for all. I feel so honored that John Lewis understood history the way we do. OUTWORDS thanks John Lewis for his life and his work, which included advocating wholeheartedly for the rights of LGBTQ+ people. He is missed; but his work continues on many important fronts.

ANTI-RACISM WORK



As we're sure has also been true for many of you, the protests across the country have led OUTWORDS to some deep reflection, and exploration of how to turn reflection into education, and education into action.

Here are a couple of ways we are working this out:

- Our entire team is participating in [The Adaway Group's Whiteness At Work](#) course to learn, more concretely, how white supremacy shows up in the workplace and how we can address it.

- OUTWORDS has also signed the [Anti-Racist Small Business Pledge](#), which spells out how we will implement anti-racist practices in specific, ongoing ways.

We aren't sharing these steps to pat ourselves on the back, but to be transparent about our failings as well as our successes, and to hopefully provide leadership. Our commitment to "being the change we want to see in the world" requires time and money, and we would not be able to do this work without you. Thank you for your support in this important area. We will keep you posted on our progress.

INTERVIEWING IN THE AGE OF COVID

Since its inception, OUTWORDS' model has been to travel in-person to subjects' homes and interview them with a camera crew. Obviously, this model is no longer viable, especially as LGBTQ+ elders are among some of the most vulnerable to Coronavirus. How, we asked ourselves, might we continue this work?

Through some trial and error, we've arrived at a new interview format, one that goes above and beyond the quality that would be possible by simply recording a Zoom interview. We've started sending out equipment kits to interview subjects, including webcams, microphones, and small lights - everything duly sanitized - so that we might capture the highest-quality video possible, even from a distance. (See photo of interviewee Roy Ashburn receiving his OUTWORDS equipment kit last week in San Luis Obispo, California!) Thank you to our generous donors for underwriting the equipment, labor, and shipping costs that make it possible to continue our mission!



MEET THE INTERNS

This summer, we've been so thrilled to welcome two new members to our team — Sommer Alex and Axel Rivera-De Leon!

Sommer Alex is an incoming second year undergrad at Stanford, intending to pursue



a BA in Science, Technology, and Society with a minor in Education. She's an advocate for Stanford's First-Generation and/or Low-Income (FLI) community, an advisor for low-income high school students, and organizes projects and workshops to increase her fellow students' financial literacy. In her time at OUTWORDS, Sommer is working to increase our social media presence, especially on Twitter, and producing a series of mini-interviews

focusing on LGBTQ+ elders who have experienced incarceration.

Axel Rivera-De Leon is a rising junior at Stanford, majoring in Human Biology with a concentration in Neuroscience. He plans on attending medical school and pursuing a career in trauma surgery. He's the founder of the Stanford Happiness Collective, and has been an emergency room volunteer and a peer counselor. Axel lives with his mom, dad, two sisters, four dogs, a cat, and a parrot (it's a bit of a zoo...).



At OUTWORDS, he's been designing lesson plans around the LGBTQ+ histories shared by our subjects, such as Dean Hamer's discovery of the gay gene, Evan Wolfson's fight for same sex marriage rights, Miss Major's participation in the Stonewall Riots, and Charles Silverstein's struggle to reclassify homosexuality from being a mental disorder. Axel is also organizing a webinar on music in the LGBTQ+ community — more on that below.

Many thanks to our donors for supporting a project that, clearly, is important and impactful to the next generation of LGBTQ+ activists!

MUSIC AND QUEER HEALING

Join us on August 20th at 5pm PST for Music and Queer Healing, a webinar on the evolution of music in the

OUTWORDS
THEOUTWORDSARCHIVE.ORG
presents **Music and
Queer Healing**


A webinar on music as a tool for escapism,
counterculture, and healing in the
LGBTQ+ community

Featuring a Q&A panel with
OUTWORDS interviewees
and DJ Skype Williams

**Thursday, August 20th
5pm PST**

Register on Zoom:
bit.ly/QueerMusic

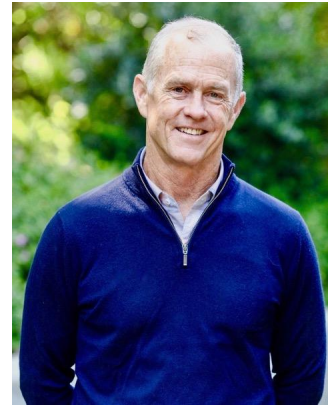
PARENTAL
ADVISORY
"MAYBE" CONTENT



LGBTQ+ community. Our community is one of lovers, fighters, and creators, and the music in our culture certainly reflects that. From headbanging to sashaying, come learn about how music has backed our fight and supported our love for decades. DJ Skype Williams and OUTWORDS interviewee and drag queen Donna Sachet will join us for a Q&A panel. We hope to see you there! The event is free and open to the public, but requires registration on Zoom. Register for the

event here: bit.ly/lgbtqmusic.

In closing, please let me say again that none of this would be possible without you. Individual donors are the lifeblood of any non-profit organization, and OUTWORDS is no different. And as a reminder: *recurring donations* are the *creme de la creme* of non-profit fundraising. To initiate a recurring donation to OUTWORDS — even \$10/month would mean so much to us — click [here](#).



In Gratitude,

Mason Funk
Executive Director, OUTWORDS

"You must ... study and learn the lessons of history, because humanity has been involved in this soul-wrenching existential struggle for a very long time. People on every continent have stood in your shoes, through decades and centuries before you. The truth does not change, and that is why the answers worked out long ago can help you find solutions to the challenges of our time."

—John Lewis



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