

**From:** Official ESU Email  
**Sent:** Monday, June 22, 2020  
**Subject:** A Message from Dr. Santiago Solis on Pride Month

Happy Pride Month Warriors!

On June 15, 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court determined that sexual orientation and gender identity are covered under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This landmark decision finally grants LGBTQAI+ individuals important rights, deeming employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity unlawful. Before this decision, people within the LGBTQAI+ community could still be fired simply for who they love or how they identify.

All month of June is a celebration of the LGBTQAI+ community. While Pride has evolved into celebration, its roots stem from a response to oppression, the Stonewall Riots in late June of 1969. While some of you know about the Riots, did you know that two of the main activists were Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, trans women of color? If you didn't, this highlights the need for us to understand the intersectionality of the LGBTQAI+ community.

This month is the time to celebrate how far we have come as individuals and as a community, remember those who never got to see support, and those who continue the fight for full and equal participation in our culture. Coming out to family and friends takes immense courage because you never know how others will react. Some see support and love, others are kicked out of the only home they've ever known. Many still encounter violence. Some even death.

Marsha P. Johnson reminds us: *No pride for some of us without liberation for all of us!* How will you help achieve social justice for LGBTQAI+ individuals? Consider getting involved with The Trevor Project and True Colors United, nationwide organizations that are committed to helping LGBTQAI+ youth in crisis by offering mental health and housing assistance as well as educating allies. Read up on LGBTQAI+ history. Talk to your family and friends about their views on gender and sexual identities. Integrate this material into your courses and your programs.

ESU sponsors numerous programs and services to help you become a better LGBTQAI+ ally. One of these is Safe Zone Training. If you want more information, to sign up, or schedule a training for your organization, email Ariel Tucci (She/ Her/ Hers), Interim Director of the Gender & Sexuality Center, at [atucci@esu.edu](mailto:atucci@esu.edu)

Together, we can all help each other become true champions of social justice, and follow the Ways of the Warrior!

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**Black Lives Matter!**  
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