



For Local 8 Members at Crisis Connections

June 8, 2023

Happy Pride!

As part of Pride Month, OPEIU is very proud to unveil two special buttons designed by Local 8 member, Blake Van Oosbree!



Blake has worked at Crisis Connections as a Crisis Intervention Specialist for over three years and is also currently enrolled in a certificate program for UX/UI Design. When not at work or school, Blake enjoys gymnastics, cooking, and watching telenovelas and Thai BL dramas. Blake is a gay/queer male and a Gemini (happy belated birthday!). When asked what Pride Month means to him, he said, "Pride Month, to me, is a time to acknowledge your sexuality is important and also something to celebrate. For me, it's also a time for queer and straight people to come together."

Thank you, Blake, for sharing your artistry with us! These buttons will be available on the union bulletin board in the kitchen of the Belltown office.

OPEIU Local 8 celebrates Pride in solidarity with our LGBTQ+ sisters, brothers, and siblings. We believe in full equality. We oppose all forms of discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. And for all of our members in the LGBTQ+ community, we see you, we value you, we acknowledge your courage, we appreciate your resilience, you belong. Your fight against oppressive power structures is our fight too. Queer rights and workers' rights are inseparable.



More Than a Parade: The History and Importance of Pride

Happy Pride! The month of June is dedicated to honoring and celebrating the LGBTQ+ community. Pride Month, also known as Gay Pride, is observed with joyful celebrations, reflection, and activism that uplift queer voices, celebrate queer culture, support queer rights, and highlight the progress made in the fight for equality.

Pride Month observes years of struggle for civil rights and the ongoing pursuit of equal justice under the law for the LGBTQ+ community. Unfortunately, the battle for LGBTQ+ rights is far from over. Extremist lawmakers are advancing anti-LGBTQ legislation in states across the country. 45 laws have been enacted so far this year, including: laws banning gender-affirming care for trans youth, laws requiring or allowing misgendering of trans students, laws targeting drag performances, laws overturning protections against discrimination, and laws censoring school curriculum and banning books.



"To be afraid is to behave as if the truth were not true." — Bayard Rustin

Pride month is important. It intentionally creates space for people of all LGBTQ+ identities, instilling a sense of community and comradery while celebrating queer life. Pride festivities often include colorful parades, picnics, protests, parties, drag performances, music, dancing, and memorials.

Gay Pride commemorates the Stonewall rebellion, which began in the early hours of June 28, 1969, as an uprising against police brutality after the NYPD violently raided a popular gay bar called the Stonewall Inn, and roughly hauled off employees and patrons—a majority of whom were Black or brown. This event at Stonewall provided

the spark that ignited the LGBTQ rights movement in the U.S. The following year, the first Pride marches took place in Manhattan, Los Angeles, and Chicago memorializing the one-year anniversary of Stonewall.

It wasn't until 30 years later that Pride Month was officially recognized by the U.S. government, when President Bill Clinton signed a proclamation declaring June "Gay and Lesbian Pride Month." Since then, President Barack Obama proclaimed June to be "LGBT Pride Month" and President Joe Biden expanded the declaration to observe "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) Pride Month."

"No pride for some of us without liberation for all of us." – Marsha P. Johnson

Pride is about showing solidarity with all marginalized queer identities. Pride promotes radical self-acceptance and self-affirmation- recognizing that to be yourself is truly a revolutionary act! Pride is about being visible and proudly so. It demands dignity, fights for equality, and rejects shame. Celebrating Pride means honoring prior decades of LGBTQ+ activism and organizing and continuing the fight.

With pride, we shout: "We're here, we're queer, get used to it!"

Questions or concerns? Reach Valarie at valarie@opeiu8.org or Phoebe at phoebe@opeiu8.org or by calling 206-441-8880 ext. 103 (Valarie) or ext. 119 (Phoebe).



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