



MEDIA ADVISORY
For Immediate Release
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NEW NATIONAL REPORT CALLS FOR INCREASED LGBTQ YOUTH ORGANIZING TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS, VIOLENCE AND OTHER MAJOR ISSUES FACING LGBTQ YOUTH

FIERCE to Release Report in conjunction with First-ever LGBTQ Youth of Color Organizing Summit at Creating Change Conference in Dallas, TX

WHAT: FIERCE, a NYC-based youth-led organization dedicated to building the leadership and power of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) youth of color, will be releasing key findings and recommendations from a new report—*Coming Out, Stepping Up: Organizing to Build the Power of LGBTQ Youth*.

The report, which was conducted as part of FIERCE's emerging national program, is based on a needs assessment survey of LGBTQ youth organizations to identify the major challenges facing LGBTQ youth and ways to address these challenges to create real change in the daily lives of young people. *Coming Out, Stepping Up* summarizes key findings and provides recommendations for how organizations can strengthen their work to build a more effective LGBTQ youth movement. The report also calls on national LGBTQ organizations and funders to prioritize the needs of LGBTQ youth and to increase resources for youth organizing as a strategy for change.

This report is being released in conjunction with the **first-ever national LGBTQ Youth of Color Organizing Summit**, which will bring together nearly 30 youth from 11 organizations across the country to build their youth organizing skills. The Summit is a critical opportunity for youth of color to share approaches on how they can build their political power and engage in strategic dialogues about the direction of LGBTQ youth organizing and its relationship to the LGBTQ movement. Summit participants will partake in interactive youth-led trainings on the fundamentals of youth organizing, including base-building and campaign strategy development.

WHO: Interview Opportunities with the following Summit participants:

- Ash Hammond, FIERCE Youth Member, National Committee
- Elegost Rosado, FIERCE Youth Member, National Committee
- Derrick Shenault, Gender JUST Youth Member, Chicago, IL
- Glo Ross, FIERCE Movement-Building Coordinator
- Rickke Mananzala, FIERCE Executive Director

WHEN: Thursday, January 28, 2010: Online release of *Coming Out, Stepping Up*
Wednesday, February 3, 2010: LGBTQ Youth of Color Organizing Summit
Saturday, February 6, 2010: Report Presentation by FIERCE Youth Members at Creating Change Conference, Morning Plenary

WHERE: Creating Change Conference

Sheraton Dallas Hotel
400 North Olive Street
Dallas, TX

WHY: LGBTQ youth, particularly youth of color, increasingly experience homelessness, poverty, lack of safe public spaces, and decreasing access to social services. Unfortunately, many LGBTQ youth organizations are not in a position to adequately address immediate needs or the root causes of these growing problems.

Youth organizing as a strategy for changing the conditions facing LGBTQ youth is a critical and proven strategy because it builds the capacity of young people to be the leaders in identifying and demanding the solutions to their problems. Currently, most LGBTQ youth organizations that exist across the country primarily focus on providing services.

Youth organizations across the country overwhelmingly lack the capacity to build the political power of LGBTQ youth and develop effective youth organizing strategies. Additionally, the issues prioritized by LGBTQ youth of color are not the same issues currently being addressed by most LGBTQ organizations, particularly those with the most resources and capacity.

Please note that the LGBTQ Youth of Color Organizing Summit will be closed to the media, but interviews with summit participants can be arranged.

Embargoed copies of the Full Report are available. Please contact Ellen Vaz at 646-336-6789 ext. 209 or ellen@fiercenyc.org for more information or to schedule interviews.