

# A TLANTA PRIDE



Specialized Committee

February 14-16, 2025

[www.gtmun.gatech.edu](http://www.gtmun.gatech.edu)

**Committee**

*The First Atlanta Pride, 1971*



**Georgia Tech  
Model United  
Nations**

#TECHMUN 2025

**BRIDGING  
TECHNOLOGY  
AND  
DIPLOMACY**



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# ***CONTENT DISCLAIMER***

Model United Nations offers an opportunity for delegates to diplomatically engage with topics of global importance and meaningfully explore possibilities for conflict resolution. Many of the topics at hand may involve sensitive or controversial subject matter. We ask delegates to be respectful and professional when engaging with their committee and communicating with fellow delegates and TECHMUN Collegiate Conference staff. The below content warning is meant to warn you of potentially controversial topics that are present in the content of this background guide, as well as content that may appear in other aspects of the committee (e.g. debate, speeches, directives) so that you can prepare yourself before reading this background guide and participating in committee or opt-out of this entirely.

4 In the First Atlanta Pride Planning Committee, delegates may be involved in discussions and may receive crisis updates covering death, classism, racism, sexism, homophobia, war crimes, natural disasters, illnesses, and political suppression.

At TECHMUN Collegiate Conference, we take equity violations very seriously and require delegates to fully comply with our equity guidelines. Failure to do so will result in an immediate disqualification from awards and you may be asked to leave the conference. Please remain respectful in committee, and avoid overgeneralizations as well as take into account individual differences and contexts during your speeches. If you have any questions regarding our equity guidelines, we encourage you to reach out to one of our staff members.

If, because of this committee's content warning, you wish to request switching committees, please email the TECHMUN administrative team with a brief explanation of your concerns based on this committee's content warning and your request to switch. You will be contacted shortly regarding your request.

STOP POLICE ATTACKS FROM  
MIAMI TO ATLANTA! SAY NO TO  
RACISM, SEXISM, ANTI-GAY BILLS

WORKERS

WORLD

PARTY



# LETTERS FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

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*Hello everyone,*

*My name is Gita Pavuluri and I am a chemical and biomolecular engineering student at Georgia Tech. This year, I am the Director General for the TechMUN collegiate conference. This specialized committee was born from much debate over potential topics and then hard work and love being poured in to craft the committee.*

*I hope each of you loves being a delegate under the unique set of challenges of this time and place. I cannot wait to see how your creative model UN skills work on event planning with the high stakes and longevity in mind. See you in 1970!*

*Sincerely,  
Gita Pavuluri*

*Dear Delegates,*

*Hi, my name is Isa Simon, and I am a international affairs and modern languages major with a concentration in Chinese and minor in sustainable cities here at Georgia Tech, and I would like to welcome you to TECHMUN. As your assistant Director-General, I would especially love to introduce you to TECHMUN's specialized General Assembly: The First Atlanta Pride (1971) committee.*

*This committee topic was really beloved by our team and lots of dedication and care went into planning this planning committee out; Thus I hope that all of the delegates attending will give this committee the love and respect it deserves. Given the nature of this specialized committee, we encourage all delegates to reach out to the Dais or DG-team about any confusion regarding the limits of discussion, your character, or anything else that you feel is unclear to you.*

*That being said, as a delegate of this committee, your character is tasked with planning the inaugural Atlanta Pride in the year of 1971, navigating the socio-political climate of the early 1970s raising crises left and right impacting the planning process, as well as influencing the other committee members to create the Pride that your character wants to see. We hope to see your unique solutions in this specialized committee and wish you the best of luck at this year's TECHMUN!*

*Best,  
Isabella Simon*

Isabella Simon  
Assistant Director General, The First Atlanta Pride, 1971

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-GAY BI  
PARTY

**GAY  
IS  
GOOD**





# **LETTER FROM THE DAIS**

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Hello Delegates!

My name is Kaeli Lawrence, and I am a public policy major at Georgia Tech with a minor in pre-law and sustainable cities. It is my honor to welcome you to the inaugural Atlanta Pride Parade Planning Committee! I hope that you leave this conference with a deeper understanding of the sociopolitical climate of the 1970s and, more importantly, an appreciation for the dedication that went into organizing this landmark event.

As your director, I encourage you to come to this conference with an open mind and approach every topic with humility and compassion. While the debate will center around controversial subjects, it is essential to address them with respect and professionalism. If you ever have doubts or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask. It is my responsibility to foster an inclusive environment that promotes learning and thoughtful debate.

Given the current socio political climate, reflecting on our past is more crucial than ever. However, with that being said, the Dias asks you to focus debate within the context of the 1970s rather than within a modern-day lens.

The Atlanta Pride Parade would not have been made possible without the collaboration—and sometimes dissent—of committee members. The Dias values respectful disagreement, as it is through fruitful debate that a truly impactful event can emerge.

As a delegate of this committee, you will confront both the internal conflicts of planning a national event and the external challenges of public perception and the broader geopolitical climate. The stakes have never been higher for the planning committee, but I am excited to hear all of the ideas brought forth to make the first Atlanta Pride Parade unforgettable. Good luck to you all, and I look forward to meeting you in a few short weeks!

Sincerely,  
Kaeli Lawrence

**Kaeli Lawrence**  
**Chair, The First Atlanta Pride, 1971**

# TERMS TO KNOW

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**Gay Liberation Movement** - Socio-Political movement that arose in the late 1960s advocating for LGBTQ+ rights and freedoms

**Stonewall Riots** - Series of protests for LGBTQ+ rights and freedoms beginning in New York named after the Stonewall Inn, which welcomed queer individuals. Led by LGBTQ+ trailblazers such as Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera.

**Closeted** - Any individual who has not publicly disclosed their queer identity, often due to fear of discrimination, backlash, or judgement.

**Out** - Opposite of closeted, for a LGBTQ+ individual to be 'out' meant that their queer identity was publicly disclosed to some degree. Additionally, one could be out among certain groups but closeted amongst another.

**Homophobia** -Prejudice, discrimination, or hostility directed at LGBTQ+ individuals.

**Lavender Scare** - Named in parallelism of McCarthyism and the Second Red Scare, this refers to the moral panic regarding LGBTQ+ individuals in government being national security risk and communists sympathizers resulting in mass dismissal in government work.

**Lavender Marriage** - A legal marriage between a gay man, lesbian and/or heterosexual, meant to hide the sexual orientation of one or both partners.

**Anti-Sodomy Laws** - criminalized oral or anal sex. These laws were used against the queer community to criminalize sexual interaction, even though they generally applied to both heterosexual and homosexual couples

# TERMS TO KNOW

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**Counterculture** - Sociopolitical of the 60s and 70s primarily led by young adults that rejected mainstream American ideals and pushed for societal change, gave birth to hippie-culture, widespread drug usage, as well as championed anti-establishment, anti-war, and anti-consumerism

**Vietnam War** - A proxy war lasting from 1955-1975 following the end of French colonized Indochina, between communist-backed North Vietnam with support from China and Russia, and capitalist-backed South Vietnam with support from the United States. Also known as the first 'television,' coverage on the war made this issue widely divisive. The United States withdrew under Nixon in 1973, following domestic opposition and inability to win the war. (\*Note that in this committee, the Vietnam War is only to be discussed on whether the committee should include itself in Anti-Vietnam protest movement into Pride, not whether the war was justified or not)

**Civil Rights Movement** - A broader social movement advocating for racial equality in the United States.

**Grassroots Organization** - Community-based efforts to mobilize people for a cause, often relying on volunteers and local networks.

**Allyship** - Support from non-LGBTQ+ individuals/ LGBTQ+ groups.

**Intersectional Activism** - Advocacy that addresses the overlapping struggles of different marginalized groups, such as LGBTQ+ people of color.

# Background

## Context

The 60s and 70s in the United States was a period of significant social change, and the LGBTQ+ community was at the forefront of the struggle for civil rights. The first pride marches were on June 28th, 1970, one year after the Stonewall Uprising. Before Stonewall, the LGBTQIA+ community had used more covert methods to fight for their rights. Events such as the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War encouraged the LGBTQIA+ community to switch tactics. The Gay Liberation Movement, or GLM, was ramping up, and social tensions were high in America. After the Stonewall Riots, the GLM and radical lesbians began using more radical political strategies to be heard. However, the American government had policies in place to sustain the current discrimination of the LGBTQIA+ community.

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<https://www.campuspride.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/stone-wall.jpg>

During the late 1960s, every state in America but one, criminalized any form of sexual intimacy. There was no protection from discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. To the American Psychiatric Association, homosexuality was

classified as a psychiatric disorder. Gathering places for the LGBTQIA+ community were often raided by police. Harassment of the LGBTQIA+ community was a normality.

1970 was a year of tremendous accomplishments for the LGBTQIA+ community, but it also came with significant challenges due to the pervasive stigmatization of LGBTQIA+ individuals. Planning events like Pride required overcoming numerous obstacles, including securing funding, navigating legal barriers, and obtaining permits from government and city officials. Anti-LGBTQIA+ laws dominated legislation, and events were often deemed illegal under vague charges like public indecency or loitering, leaving participants vulnerable to arrest. Police hostility, heightened by the aftermath of the Stonewall Riots, further endangered parade-goers, who also faced threats from anti-LGBTQIA+ groups such as religious organizations and far-right factions. In cities like Atlanta, where cultural conservatism was deeply entrenched, LGBTQIA+ individuals risked legal persecution, harassment, and social ostracism. Despite the rise in activism inspired by Stonewall, the South's opposition from religious and political leaders made organizing Pride events openly and safely a daunting task, with organizers forced to establish safety measures to protect participants in the face of violence and lack of police protection.

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There was also tension and division in the LGBTQIA+ community itself. The LGBTQIA+ community has always held a wide variety of identities, which caused groups to have their specific priorities, which could be detrimental to other groups. This division influenced how groups within the community approached activism. Some groups wanted non-violent protests, while others wanted to use more confrontational tactics in light of the Stonewall riots. Lesbians and Gay Men often had tremulous relations due to underlying issues such as sexism and the patriarchy. Transgender activists were often excluded and marginalized, with cis-gendered lesbian and gay people being prioritized.

As the LGBTQIA+ community fights for their rights, they must confront obstacles in their path. With rampant discrimination in America towards LGBTQIA+ individuals, successfully planning and executing the first pride parade was a tremendous victory. However, the complexities of gaining rights in society come with a cost. Perseverance is key.

## Legal Issues

In 1970, the legal environment for LGBTQ+ individuals was grim. Many states still had laws that criminalized same-sex behavior, and police raids on LGBTQ+ bars and gathering spots were commonplace. The American Psychiatric Association continued to classify homosexuality as a mental disorder, a classification that further entrenched stigma and discrimination. The Mattachine Society and other LGBTQ+ groups had worked for years to decriminalize homosexuality, but meaningful legal change was slow. In many parts of the country, including Atlanta, LGBTQ+ people had little legal protection against discrimination in employment, housing, or public accommodations. Given this, organizing any public LGBTQ+ event in 1970 was a considerable act of defiance.

The South's deeply entrenched religious and cultural conservatism created additional barriers for LGBTQ+ organizers. Religious groups, particularly evangelical Christian communities, were strongly opposed to any public displays of LGBTQ+ identity. This was exacerbated by the wider political climate of the time, which was marked by resistance to various social movements. The civil rights movement for racial equality had gained significant ground in the 1960s, but many white Southerners viewed the LGBTQ+ rights movement as a threat to the social order, associating it with other movements for social change, such as feminism and racial equality.

## National and International Issues

1970 was also a year of political turbulence and upheaval in the U.S. The Vietnam War was in full swing, and widespread protests against U.S. involvement were occurring across the country, particularly among young people. The counterculture movement and the rise of student activism were central to many of the protests, as Americans began to question the government's policies on war, civil rights, and social justice.

At the same time, the women's liberation movement was gaining momentum, pushing for gender equality and reproductive rights. These national movements were often linked in their challenges to traditional norms and authority structures, and LGBTQ+ activists saw their fight for sexual and gender equality as part of a broader struggle for human rights. Despite their shared goals, there were tensions between the feminist and LGBTQ+ movements, particularly in the early years. One of the main points of contention

was the intersection of feminism with the LGBTQ+ struggle, particularly as LGBTQ+ issues, like homosexuality, were often marginalized within mainstream feminist circles. Some feminist leaders in the 1970s, like Betty Friedan, were initially skeptical of the LGBTQ+ rights movement, with Friedan famously describing the gay rights movement as a “lesbian conspiracy” in the early 1970s. One significant moment of collaboration occurred in 1970, when a group of lesbian feminists, in response to their marginalization within the mainstream women’s liberation movement, formed the Lavender Menace. This group staged a demonstration at the Second Congress to Unite Women in New York to demand that lesbian issues be addressed within feminist discourse.



*Betty Friedan*

*The Lavender Menace*

The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), a prominent student activist organization during the 1960s and 1970s, had a significant role in promoting progressive social change, which included supporting LGBTQ+ rights. While the SDS was primarily focused on protesting the Vietnam War and advocating for civil rights, many of its members also saw LGBTQ+ liberation as part of the broader struggle for human rights. Some SDS chapters supported LGBTQ+ rights by incorporating them into their wider platform for social justice. SDS also provided an early space for LGBTQ+ students to organize and express their activism.

However, in the South, many of these progressive movements faced intense resistance. States like Georgia had not yet fully embraced the civil rights reforms of the 1960s, and

the region's political leaders often supported laws and policies that restricted social freedoms. This backdrop of political and cultural conservatism meant that any attempt to organize a Pride event in Atlanta would have been met with suspicion, fear, and likely strong opposition from local authorities, religious groups, and conservative activists.

## Tensions Within the LGBTQ+ Community

Even within the LGBTQ+ community, there were tensions about how best to approach activism. The early LGBTQ+ rights movement was divided between more radical, revolutionary elements, such as the Gay Liberation Front (GLF), and more moderate, assimilationist groups, such as the Mattachine Society. The GLF embraced a broader vision of social justice, linking the struggle for LGBTQ+ rights to other progressive movements, while the Mattachine Society focused more on legal reform and respectability. These internal differences often led to disagreements over strategy, particularly about whether to adopt a confrontational or peaceful approach to public demonstrations.

16 In addition, there were significant gender and racial tensions within the LGBTQ+ movement. Early LGBTQ+ Pride events, particularly in cities like New York and San Francisco, were often dominated by white gay men, and lesbian, bisexual, and transgender individuals were sometimes marginalized. The intersectionality of race, gender, and sexuality was not yet fully understood within the movement, and LGBTQ+ people of color, including Black and Latinx LGBTQ+ individuals, often found themselves excluded from mainstream events. The first Pride marches, like those in New York City, were predominantly white, and the needs and experiences of people of color were often overlooked in the early days of Pride organizing.

Additionally, transgender people were often excluded from the mainstream LGBTQ+ movement, despite the fact that many transgender individuals, including figures like Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson, played a key role in the Stonewall Riots. This exclusion created significant challenges for early LGBTQ+ Pride organizers, who had to work toward creating more inclusive events that reflected the diversity of the community. In 1970, organizers in Atlanta would have had to grapple with how to navigate these internal divisions while creating an event that was both inclusive and reflective of the community's broader aspirations.





# ***Committee Policy***

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## ***Deliverables Throughout the Conference***

Throughout the committee sessions, delegates will be tasked with creating one final document that outlines the plans for the first Atlanta Pride Parade in 1971, not to be confused with the first Atlanta Pride March in 1970. This specialized body will flow more like a General Assembly; however, shorter resolutions and crisis updates will be incorporated. Each crisis update will affect the flow of debate and, as such, should be addressed in both press statements, resolutions and the final planning document.

## ***Press Releases***

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During each committee session, delegates should expect to be working on working papers, while also writing press releases to address stakeholders outside of the committee. Potential stakeholders would include the media, the public, adjacent protestors, other political organizers, police departments/the police lobby, and many others. Each crisis update will incorporate information on how these stakeholders are viewing the work being done in the committee, so if delegates wish to address these stakeholders, writing a press release is the only way to do so. These press releases do not have a sponsors cap, however, everyone who contributed to the press release must have their names on the document. Information about the format of the press release will be introduced during the first committee session.

Press releases can take on many forms, such as written statements, flyers, memos, newspapers, and other examples of written, visual, and spoken media.

## ***Speaker for the Committee***

If delegates wish to elect one person to be the Speaker for the Committee, they can motion for this by saying [Blank] moves to elect a Speaker for the Committee while the director is calling for points and motions. The delegate will also need to provide a speaking time for nomination speeches. This motion is not automatic and needs to be

passed by a super-majority. If the motion passes, the director will ask the person who motioned for the Speaker for the Committee who they elect to be the Speaker for the Committee. At this point, the director will ask if there are any other nominations for the Speaker of the Committee. At the chair's discretion, they will select the amount of nominations they will accept. At this point, nominees will give 30-second speeches, unless changed in the initial motion, detailing why they should be the Speaker for the Committee. After hearing speeches, in the order the director calls on potential Speakers for the Committee, the committee will vote for the Speaker for the Committee. Whichever Speaker gets the majority will be the Speaker for the Committee only for that committee session. If no one gets to a simple majority, no one becomes Speaker for the Committee, and debates continue.

# Topics to Consider

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*Given the nature of this GA, delegates will be asked to include solutions and/or plans to the following issues within their final resolution.*

- 1. Define the overarching theme and goals of the Pride event (e.g., visibility, advocacy, etc).*
- 2. Develop a strategy for ensuring the physical safety of participants in the face of potential protests, harassment, or police interference, and a contingency plan in case of emergency.*
- 3. Identify strategies to involve as many LGBTQ+ community members as possible.*
- 4. Develop a media strategy to promote the event effectively and combat negative press.*
- 5. Detail the kinds of activities the Pride plans to have.*
- 6. Establish a detailed plan for securing permits, coordinating with local authorities, addressing logistical needs (such as venues, equipment, transportation, and crowd management).*



**MARCH FOR GAY RIGHTS**

**NATIONAL GAY RIGHTS LEGISLATION**  
**ATLANTA GAY RIGHTS ORDINANCE**

**ATLANTA GAY RIGHTS ALLIANCE**

**ATLANTA LESBIAN-FEMINIST ALLIANCE**

**ATLANTA WOMEN'S UNION**

**BLACK**

**Come Gay Rights**

# Questions to Consider

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- 1. What measures should be taken to address intersectionality within the Pride movement?*
- 2. What strategies should be implemented to ensure the safety and security of Pride events?*
- 3. Should the committee integrate other political and social issues into Pride's programming or become apolitical?*
- 4. What is the legacy the committee wants this Pride to leave?*
- 5. How can the committee secure sustainable funding sources for future Pride events?*
- 6. How can the committee foster trust and solidarity within the LGBTQ+ community?*
- 7. How should the committee approach local media, which might be hostile or dismissive toward LGBTQ+ issues in 1971?*
- 8. How can the committee work with existing civil rights organizations, such as those involved in the Black Freedom Movement, to build solidarity?*

# CHARACTERS

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*For the safety of the members in this committee, each character is using a pen name. The Committee Chair/President, Vice Chair/VP, and Secretary + Press will be played by the Director, Assistant Director, and the Director General Team.*

## **Thomas ‘Tom’ Davis, 62, Historian, Retired History Professor**

- Thomas ‘Tom’ Davis is a retired History Professor from the University of Georgia. During his time as a Professor, Thomas focused his studies on social movements in history. In order to preserve the credibility of his academic work, Thomas is currently in the closet to his peers. Therefore, Thomas prefers to support the movement from behind the scenes as a member of the planning committee. At 62 years old, Thomas serves as senior advisor to the members of the committee, as a former History Professor, Tom has taken up the mantle as the committee Historian, hoping to use his historical expertise to solidify the legacy of this First Atlanta Pride. Some members of the committees find Thomas to be valuable in his strategic input and admire his ability to remain patient for the progress in LGBTQ+ rights; Others also note that Thomas is rather reserved in some of intentions / goals, making it difficult to know his true stances on certain matters but overall observe that he seems to take a more conservative approach to Pride.

## **Alice Chen, 19, Youth Engagement Lead, College Student**

- Hailing from San Francisco, Alice is a second year industrial engineering student at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Despite living in Atlanta for only a year and a half, Alice has managed to become very involved in the city’s activism scene. Outside of her busy schedule as an engineering student, Alice is involved LGBTQ+ clubs and alliances, as well as Youth activism groups. At 19 years old, Alice is the youngest member on the committee, and brings a fresher take on Pride. Given her status as a college student, Alice has taken it upon herself to get the word out to kids her age about the first Atlanta Pride. Members of the committee find Alice endearing because of her great passion for social causes and moral righteousness. Despite her age, Alice remains outspoken

and steadfast in her ideals of change. While many find her admirable, some members of the committee think that her idealism and youth make her a bit naive and inexperienced in terms of making sustainable change.

### **Linda Johnson, 33, Treasurer, Accountant**

- 33 year old African-American Atlanta native Linda Johnson worked her way up from a bank teller to accountant. Linda currently works at a Black-owned financial firm in the West End. Linda's experience in finance and natural pragmatism make her the perfect treasurer for Atlanta's First Pride Committee. As the treasurer, Linda is in charge of approving funding allocation, reimbursements, and reaching out to Pride donors. Additionally, Linda offers financial advice to the committee during the planning process of Pride so that the committee stays out of red. Member's of the committee appreciate Linda's efficiency and practicality that allow this Pride to actually come to life. Additionally members appreciate Linda's vision of highlighting Pride joy. Despite this, some members remark that Linda's prudence with the budget can stifle creativity, limiting the scope of what this Pride could achieve in terms of social justice.

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### **Marisol Delgado, 29, Outreach Coordinator, Seamstress**

- Marisol Delgado is a proud Puerto Rican trans woman who moved to Atlanta in search of community. 29-year-old Marisol currently works as a seamstress and costume designer to pursue her passion of fashion and expressing both her gender identity and cultural heritage. Marisol understands that Pride is meant to represent many different queer identities, and hopes to bring this perspective to her position as the Outreach Coordinator and let this Pride be one that represents everyone. Members of the committee have many good things to say about Marisol's commitment to this Pride. Many love her welcoming and inclusive vibe that makes her excel as an Outreach Coordinator. Additionally, her creativity and passion are able to make this Pride really shine. However, some members question the feasibility and practicality of her ideas.

### **Samuel 'Sam' Porter, 41, Accessibility Coordinator, Mechanic**

- 41-year-old mechanic Samuel Porter from rural Alabama, moved from his small town 5 years ago to open an auto repair shop in the city where he could find a bigger queer community to finally be himself around. Spending most of his life in the closet, Sam does not want anyone to feel the same he does, and one of



his ways of doing that is making sure that Pride is accessible to everyone. Sam's mantra and experience as a mechanic make him a perfect fit for the committee's Accessibility Coordinator. Most members of the committee find Sam the most reliable guy to call in a pinch. Moreover, Sam's vision for accessibility has garnered him admiration among the committee for expanding the possible attendees and making him one of the most liked members of the committee. However, some critique Sam for being neutral in the committee's biggest disputes to remain in the majority of the committee's good graces.

### **Mark Whitfield, 25, Legal Liaison, Civil Rights Organization Intern**

- Mark Whitfield is a 25-year-old law student entering his final year of law school in the fall, specializing in civil rights law. Born and raised in New York, Mark joined the Mattachine Society whilst studying at NYU, before moving to and joining Atlanta's queer community on a full ride scholarship to Emory's Law School. Currently, Mark is interning at a civil rights organization this summer during the Pride planning process. However, studying law and interning with Civil Rights organization's opened Mark's eyes to all the behind the scenes work that go behind Civil Rights mobilization. Thus Mark has taken up the role as the Pride Planning Committee's Legal Liaison, guiding the committee through the legal processes behind protesting and social justice. Committee members appreciate Mark's passion, intelligence, and drive to use the law as a tool for change. However, some members feel his limited professional experience sometimes leads him to underestimate the complexities of navigating political and social tensions.

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### **Benjamin Carter, 27, Public Relations Chair, Journalist**

- 27-year old Benjamin Carter landed a column journalist position at the Atlanta Journal Constitution after years of developing credibility and popularity as a freelance journalist. As a gay black man, Benjamin was inspired to become a journalist seeing the terrible narratives spouted about marginalized communities in the news. While Carter runs an editorial column around civil rights, his storytelling ability makes him the perfect Public Relations Chair. As the Public Relations Chair, Carter helps the committee navigate the media narratives, improve their public image, and get messages regarding events out to the community. Members of the committee love Benjamin's charismatic and witty writing style. The members of the committee admire his dedication as a

spokesperson for the cause and his work to spread the word about Atlanta's First Pride. However, some members of the committee believe that his perfectionism around the public image dilutes some of the messaging around this Pride.

### **Harry Simmons, 38, Event Coordinator, High School Teacher**

- Atlanta Public School's teacher of year is Brunswick, Georgia native Harry Simmons. Harry has been teaching English in Atlanta for 15 years, and planning fun activities for his students to enhance their learning experiences. As a teacher in the Civil Rights era, Harry has had the opportunity to teach many different students of different backgrounds and works to meet their differing needs in the same underfunded classroom making him the perfect event coordinator meeting different groups engagement needs on tight budgets. Additionally, Harry uses his long-term lesson planning skills to design a schedule for the committee. The committee loves Harry's organizational skills and cool head to lead the event coordination process. Additionally, the committee finds Harry to be one of the most approachable members, with a knack for communication making him a strong liaison for the committee in securing vendors, volunteers, and performers. However, some members of the committee note that Harry could be a little inexperienced for coordinating an event of this scale.

### **Darrell 'Dare' Matthews, 35, Parade Manager, Urban Planner**

- 35-year old Non-Binary Dare Matthews is a local urban planner in the Metro Atlanta area. As an urban planner, Dare has years of experience in coordinating logistics, designing urban spaces, and managing large-scale public projects—Dare is THE person to make big projects happen. In the committee, Dare uses their experience to take on the role of the Parade Manager. In this position, Dare is responsible for approving floats and performers, organizing the parade order, securing permits for street closures, and overseeing the timing and layout of the event. Their ability to balance creativity with precision has made them an indispensable part of the team. Many members of the committee think that this Pride would be a nightmare without Dare and their experience in urban planning, giving them insight into some of the more logistical processes of Pride such as securing permits and closures. Even on a tight schedule members of the committee appreciate Dare's ability to work well under pressure. However, some committee members note that Dare's focus on logistics may make them overlook emotional and symbolic components to the Parade.

### **Nancy Del Luna, 27, Crisis Manager, ER Nurse**

- 27-year old Nancy Del Luna is an emergency room nurse here at Grady Memorial Hospital. In the ER, Nancy has to be decisive and quick but also careful and precise. The qualities that make her a good ER nurse, make her a natural Crisis Manager. As the Crisis Manager, Nancy is not only for designing contingency plans and safety protocol but also for solving any day-of-event crises and emergencies, making sure everyone remains calm and stays safe. Committee members admire Nancy for her ability to stay composed under pressure and offer clear solutions, even in the most stressful situations. However, some committee members criticize Nancy's busy schedule as an ER Grady nurse preventing her progressing further on the contingency plans for the committee.

### **Jacqueline 'Jackie' St. Clair, 21, Volunteer Coordinator, Waitress**

- 21-year old waitress Jacqueline St. Clair is the committee's southern belle. Born and raised in South Georgia, Jackie's southern hospitality and kindness have garnered her recognition as one of the friendliest faces in the big city. In her spare time, Jackie volunteers down at Atlanta's Food Bank. Her natural charisma and kind heart have led her to the committee position of volunteer coordinator. She's responsible for recruiting, training, and organizing the hundreds of volunteers needed to make this Pride a success. Committee members admire Jackie's charisma and ability to motivate others, even under challenging circumstances. She has a knack for making people feel welcome and valued, whether they're seasoned activists or newcomers. However, some members find her kindness to resemble that of a doormat, letting others push her around too much which could prevent the volunteers from being properly prepared.

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### **Raymond 'Ray' Alvarez, 39, Arts and Performance Director, Carpenter**

- 39-year-old Raymond Alvarez immigrated from Mexico to the US in the mid 1960s in hopes of finding a place where he could express himself more. In Atlanta, Raymond has set up shop as a neighborhood carpenter, spending his days designing furniture, whilst spending his nights performing in secret as a drag artist. Known for his creativity and flair, Ray has taken on the role of Arts and Performance Director for the committee. In this position, he oversees the parade's creative vision, selects performers, and collaborates with local artists to make Atlanta's Pride both visually stunning and culturally rich. Many committee members appreciate Ray's artistic vision that he brings to Pride and

his ability to use arts and performance to highlight queer joy and visibility. However, some members note that Ray's commitment to his vision is overly perfectionist to the point of hindering practicality and delaying decisions.

### **Beverly Sterling, 26, Policy Advocate, Part-Time Research Assistant**

- NCAT alumna 26-year old Beverly Sterling returned to her hometown of Atlanta to take up a part-time job as a research assistant at a progressive political organization before going to grad school. With a degree in political science and minor in history, Beverly found her passion in the intersection of law, policy, and social justice—with a drive to bring this change to the place she grew up. On the committee, Beverly uses her experience as research assistant to serve as the policy advocate, where she leads the process of drafting official policy memos for the committee. Members of the committee find Beverly's work of analyzing legislation, crafting policy recommendations, and building coalition relations as invaluable assets to the committee. However, some members criticize Beverly's focus on policy details less immediately relevant to the immediate goal of organizing the Pride event.

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### **Scott Goldstein, 42, Logistics and Operations Coordinator, Electrician**

- Scott Goldstein is the neighborhood's fix-it guy. A skilled electrician by trade, Sam possesses a natural aptitude for organization, problem-solving, and making things work smoothly. With his practical background and organization, Goldstein is a natural fit for the committee's Logistics and Operations Coordinator. In this position, Goldstein is responsible for organizing the event location, transportation, and day-of operations. As well as collaborating with local authorities for permits and security and coordinating with vendors, sponsors, and volunteers to ensure smooth execution. Members of the committee admire Goldstein's hands-on experience, meticulous attention to detail, and ability to anticipate potential problems. Additionally his ability to troubleshoot technical issues and adapt to limited resources are noted to be some of his greatest strengths. However, some members of the committee dislike Goldstein's perfectionism and controlling tendencies which can overwhelm volunteers.

### **Valerie 'Val' Smith, 29, Civic Engagement Officer**

- At 29 years old, Valerie Smith's philosophy is that the biggest changes come from the ground work. As a non-profit community outreach coordinator, Val

tirelessly works to get the local community involved with their own progress, connecting them to resources and support in regards to civic engagement. With this experience, Val has taken on the role of the committee's civic engagement officer, building alliances with other community organizations, encouraging voter registration, and promoting the importance of civic participation within the LGBTQ+ community. Members of the committee love Val for communication skills that make members of any tenure feel welcome. Additionally, committee members appreciate her ability to mobilize the community. However, some members criticize Val's approach of being too focused on working within the system rather than challenging it.

### **Malcolm 'Mal' Kingston, 32, Merchandising and Sponsorship Lead, Freelance Marketing Consultant**

- Detroit, Michigan born-and-raised Malcolm Kingston is a 32-year old freelance marketing consultant. Growing up amidst the labor and civil rights movements, Mal was deeply inspired by the idea that economic empowerment could fuel social change. His sharp business acumen and passion for activism make him the ideal Merchandising and Sponsorship Lead for the Pride planning committee. In this role, Mal secures corporate sponsors, oversees merchandise production, and ensures the funds raised contribute directly to the committee's goals. Committee members adore Mal for his ability to design and push bold strategies for the committee. Additionally, many committee members appreciate his ability to negotiate tactfully to secure committee needs. However, some committee members dislike Mal's outspoken and uncompromising nature for alienating or discouraging potential collaborators.

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### **Eileen Gardner, 42, Elderly Engagement Lead, Retirement Home Registered Nurse**

- Eileen Gardner is a 42 year old registered nurse from Savannah Georgia, has dedicated her career to caring for others. Now working in a retirement home in Atlanta, Eileen became exposed to elderly members of the queer community who never got the chance to express themselves authentically. Hearing their stories, Eileen has become dedicated to getting older queer individuals more involved in Pride. Thus she has taken on the role as the committee's Elderly Engagement Lead, ensuring that older LGBTQ+ individuals, often forgotten in conversations about Pride, feel welcomed, celebrated, and included in the

festivities. Members of the committee admire Eileen for her unwavering dedication to getting older LGBTQ+ individuals more involved in Pride and her ability to stop them from feeling too old to make a change. However, some committee members think it might be a waste of time and effort to try and involve the elderly, given their stubbornness and more internalized struggles.

### **Kevin Patel, 24, Junior Financial Analyst, Fundraising Coordinator**

- Kevin Patel is a junior financial analyst working for a small investment firm in Atlanta. As a first-generation Indian American, Kevin works to support his family in the lucrative finance world, hoping to rise in the ranks. Despite his youth, Kevin has quickly gained a good reputation at his office for his innovative approach to managing and securing funding. On the committee, Kevin works as the fundraising coordinator. In this role, Kevin helps secure sponsorships, connects with donors, and helps the treasurer manage budgets to meet financial goals. Many committee members are impressed by Kevin's professionalism and his ability to deliver results under pressure with a task as difficult as fundraising. However, some members his critique his choice of donors and sponsorships who could dilute the grassroots spirit of Pride.

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### **Martin 'Marty' Castillo, 38, Security and Safety Officer, Security Guard**

- Marty Castillo, a 38-year-old Afro-Caribbean immigrant, works as a security guard for activists. Having spent years navigating the complexities of safety and security in his profession, Marty has seen firsthand how vulnerable marginalized communities can be, particularly in public spaces. He joined the Pride committee to ensure that everyone attending has a safe and welcoming experience. Members of the committee appreciate Marty's calm and pragmatic presence to handle stressful situations. However, some members of the committee feel that his approach can sometimes be overly cautious, potentially limiting the scope of Pride events.

### **Diana 'Di' Walker, 29, Grassroots Organization Liaison, Community Organizer**

- Diana Walker, a 29-year-old Appalachian organizer from rural North Georgia, has spent her career working with grassroots movements connecting with marginalized communities. Working as a community organizer, Diana has focused on environmental justice and rural outreach. As the committee's Grassroots Organization Liaison, Diana works to keep the committee connected

to other grassroots movements bolstering their network of allies and bridging the gap between the committee and underrepresented communities. Members of the committee admire Diana for her ability to connect with people from different walks of life has made her a favorite among committee members. However, some members may see her approach as unrealistic in the time they have.



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