



ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT:

San Joaquin Pride Center, Stockton, CA

The San Joaquin Pride Center, located in Stockton and established in 2012, serves as a welcoming and safe space for all LGBTQ+ members in the San Joaquin Community. With its brightly decorated interior and friendly members, it's a place where Executive Director Cymone Reyes says, "you should feel like you're walking into home." She also underscores the Center's diversity, as the LGBTQ community, "intersect[s] with every race, gender,

religion, and creed that encompasses this planet." The Center offers free counseling services, cultural and diversity trainings, LGBTQ resources, advocacy, and hosts various public events.

According to TheTrevorProject.org, 28% of LGBTQ youth reported experiencing homelessness or housing instability at some point in their lives. Homelessness may amplify poor mental health, and for LGBTQ youths, the consequences may be even more alarming. Homeless LGBTQ youths had two to four times the odds of reporting depression, anxiety, suicide, and self-harm compared to those with stable housing. Thus, the San Joaquin Pride Center also works to support homeless LGBTQ youth by partnering with the Women's Center Youth and Family Services (WCYFS), an organization where homeless youths are provided with amenities and shelter.

From offering indispensable resources in their center, to hosting various support groups and events like the annual Pride Festival, to advocating for the LGBTQ population, the San Joaquin Pride Center does monumental work in supporting the LGBTQ community. In fact, many have only good things to say about the Center. Virgil, who has utilized the Center's services, shares his appreciation for them on Yelp: "They've helped me a lot over the years. Counseling services are free, which is amazing. I love spending time here." James, another Yelp reviewer and Pride Center visitor, writes, "[its] a great safe community space to just sit and exist in...the staff are very kind and caring and are willing to help anybody who comes through their doors."

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