

SAFE SPACE NOVA NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS



Safe Space NOVA | Quarterly Newsletter

VOL.7 SUMMER 2023



Our Second Regional Pride Prom Recap Inside!



In June of 2023, Safe Space NOVA held its second regional pride prom this year in partnership with the City for Alexandria Office of the Arts. Our Pride Prom remains unique in that it combines the following:

- **EDUCATION** – Students have the unique opportunity to connect with LGBTQ-affirming organizations that provide social, medical, and mental health support to youth in Northern Virginia and beyond.
- **COMPASSION** – We ensure a quieter space for students who need to take a break or speak to our volunteer mental health professionals. Students have reported anxiety when attending their first dance or experiencing dysphoria, and we want to provide for psychological safety.
- **ACTION** – Students apply to serve as Pride Prom Leaders who work from December through May creating their prom while learning advocacy skills which they are encouraged to turn into action within their communities.
- **CELEBRATION** – Pride Prom is fun! Students routinely report that it is their favorite day of the year and cannot wait for next year's event! Adult chaperones and volunteers are equally delighted watching the attendees have the time of their lives.

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Follow Us On Social Media!



@safespacenova



Message from the Executive Director

JORDAN
COSTEN-SUMPTER, MSW

Hello All,

Summer is whipping by, and now we are almost into fall. With that, Pride Month has passed. It was a great month. I would love to share the highlights. I would also like to talk about our upcoming fall programming and a new member that was added to the team for the summer.

First, I hope your Pride Month was amazing. We at Safe Space NOVA did all that we could to share with others the work that we do and how we support LGBTQ+ youth. That included partnering with Springfield Town Center for a night of pride themed events for the family, including face painting and drag queen performances. Safe Space NOVA also attended pride festivals held throughout the Northern Virginia area, including Reston Pride, Arlington Pride, and Alexandria Pride, to name a few. Unfortunately, I cannot cover all we did, but it was an amazing month regarding outreach.

We also hosted our LGBTQ+ Prom with the New York State of Mind theme during Pride Month. Over one hundred and fifty students poured into the event, including some from out of state. There was music, performances, door prizes, and so much more. Thus far, the feedback is that all who attended had an amazing time.

Regarding our fall programming, the Safe Space NOVA Team is preparing for the next iteration of You + Me= We: Queer Sex Education. Dates will be announced and listed on our website in the coming weeks. We are also continuing our social support groups, which meet two times a month.

Lastly, we had an intern, Jules Hoffman, join us for June and July. Jules is a rising senior attending James Madison University for a bachelor's degree in social work. They have been a tremendous help to our team. I can not thank them enough for supporting our mission through assigned tasks and being willing to step up when needed.

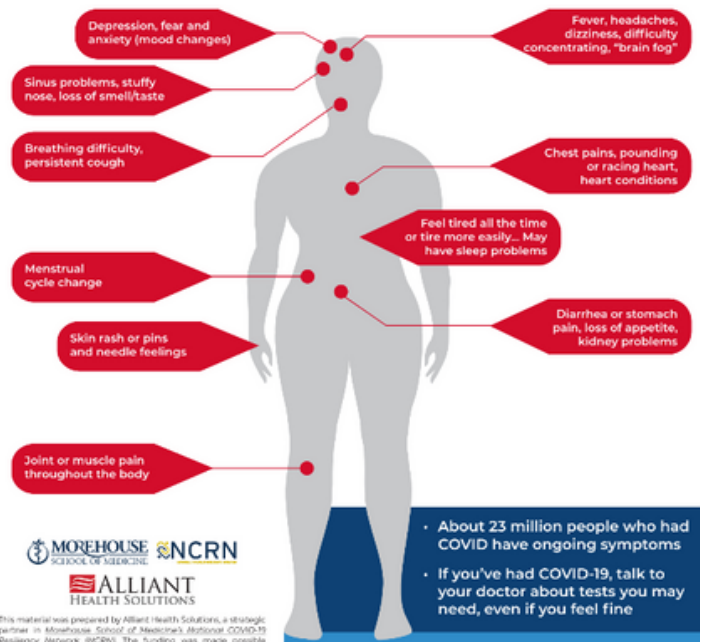
At the conclusion of these letters, I get excited. Why, you may ask? I get excited because I know there is so much to come. With your support, we will continue to persevere and provide the safe space the LGBTQ+ youth of Northern Virginia deserve.

Thank you for believing in the mission of Safe Space NOVA. If you ever have questions, please feel free to reach out.

Thank you,
Jordan L. Costen-Sumpter
Founding Executive Director



"Long COVID," "Post COVID Syndrome" or "Post COVID Condition" are all terms used to describe ongoing symptoms that remain four or more weeks after being infected with COVID-19. People who have this condition, frequently called "long haulers," commonly report experiencing different combinations of the following symptoms:



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This material was prepared by Alliant Health Solutions, a strategic partner in Morehouse School of Medicine's National COVID-19 Resiliency Network (NCRN). The funding was made possible through a grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health. The National COVID-19 Resiliency Network logo are service marks of Morehouse School of Medicine.

- About 23 million people who had COVID have ongoing symptoms
- If you've had COVID-19, talk to your doctor about tests you may need, even if you feel fine

To learn more or to find a Post COVID Care Center (PCCC) in your state go to <https://www.survivorcorps.com/pccc>

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A New York State of Mind welcomed 100+ students from all over the DMV (Alexandria City; Arlington; Fairfax; Falls Church; Loudoun; Prince William; Manassas; Washington, DC; Montgomery County; Private Schools, Home Schools), 50+ chaperones, 14 LGBTQ+ affirming vendors, our favorite emcee on the planet Mr. Jimmy Alexander, DJ Franxx, two drag performers (Jinx Demon and [King Flirty Rico](#)), two volunteer photographers, and several thousands of dollars in door prizes and donated items to create an unforgettable experience! The attendees enjoyed dancing, the most amazing food from [Classic Catering](#), a quiet game room, free books from [Project Open Books](#), body painting by [Cinder M Creations](#), art installations by [Torpedo Factory Arts Center Artists](#), and the ability to learn about the affirming resources in the area.

Attendees will receive a link to a Google Drive of pictures documenting the smiles, laughs, validation, affirmation, friendships (old and new), and fun in the coming weeks. NONE of this would be possible without the generosity the

City of Alexandria Office of the Arts, Safe Space NOVA, crowdsourcing, and hundreds of hours of volunteer efforts. A year of planning leads to ONE unforgettable night. If you or your company want to ensure pride prom returns in 2024, please email Amy@safespacenova.org for a copy of our Sponsor Deck. Want to be a Student Ambassador? We are accepting [applications](#) NOW! Chaperone and vendor selection will begin in March 2024, so make sure you're following us [@safespacenova](#) & [@safespacetohang](#) for updates!

This summer, please patronize and appreciate our donors' generosity, without which the event (and subsequent ones) would not have been possible. Not pictured are the countless generous families who donated several thousand dollars in door prizes after a challenging pandemic and economic recession.

We thank everyone for their support and look forward to Safe Space NOVA's pride prom for many years to come.



We also want to extend a special thank you to our entertainment team, vendors, venue, and top-tier donors:

Venue: [Torpedo Factory Art Center](#)

DJ: [DJ Franxx](#)

Emcee: [Jimmy Alexander](#)

Drag Performers:

[@jinxxdemon](#) [@flirtyrico](#)

Prom Swag:

[Jacqueline Smith](#)

Top Donors:

[Tosche Station & Echo Base](#)

[Signature Theatre](#)

[Rainstorms to Rainbows](#)

[Excella](#)

[Project Open Books](#)

