



2018

ANNUAL REPORT



HETRICK-MARTIN INSTITUTE

EMPOWERMENT, EDUCATION & ADVOCACY FOR LGBTQ YOUTH

— NEW JERSEY —

www.hminj.org



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2018

Letter from HMI: NJ Board of Directors

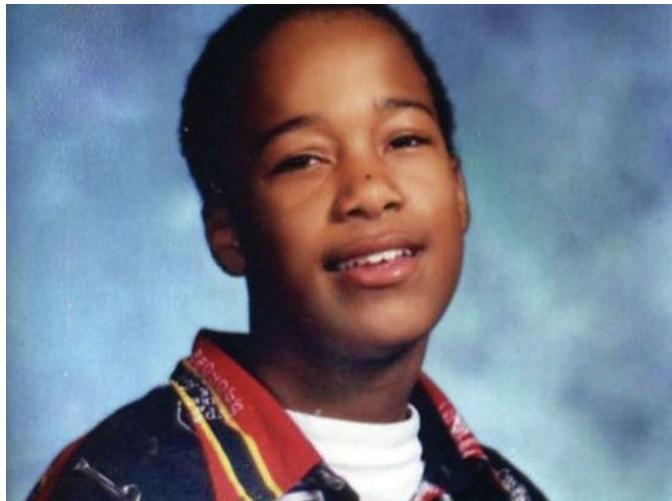
All of us on the Board are truly amazed and humbled to look back on the incredible growth of the Hetrick-Martin Institute: New Jersey over our first seven years. It's quite gratifying to see and hear about the very real impact we're having through our programs for LGBTQ youth. I hope you'll be equally proud of our organization's many accomplishments this past year as you read through the following pages.

We're especially excited to welcome Lillian Rivera as our new Executive Director. Her vast experience working with the HMI model and her tremendous commitment to our community and the youth we serve will no doubt help to sustain and grow our efforts to meet the many critical needs of our young people.

It's important we take this opportunity to share our deep appreciation for our amazing staff, volunteers, partners, and the hundreds of individual and institutional donors who continue to make our work possible.

We look forward to working with all of you in the coming year to build a future where all youth can enjoy the promise of a life filled with joy, love, and the opportunity to shine brightly as the very best version of themselves.

REMEMBERING SAKIA



In 2003, the City of Newark lost Sakia Gunn to a hate crime. She was 15 years old at the time of her death. She was within the age range of the youth in our program today. We continue to say her name to ensure we never lose another young person to a hate crime. She was waiting for a bus at the corner of Market and Broad when she was propositioned by two men. She informed them that she was gay and turned down their advances; one of the men stabbed her. She died on the way to the hospital.

Her murder galvanized the community to organize around the violence impacting the LGBTQ community which resulted in many important milestones in Newark's LGBTQ history. We are grateful to be part of the growth to ensure safety for the youngest in the LGBTQ community and will always lift up her name.

From the desk of the Executive Director

It is with great enthusiasm and excitement that I join the HMI: New Jersey team. I joined the team as Interim Executive Director in July with the intention of learning about the programs and LGBTQ youth work in New Jersey. I did not realize at that time that I would fall in love with this work all over again. I found a staff full of dedication, a youth community as vibrant as the City of Newark, and a Board of Directors made up of caring supportive adults willing to go the extra mile for our young people. I did not come with the idea of staying but I quickly realized that nothing would make my heart happier.

As a New Jersey native, I am excited to continue to grow the brilliant work of my predecessor, Dr. Ashawnda Fleming. I am honored to expand on the legacy of our founders, Drs. Hetrick & Martin and Dr. Hunter. I am ready to create opportunities for LGBTQ youth in New Jersey and to inform decision-makers what they need to make our great state a place of support and nurture for their lives. I come to this work in the spirit of bell hooks' writing: from a place of love because I see the humanity and value in all the youth we work with every day. I ask that you take this journey with us and hold me to my promise to work hard, stay transparent, and put the best interest of our young people first.



By the numbers

1,126 Counseling Services

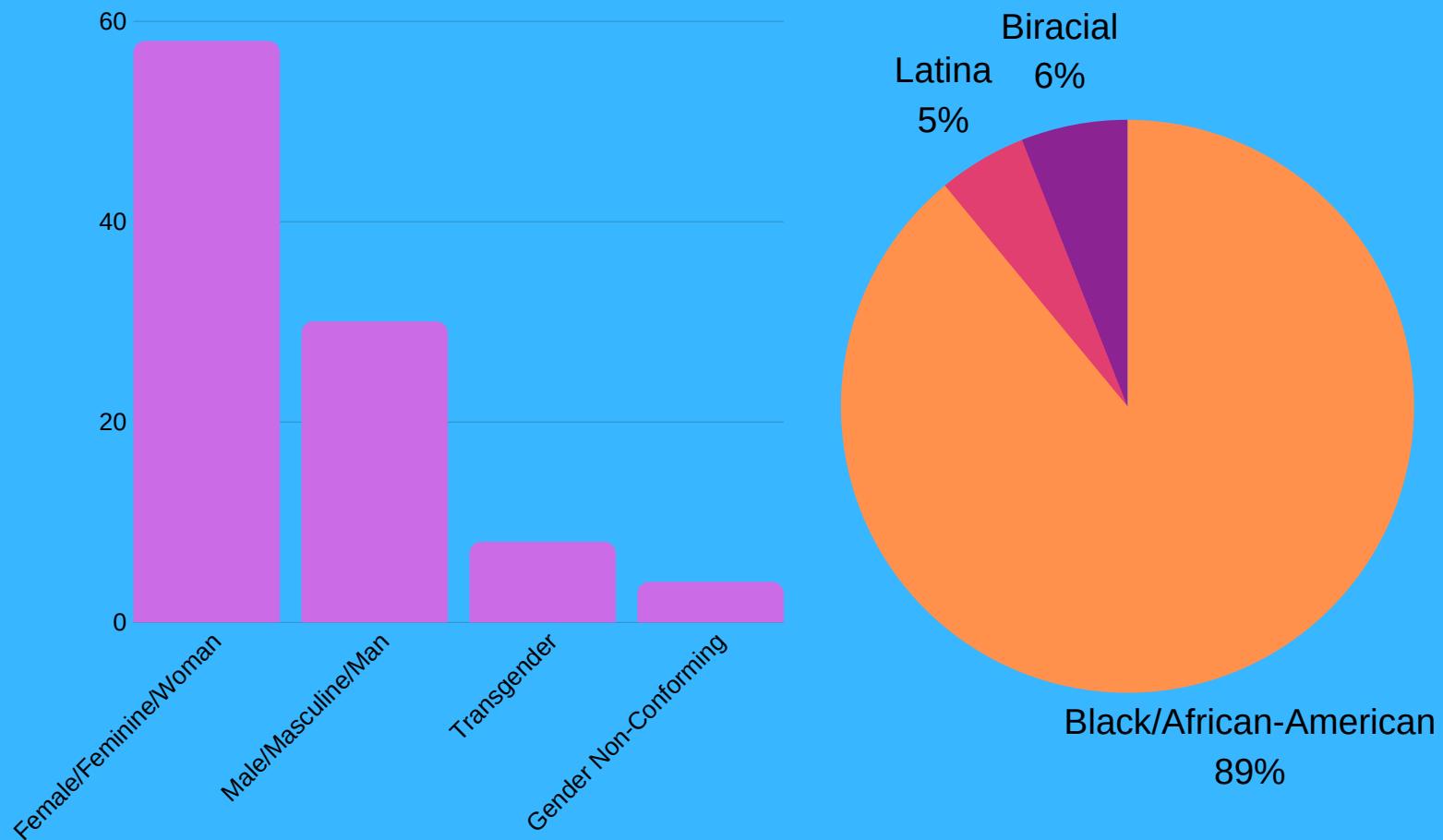
578 Groups

392 Pantry Services

210 New Youth to our program

2,749 Meals

This year HMI: NJ provided a great number of services to the youth who attend our programs. They were provided with life-saving services like counseling, groups and meals. Our youth have the opportunity to access items that sustain their well-being as well as allow them to work on their life goals.



Mini-site: HMI: NJ in high schools



Many of our youth members spend a majority of their day in school, which can be a daunting task for those who face bullying because of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation. According to a study commissioned by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, 4 out of 5 students report experiences of harassment due to perceived sexual orientation or appearance. This lack of safe spaces and the bullying that occurs in schools puts LGBTQ+ youth at an increased risk of depression and suicidal ideation; per our commitment to young LGBTQ+ individuals, HMI: NJ meets those who could benefit from services where they're at and assist in the creation of safe spaces for LGBTQ+ folks and allies.

In 2018, HMI: NJ continued to provide clinical services and group therapy to young people in their schools throughout Newark. These satellite sites replicate the services provided at the home office, but allow young people who have not had access to or have never heard of HMI: NJ to benefit from services. HMI: NJ provided services in 5 high schools in 2018 including 1 new site which was opened in the Spring of 2018.

During these groups, licensed social workers assist in the creation of a safe, LGBTQ+ environment in which the youth can thrive; programming at these sites include LGBTQ+ support groups, art therapy groups, and groups which focus on building and maintaining healthy relationships. Licensed social workers also provide individual therapy sessions for students who find it difficult to access therapy outside of the school setting.

Discrimination and hate does not affect young people only at school, however, many LGBTQ+ youth who are homeless accredit their homelessness to discrimination and family rejection. In order to maximize the number of young people we provide services to, HMI: NJ has continued its partnership with Covenant House: New Jersey. Licensed social work staff provide groups to young people living in the shelter twice per week; groups include LGBTQ+ support and art therapy. Because many of the youth served in the shelter are disconnected from traditional family supports, programming at the site is tailored to meet the youth where they are in terms of building a safe space, identifying healthy coping mechanisms, and creating strong relationships.

1 "Violence & Bullying." GLAAD, 5 Sept. 2011, www.glaad.org/resources/ally/6.

2 LGBTQ Youth. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.stopbullying.gov/at-risk/groups/lgbt/index.html>

3 LGBT Homelessness. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://nationalhomeless.org/issues/lgbt/>

Health & Wellness

The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey has supported our Health and Wellness program for several years, allowing us to provide young people connection to dental and medical care alongside other vital resources that establish the groundwork for self-care and a focus on personal wellness for years to come. With long-term goals in mind, we connect young people with the resources they need to utilize the medical professionals in their community, as well as build foundations of self-care, nutrition, stress management skills, and other pillars of wellness that facilitate overall, mind-and-body focused health.

Our social work staff work with young people on personal health and wellness goals, established upon intake with HMI. Each youth has a comprehensive care plan that helps staff to meet their needs holistically, and refer within and outside of the agency to professionals who can best help them accomplish their individual goals. From our harm reduction perspective, we give young people the tools to make informed decisions around sex, drug use, and other potentially risky behaviors; we aim to prevent negative outcomes through supportive counseling and providing tangible resources our young people can connect with. Whether it is navigating shelter or making healthy decisions around their sexuality, the youth at HMI know that they can come to us with their needs.

Youth are also able to participate in weekly groups around health and wellness topics, including sexual health, violence prevention, self-care, anger management, mindfulness, and nutrition. We have partnered with the North Jersey Community Research Initiative (NJCI) to provide rapid and confidential HIV testing onsite, and are able to provide HIV counseling and connect to PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) and PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis) resources for the prevention of HIV. We have been able to build a relationship with Rutgers Health, and see medical residents at our site monthly who answer youth questions and help build their understanding of effective preventative care, helping young people take care of their health and prevent serious problems before they begin.



Photo credit Rick Guidott

Each One Teach One

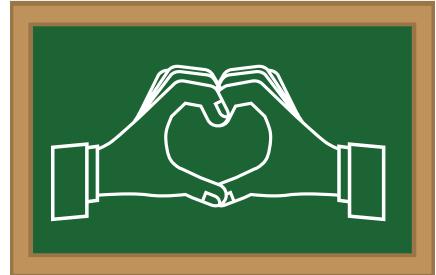
At the heart of HMI: NJ is our commitment to providing a safe space for the amazing youth we serve each day. As noted in the Remembering Sakia section, a large contributing factor to the creation of our program was in response to her tragic murder which validated the need to bring safety to the young LGBTQ+ people of Newark.

As our members attempt to navigate the world as young people in the community, they interact with teachers, school administrators, clinicians, court officials and various other professionals. Safety is a deep concept that is core to working with all persons, specifically people who have experienced trauma. When safety is experienced, not only is a youth member more likely to engage successfully in these systems, but it also supports healing. In an effort to expand the safety of our members, HMI: NJ continued to provide professional development trainings for agencies in New Jersey in 2018. The Addressing Trauma with LGBTQ+ Youth presentation seeks to provide knowledge and support of how trauma may interact with the young people and how to best provide trauma informed care.

Reaching over 300 people in 2018, this continued effort has seen success as evident by evaluations supportive of the information and asking for more! Additionally providing these trainings has strengthened the HMI: NJ network and referral process providing more services to the community. The training focuses on each individual creating ready to implement changes to their practice that can promote safety, trust, choice, collaboration and empowerment for LGBTQ+ youth.

HMI: NJ hopes to extend its safety net further into more classrooms, courts and counseling spaces in 2019 and beyond. This goal will support our mission and the youth across disciplines and in areas that can be specifically triggering for survivors.

How can you support us in our mission? Contact asimpson@hmi.org to schedule a training on site at your place of business or spread the word to folks who would benefit from the education and support.



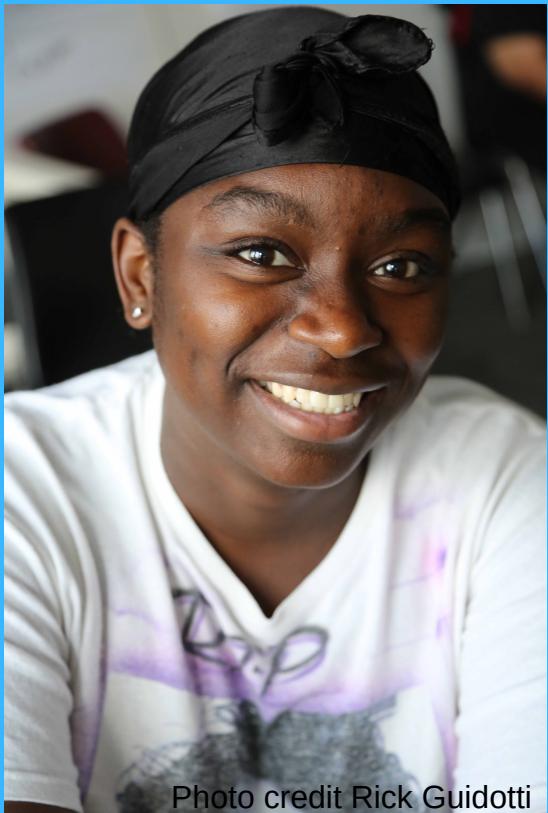


Photo credit Rick Guidotti

In 2018, HMI: NJ was approved for a new grant by the state of New Jersey

Victim Witness Advocacy grants program; this grant assists staff in creating programming dedicated to providing victims of crime services.

With this funding, HMI: NJ has been able to open a new satellite site with Newark Public Schools, hire a licensed social worker, and has been able to identify 45 individuals for services.

Thank you state of NJ for making this possible!



Photo credit Rick Guidotti

Our Community of Supporters

HMI: New Jersey started off 2018 with our first annual Say It In Song Cabaret Event. This sold out event was the largest and most well attended fundraiser for HMI: New Jersey. We surpassed all expectations for fundraising and were able to increase our visibility throughout the State of New Jersey. Guests were entertained by amazing cabaret performers and we were eternally grateful for their support of HMI: New Jersey.

We are pleased to announce that the 2nd annual Say It In Song Cabaret Event will take place on February 1, 2019 from 6:30-10:30 at The Grove, Cedar Grove, NJ.

Tickets are going fast with open bar, extensive cocktail hour and exciting new cabaret performers. You will not want to miss out on this annual event. If you would like to contribute to this wonderful evening or purchase tickets, please go to our website. We look forward to seeing you in 2019.

Thank You

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AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS



**THE HEALTHCARE
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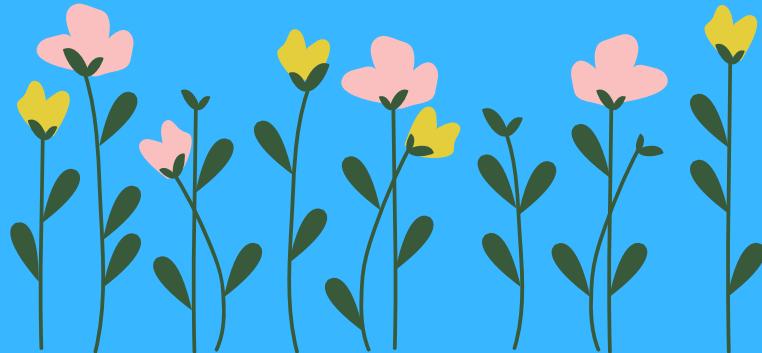
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Community Partners



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 City of Newark LGBTQ Advisory Concerns Commission
 Division of Child Protection & Permanency
 Essex County LGBTQ Commission
 Garden State Equality
 Jersey Cares
 Montclair State University
 Newark Gay Pride
 Newark LGBTQ Community Center
 Newark Pride Alliance
 Newark Public Schools
 North Jersey Pride, Inc.
 NYU Silver School of Social Work
 Masakhane Center

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