

Dearest Durhamites,

I am J Clapp, Executive Director at the LGBTQ Center of Durham.

June is LGBTQ Pride month. [“Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer \(LGBTQ\) Pride Month is currently celebrated each year in the month of June to honor the 1969 Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan. The Stonewall Uprising was a tipping point for the Gay Liberation Movement in the United States. The purpose of the commemorative month is to recognize the impact that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals have had on history locally, nationally, and internationally.”](#)

The LGBTQ Center of Durham is committed to improving the quality of life for LGBTQ+ people in and around Durham: through programming, resources, and networks of support; by acting as a hub for Durham’s LGBTQ+ community; by sharing and affirming all LGBTQ+ lived experiences; and by educating our neighbors in order to enhance understanding of and sensitivity to LGBTQ+ issues.

As an example, our Friends Aging Quirkily program is a collaborative effort to build community among LGBTQ+ folks age 50 and older. Our Center hosts several transgender and gender non-conforming programs and support groups. We also maintain an updated list of businesses, associations, and organizations that provide supportive resources to the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally, we run a program for housing insecure young adults ages 18-24 called the Host Home Program. For more information on these and other programs, visit us online at lgbtqcenterofdurham.org.

The LGBTQ Center of Durham focuses on the experiences of the most marginalized individuals among us. As the leader of this organization, it is my mission to ensure that all of our programs uplift queer and trans people of color. Black and brown LGBTQ people face higher rates of unemployment and homelessness and I am thankful to be able to help dismantle the oppressive systems by supporting our community.

On June 15, 2020, [the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that employers cannot discriminate against LGBTQ+ people. Prior to this ruling, workplace discrimination, including being fired, not hired, paid less or harassed, was legal in about half of the states in the U.S. However, in this ruling, the high court said that protections based on gender under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act extend to sexual orientation and gender identity.](#)

As activists continue to push Congress for additional non-discriminatory legislation, and as many across the country and the world stand up, speak out, and demand action against racism, we want to use this opportunity to remind you of the supports needed for the Black LGBTQ+ community. Please consider donating to rapid response funds that benefit queer and trans people of color like our rapid response fund. If you would like to join us in our efforts, **contact us by email at info@lgbtqcenterofdurham.org**

As we continue to participate in decisions and actions that lead us to a more equitable society, we want to use this opportunity to remind you to vote and complete the Census, both are important in identifying representation and supporting local resources. I make sure to vote in every election because I recognize the importance of having people who think like me in positions that determine the wellbeing of my community and those I love. And I completed my Census because I recognize that being counted helps with being seen. And, being seen means being valued.

You can learn more about voting for the 2020 general election on the Durham County Board of Elections website, dcovotes.com. And you can complete the Census online in English at 2020census.gov/en and in Spanish at 2020census.gov/es. Additionally, you can call **844-330-2020** to respond to the Census by phone in English and **844-468-2020** to respond to the Census by phone in Spanish.

Warmest Regards and thank you so much!

Black LGBTQ+ Lives Count!

My name is J. Clapp and I am the Executive Director of the LGBTQ Center of Durham