



Rainbowland

Anti-LGBTQ activities remind us all that fighting for our rights is still necessary.

May 15, 2023 By [Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.](#)

I didn't attend the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation, which took place in our nation's capital on April 25. I had a family commitment that I couldn't miss. That said, to this day, I wonder how my life might've been different had I gone to DC for that march.

I had tested HIV positive less than a year earlier. I was nowhere near OK with accepting my status. In fact, I was scared for my life. Perhaps an infusion of hope at the rally would've done me some long-term good.

Even then, I understood in a general sense what I had missed. Larry Kramer spoke at the march. Hundreds of marchers performed a die-in to honor those lost to AIDS. The amazing stories I heard from friends and acquaintances who did attend the march inspired me secondhand.

So I tried to make up for my absence by attending the 1994 New York City Pride march, which took place June 26. Actually, two marches happened that day—an official one on the East Side of Manhattan demanding global LGBTQ rights and an unofficial one that went up Fifth Avenue from Greenwich Village. The two joined up before entering Central Park together.

My friends and I were part of the unofficial march. I didn't witness the die-in in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral, but I did experience the sense of hope that I had missed the previous year. Effective HIV treatment was still two years away, but the march gave me a much-needed boost to keep believing.

Since then, the need for Pride marches has been routinely questioned, only to come full circle when anti-LGBTQ activities remind us all that fighting for our rights is still necessary. Today, anti-transgender legislation and attempts to curb funding for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent HIV transmission are just the latest examples.

So it is with much enthusiasm that POZ presents this special issue celebrating Pride. Our two cover subjects, André Jordan and Darius Harper, are great examples of why Pride remains as relevant as ever.

The friends and actors have had success on Broadway and beyond. André, who uses he/she

pronouns, and Darius, who uses he/they pronouns, have supported each other throughout their careers, and now they're standing by each other as they navigate life with HIV. Go [here](#) to read more.

André and Darius are sharing their stories in part to let others living with HIV know that they are not alone. The same can be said of other advocates highlighted in this issue.

Nicholas Snow is a longtime AIDS activist. In fact, he was fighting the virus well before he tested HIV positive. The journalist, actor and author remains a force to be reckoned with. Go [here](#) to learn more.

David Michael is a country singer living with HIV. As such, he is blazing a trail in Nashville for those who either have the virus or are affected by it. Go [here](#) to [read](#) about his HIV story and love of Patsy Cline.

Lola Flash has been photographing LGBTQ people and people with HIV for four decades. A new photo book brings their work together for the first time. Go [here](#) for more.