Pedro Zamora

October 31, 2011 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

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born: February 29, 1972
died: November 11, 1994

“As gay young people, we are marginalized. As young people who are HIV-positive and have AIDS, we are totally written off.”

Pedro Zamora is an official honoree today for LGBT History Month 2011.

Zamora was born in Havana, Cuba. He and his family emigrated to the United States in 1980 during the Mariel boatlift when he was 8 years old.

They settled in Hialeah, Florida, which still remains a heavily Cuban-American part of the Greater Miami region.

Zamora became an AIDS activist when he tested HIV positive, which he discovered after donating blood. In 1993, he testified before Congress urging more AIDS education

In 1994, he joined the cast of *The Real World: San Francisco* on MTV. The day after the final episode aired, Zamora died of AIDS-related complications.

Also in 1994, Zamora was featured on the cover of the recently launched *POZ* magazine. His life was made into a movie in 2008.

Not only do Zamora and I share a Cuban heritage, I was newly diagnosed HIV positive in 1992. I received much encouragement from seeing him live his life as an openly gay, openly HIV-positive person on television.

Sadly, Zamora didn’t benefit from the HIV drugs that saved so many of us only a few years after his death. It would have been amazing to see what more he could have achieved.

Click here to read the 1994 *POZ* cover story featuring Zamora.

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