

Did you ride camels across Mongolia?
Start a Latina youth group?
Rally against a pharmaceutical company?

Produce a screenplay?
Tap dance with your grandfather?
Raise four kids?

Ride a motorcycle across Wisconsin?
Marry your high school sweetheart?
Run for city council?
Strip your way through law school?

Build your own house?

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CURVE's readers are among the most fascinating women out there, which is why you make for the most interesting interviews. Are you ready to share your story with the world? If so, we want to hear it.

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Where your story is our story...

Out in Front

By Sheryl Kay



Optimistic Activist

Her mom was an antiwar activist in the '60s, her dad, the son of a Harlem numbers runner, and she was born in New York City just weeks after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

It's in **Tanya Mayo's** DNA to be a revolutionary and use grassroots activism in the fight for social justice. "I have spent more than half my life speaking out," says the 39-year-old biracial Bay Area artist, youth advocate and queer activist. "But more importantly, putting my words into action to create systemic change in what I consider an unjust society."

In addition to her recent stint as a national organizer for Not in Our Name, Mayo has also served as the executive director of Loco Bloco Drum and Dance ensemble, the youth program director at Brava for Women in the Arts, and a core member of the Medea Project: Theater for Incarcerated Women.

Today, as program director of the Gay-Straight Alliance Network, Mayo says she is beginning to see a bit of light at the end of the tunnel. "I am inspired daily by the youth movement within the LGBT scene and marvel at the passion of the straight allies," she says. "I also am inspired to see the gender nonconformity of this younger generation."

Today, Mayo is even more focused on that future, as she just celebrated the first birthday of her son, Kekoa Nelson Mayo.

"I hope to raise a kind, gentle, courageous person in a harsh world," Mayo says. "I hope to raise him to see the injustices and have the courage to go up against them."

If you know of any LGBT activists or any women who are Out in Front at work, home or in the community, please let us know by writing to curvesoutinfront@hotmail.com.



Fighting Complacency

Even as a doctoral student at American University and a Carlos Enrique Cisneros scholar through the Point Foundation, **Michelle Marzullo** still keeps up with her other activities. From creating a linguistic-anthropological method of communication with politicians that involves topics of gender and sexuality, to working with the Child Welfare League of America in creating the first report on LGBT youth experiences in the foster care system, to publishing, lecturing and embarking on her dissertation research, there's little downtime.

Her convictions are deeply rooted in her teens, when she came out and endured gay-bashing by childhood friends who thought they could make her straight. She was scared and alienated, but she was also well-informed and was able to find comfort in news reports that showed gay activists and the Pride movement.

"I knew I wanted to be a part of that struggle," says Marzullo. "There's this conversation that you have to have with yourself about being honest, about really looking into your heart and agreeing with yourself about the struggle, about the fact that you are all right the way you are."

While she believes the LGBT movement has certainly made some strides, she does not believe that young gay people have a clear path to equal rights in the U.S., and she warns against complacency in the struggle for the queer cause and the rights of all marginalized members of society.

"We must remain watchful to be sure that our successes do not equate to status quo apathy when it comes to others who share in similar struggles, whether in regard to race, social-class status, ethnicity or income," says Marzullo. "If there is a worry I have, it's that many gay and lesbian people might become complacent with our gains and not translate our experiences of oppression to others."