Dear QUEERSPACE friends and community,

I am grateful and humbled by your contributions to our QUEERSPACE community and LGBTQ+ youth. The way you have shown up for our community in 2022 is inspiring and fills my heart with so much gratitude. We are so excited about this journey we are on AND we are only getting started!

We have big ambitions at QUEERSPACE collective. We continue to lay the groundwork to expand our mentorship program in the Twin Cities and beyond so more LGBTQ+ youth have the opportunity to spend time with thriving, healthy, caring LGBTQ+ adults. In addition, we see great growth potential with our LGBTQ+ training and consulting program and the significant impact we will have as we grow our presence in this space.

We know supporting our youth and their families is changing lives. We hear from parents routinely how this program is so essential to the well-being of their child. We’ve seen youth, who have had a space where they can show up authentically, evolve, open up and grow over the past year. We’ve seen some of them explore new names, new pronouns and new friendships. It’s amazing how our young people shine when given the space to show up as their true selves!

Thank you for being part of the QUEERSPACE community. Thank you for your constant dedication, cheerleading, contributions, love and energy. And a special shout out to our amazing QUEERSPACE staff who are working collaboratively to build something authentic and sustainable and for their deep dedication to LGBTQ+ youth and their families. What WE ARE ALL creating, nurturing and growing is having such an important impact in our community.

In deep gratitude,

Nicki Hangsleben
she/they
OUR MISSION

to create space for LGBTQ+ youth to feel safe and empowered to be their true selves

OUR VISION

for all LGBTQ+ youth to have a network of support to help them develop a strong sense of pride in who they are, where they come from, and where they want to go
“Representation is important for kids growing up, and seeing someone like them succeed and understand what they’re going through can make all the difference.”

- MENTOR

1,670

MENTOR DONATED HOURS TO SUPPORT YOUTH VALUED AT

$47K

$500,242

TOTAL REVENUE

30 MATCHES

$320,107

TOTAL EXPENSES

20 HANGOUTS IN COMMUNITY

7 MENTOR/CAREGIVER TRAININGS

2022 financials still being finalized
16 LGBTQIA+ TRAININGS

5 TOPICS

1. Intro to LGBTQ+ Terminology
2. Intersectionality
3. Inclusive Youth Spaces
4. LGBTQ+ Youth & Healthcare
5. Trans & Non-Binary 101

“I think this was one of the best trainings I’ve been to in a LONG time.”

- GILLETTE CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL

“It was an incredibly valuable training because of what [QUEERSPACE] shared with us, and made it comfortable to ask questions and seek clarity.”

- RIVERLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Kate (she/her) and Finn (he/they) have been matched since August 2021.

MENTORSHIP

“QUEERSPACE has been a valuable resource for my child. It has provided a unique and essential support that we, as parents, could not have given.” – Finn’s Mom
What have been your favorite hangouts so far?

**K:** We’ve done a lot of really fun things, like mini golfing and swimming and going to baseball and basketball games, but the things I really like the most are when we just chill. We go for a walk or to a coffee shop and that just gives us time to talk, spend time together, and get to know each other and see what’s going on in each other’s lives.

**F:** I agree. Just going to a coffee shop and being able to talk is nice. It’s cool to be able to open up and have it be a chill space. I love basketball so I enjoyed the basketball games and just the music and hanging out. We also got lost in a graveyard once and we were walking around for a long time. That was fun!

What made you decide to continue your match?

**K:** I’m really all about long-term relationships, and I think the more time we can spend together, the more we invest in our relationship, the better. And we’ve been having so much fun and enjoying it. I really love the organization as a whole. It just made sense to continue.

**F:** It was really nice to have someone I could trust to talk about things that maybe other people in my life won’t understand. I haven’t had that before. We also had a lot of fun and to have a friend that’s from a different generation is really interesting, to learn about how things were different when Kate was growing up versus now. I found that really cool.

**K:** Oh, yeah. Speaking of things being different now, we used a disposable camera to take some pictures around Minnehaha Falls and I found out the hard way it’s impossible to get that developed these days.

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**IT WAS REALLY NICE TO HAVE SOMEONE I COULD TRUST TO TALK ABOUT THINGS THAT MAYBE OTHER PEOPLE IN MY LIFE WON’T UNDERSTAND.**

What is one thing you’ve learned about yourself?

**K:** I was kind of worried about not being able to find fun things to do and not being able to come up with good ideas to be entertaining. But what I really learned is that it’s not really what it’s about. It’s really about being a person that can be a listening ear and just be present. So it’s less about having to come up with creative ideas and more about being ourselves and spending time together.

**F:** I think one thing I really learned about myself is that I started accepting myself more for who I am. I really just figured it out and to have Kate there with me was the best thing that I could ask for. So that has been really helpful. It’s good to have that and I think that everybody should have someone like that.

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What is one way you’ve seen each other grow throughout your match?

**K:** I think Finn said in the last answer that they really learned about themselves a lot in the last year and have come to accept themselves and that’s really, really huge. It took me until I was in my thirties, so to figure it out at 13, it’s a really good start.

**F:** I think this kind of goes for both of us, but one thing I have noticed is that Kate has become more open and we’ve been getting into the deeper stuff. We’ve been able to communicate better. I mean, I think we were always pretty good at it, but we got better and it’s become more of a deeper bond where it’s just open.

What are some things that you’re looking forward to in this next year of mentorship?

**K:** I’m looking forward to some of the things that are on the itinerary coming up. It sounds like there’s a lot of fun group events. There’s been monthly hangouts that have been really fun to be with the larger community, but I’m also always really looking forward to our one-on-one time as well. It’s really nice to have a combination of both.

**F:** Yeah, I would have to agree with that. It is really nice to have the bigger community and I look forward to going to the events and hanging out with people. I’m kind of a shy person, so it’s been good for me to also grow in socializing, so I look forward to that.
OUR FIRST BDAY
FT special performances from NUR-D, Maxi, & Rusey-Q with a panel discussion around LGBTQ+ mentorship

SPIRIT DAY
2nd Annual event bringing together LGBTQ+ middle and high school students

COOKING FOR A CAUSE
A chef’s table fundraiser. Thanks to Bruce and Teri for an amazing dinner!

PRIDE BLOCK PARTY
Good music & food with Red Cow, Red Rabbit, and Indeed!

27 APRIL, 2022
18 OCT, 2022
03 NOV, 2022
23 JUNE, 2022
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