

Ruiz's activism shines by design ^[1]



By Cathy Beuten



CU Denver student Aldo Ruiz ^[2] recognizes and employs the power of design to bring about equity and change. In his professional capacity as graphic designer for the Latinx Student Services in the Center for Identity and Inclusion, Ruiz focuses largely on promoting events and resources beneficial to Latinx students. His LGBTQ+ activism shines through in his coursework in digital design through the College of Arts and Media, and in his and day-to-day life.

“It’s definitely difficult at times to design for topics within the LGBTQ+ community that may be delicate for some people,” said Ruiz, who will graduate in 2022. “Reserving the designs to a small audience with academic focus helps me get more out of a project, as the issues I try and tackle matter to me.”

Born in El Paso, Texas, but living in Colorado nearly all of his life, Ruiz said that although his focus is primarily on Latinx flyers, brochures and digital design at the center, he also works on projects for the office offering “design sense.”

“I think especially now, being an activist comes in many different forms, and through art I have found a way to express what matters to me,” he said.

And while many are bemoaning the setbacks presented by COVID-19 pandemic, Ruiz sees an opportunity – and is inspired.

“I find comfort in seeing others who share my same identity on social media,” he said. “Because of the public health concerns, now more than before I feel that social media can be used to amplify LGBTQ+ communities, especially those with intersectional identities.”

How Many More?

PETER GAINES - TORREY ROBINSON - DARIUS ROBINSON - ANTHONY HILL - MYA HALL - PHILLIP WHITE - ERIC HARRIS
ALONZO SMITH - TYREE CRAWFORD - INDIA KAGER - JONATHAN SANDERS - FREDIE BLUE - DANTE PARKER - MICHAEL BROWN - CALVIN ROQUEMORE
BRENDON GLENN - VICTOR MANUEL LAROSA - LA'VANTE BIGGS - MICHAEL LEE MARSHALL - JOSEPH MANN - SAVVADO ELLSWOOD - SANDRA BLAND - LAQUAN McDONALD - TAMIKA ANDERSON - AKMI GURLEY - TAMIR RICE - RUMAIN BRISBON - JERAME REID - GEORGE MANN - MATTHEW ALIBADE - FRANK SMART - MIA SHA MCKENNA - TONY ROBINSON
GEORGE FLOYD - ERIC GARNER - JOHN CRAWFORD III - MICHAEL BROWN - EZZELL FORD - DANTE PARKER - MICHAEL LEE MARSHALL - JOSEPH MANN - SAVVADO ELLSWOOD - SANDRA BLAND - LAQUAN McDONALD - TAMIKA ANDERSON - AKMI GURLEY - TAMIR RICE - RUMAIN BRISBON - JERAME REID - GEORGE MANN - MATTHEW ALIBADE - FRANK SMART - MIA SHA MCKENNA - TONY ROBINSON
CHRISTOPHER MCCORVEY - ERIC REASON - MICHAEL LORENZO DEAN - BREDNA TAYLOR - WILLIAM CHAPMAN II - ALEXIA CHRISTIAN - PATERSON BROWN - DOMINIC HUTCHINSON - ANTHONY ASHFORD - DYZHAWN PERKINS - G
MARY HICKS - MARY TROXILLO - DEMARCUS SEMER - WILLIE TILLMAN - TERRILL THOMAS - SYLVILLE SMITH - ALTON STERLING - PHILANDO CASTILE - TERENCE CRUTCHER - PAUL O'NEAL - ALTERIA WOODS - JORDAN EDWARDS
JAMAR CLARK - RICHARD PERKINS - NATHANIEL HARRIS PICKETT - BENNI LEE TIGNOR - MIGUEL ESPINAL - MICHAEL NOEL - KEVIN MATTHEWS - BETTIE JONES - QUINTON LEGRIER - KEITH CHILDRESS
MICHELLE CUSSEAU - LAQUAN McDONALD - TAMIKA ANDERSON - AKMI GURLEY - TAMIR RICE - RUMAIN BRISBON - JERAME REID - GEORGE MANN - MATTHEW ALIBADE - FRANK SMART - MIA SHA MCKENNA - TONY ROBINSON
BRIAN KEITH DAY - CHRISTIAN TAYLOR - TROY ROBINSON

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Social media, awareness movements and other forms of public activism are crucial for change, but Ruiz also stresses the importance of being an ally outside of the public view. He said confronting hate speech against LGBTQ+ people online through social media is a different battle than having those conversations in person.

“[It’s about] taking the initiative to bring those public activist values into our closer circles and communities, because that’s where I see change take a different form,” Ruiz said. “It’s far more confrontational, scary, difficult or whatever word we can use to describe the discomfort we might face when having those conversations, but that’s where I see the momentum of Pride Month continuing forever, as long as we are willing to be vulnerable and take action.”

Through his experiences, Ruiz believes there is a critical need for more inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community in daily life by non-members – and not just for Pride Month. “What I mean is ally-ship: Understanding the power and privileges that can come with being an ally that is genuine and for change,” he said.

In addition to LGBTQ+ activism, he noted the importance of not overlooking of the challenges faced by other diverse communities during Pride Month and long after.

“As the black lives matter movement holds strong with recent tragedies, it is important to not choose which movement or side we are on because intersectional identities are found throughout the LGBTQ+ community,” Ruiz said. “Uplifting both communities in their own ways respectively is how I am choosing to continue with Pride Month.”

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Groups audience:

CU Pride

Sub Title:

CU Denver student advocates for LGBTQ+ through art

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