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Volunteers of the Month: Cille Haley and Gabrielle Hermosa

We are pleased to announce a mother-daughter pair of Volunteers of the Month for December and January: Cille Haley and Gabrielle Hermosa.

On January 16, 2014, after forty-four long years of struggle, Gabrielle came out to her mother, Cille, as a transwoman. Determined to support her daughter in the best way she could, Cille became an Office Volunteer at the Gay Alliance in that spring. Gabrielle completed our SpeakOUT training and joined the Speakers Bureau, in addition to table-setting on behalf of the agency several times. The contributions of these two wonderful women are indispensable to the work of the Gay Alliance.



Gabrielle and Cille.

Cille may be one of the newer members of the Office Volunteer team, but she brings a wealth of experience and skills to the job. In addition to the day-to-day office tasks, Cille is our volunteer notary, offering her services to the LGBTQ community for free. She has also been instrumental in the creation of our two new support groups, Adult Families of Trans Youth (AFTY) and Families & Friends of Trans Adults (F2TA), helping with planning, supporting the facilitators, and providing insight based on her own on-going experiences. When she's not working in the office, Cille is also a wife, mother, grandmother and gym rat; Zumba is her favorite activity at the Y. She's involved in a book club, does some church volunteering and regularly checks-in on her 97-year-old Dad in Brockport.

After Gabrielle came out, it seemed she had finally found her voice: in 2014 alone she's spoken on 35 occasions, including LGBTQ & trans panels, SafeZone trainings, cultural diversity panels, and outreach programs. Her passion and life goal is to work as a professional motivational speaker, mentor and counselor. We asked Jeanne Gainsburg, Education Director, about working with Gabrielle, and she said: "She has such a welcoming and loving energy and message that participants often flock to her following our presentations. She has taken countless hours off from work in order to assist us wherever and whenever we need her. Gabrielle is a gem!" In addition to her time spent volunteering her voice and story with our education program, Gabrielle works for a small company in Brighton as the Imaging Production Manager and process automation specialist.

It is an honor to have such talented and dedicated women as part of the Gay Alliance. Congratulations, Cille and Gabrielle!

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