

My name is Travis Salway. I'm an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Health Sciences at Simon Fraser University, where I work in affiliation with the British Columbia Center for Disease Control, and the Center for Gender and Sexual Health Equity. I'm grateful and honored by the Early Career Trailblazer Award from the CIHR Institute of Population and Public Health, and I want to accept that award on behalf of my entire research team, and collaborators at Simon Fraser University. Our research team looks at Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer - or 2SLGBTQ identities. We try to understand the settings in which those identities are made visible, where those identities are affirmed, and even celebrated, and in turn we try to understand how affirmation of those identities affects the health of the 2SLGBTQ population. Because research is strengthened by the perspectives of those with living experience, I've asked some of the students I work with to answer the following question: Why is it important to increase Two-Spirit and LGBTQ visibility within public health research?

Ren Lo: Health Equity is a fundamental principle in public health and research that captures the diversity of queer and trans people advances this goal. Two-Spirit, trans and non-binary people have unique intersectional and cultural identities and experiences. These individuals deserve to be supported, affirmed, and recognized. Two-Spirit, trans and non-binary people are underrepresented in research as a whole, and increasing their visibility will give us the knowledge we need to support their health. As movements for trans liberation continue, research that captures the reality and possibility of trans lives is important.

Martha Gumprich: More visibility more visibility of non-binary researchers in public health research means that more students will feel like there's a place for them. As Marian Wright Edelman once said, "you can't be what you can't see." And seeing non-binary researchers makes me feel like there is a place for me, and that there's a future for me in this field and that when I enter a room like I know that someone will understand my experiences, in a way that cis[gender] people just cannot.

Milo Ira: So the reason that it is important to increase visibility for Two-Spirit, trans and non-binary people in healthcare is because due to the increasing visibility at this time we have greater healthcare needs that we are in a position where - because of our invisibility at the healthcare level - we are becoming self-advocates and because we've had to learn to organize and to advocate for ourselves with the resources we have, we have become a great resource and a great font of knowledge to help improve the health of Two-Spirit, trans and non-binary people.

Harlan Pruden: As a Two-Spirit community organizer, I can't think of no other better person, or deserving, than Travis, What I would like to share with you with the short time together is what Travis will bring for you. I can think of no other better person to be an ambassador and to have their name associated with them. Where Travis walks he walks with his heart, and with a sense of curiosity that makes him so incredibly beautiful, and such an incredible ambassador for humanity thank you.