

My name is

Grey J.D. Todd

FACES OF SSU

I'm trans and non-binary, and I use the/them/theirs pronouns. I was born in Mississippi and I've moved all over the United States but now live in a tiny town a little north of Sacramento. I'm a third-year computer science major, music minor, and hoping to either become a world-famous musician or a software developer. When I'm not writing music or designing code, I'm working as a Residential Advisor and I'm happy to oversee the Unity House in Tuscany village. I'm passionate about LGBTQ+ rights and want to use my position as a student leader to bring more awareness to the issues and identities of our community. It meant a lot to me to see faculty and peers be openly LGBTQ+, so I am open about my queer identities too in hopes that I can make other queer folks feel as welcome as I did.

I've been an RA for two years now and I hope to go for a third before I graduate. Working with students has been a blast for me, even with the 3 a.m. phone calls about being locked out. I love helping people and I've found that this job has helped me grow as a person and a leader. Before being an RA, I was an officer of the Queer Student Alliance on campus, and I recall spending a lot of time with my friends in the "Gender Inclusive Living" wishing that I could join them. My second year here, I got to take part in the renaming of Gender Inclusive Living to Unity House. Now a third-year student, I oversee Unity House and work with faculty and the QSA to provide that safe space for LGBTQ+ students on campus and it's more than I ever thought I would get to do.

I love Sonoma State and how accepting everyone is, but it's never an easy journey to come out anywhere. Life while being trans consists of so many exhausting social interactions every single day. At the start of each class, I would have to make the choice to correct the professor on my pronouns or ignore it. Whenever I would have a group project, I'd have to go through coming out all over again. These struggles added onto the underlying strain of mental illness and I often found it very difficult to focus and choose my battles. Despite the weight on my shoulders from anxiety and depression, however, I was able to find the strength and resources to push through.

Navigating a classroom as a trans student may be a challenge, but outside of schoolwork I've found many wonderful friends and peers. The first place I told people I used they, them pronouns was at the first Queer Student Alliance meeting of my first year here and I haven't gone back. I've met people that I consider my second family and I no longer feel afraid to be myself. Being surrounded by such positive and accepting people in the clubs I'm a part of and where I work has been a wonderful experience. My friends and family back at home say that I smile more and I believe them. The weight is slowly coming off my shoulders.

“My name is Grey, I use they, them, theirs pronouns, I'm trans and non-binary, and I'm happy to be in this place where I can be me.”

