



The LGBTQIA+ Community & Justice June 7, 2022

FEATURED PANELIST

Jake Carter (they/them)

Program Coordinator,
Prevention and Empowerment Services
YWCA West Central Michigan



Jake identifies as a queer, non-binary artist and community organizer. They received their undergrad degree in sociology and a Masters in Social Work from Grand Valley State University.

Jake worked as a Residential Crisis Counselor at The Bridge at Arbor Circle, and has been supporting LGBTQ+ youth programming at the Grand Rapids Pride Center since 2014.

As a Program Coordinator for Prevention and Empowerment Services at the YWCA, developing and implementing programming to prevent sexual violence and advance social justice in our community has been the core part of their work.

In 2019, Jake developed The Good Nightlife Project, a program to make Grand Rapids night life safer and more inclusive. While this program was put on hiatus due to the impact of the pandemic on the service industry, Jake is now contracted to provide support for youth programming at the GRPC in addition to supporting the GRPC with developing and implementing a new onboarding process for staff, volunteers, and facilitators of the agency's many social support groups.

In 2020 and 2021, Jake developed a successful community messaging campaign that was designed to address and interrogate negative social norms that can make our communities unsafe, including colorblind racism, street harassment, and gender policing of children and youth.

Jake currently resides with their partner in Kalamazoo. They have been a drag artist for over 5 years, and hope to be continue to nurture their creative skills and talents through their drag persona, IRIS.