

# POV

Community  
Engagement &  
Education

## DISCUSSION GUIDE



**To The Future, With Love**

a film by Shaleece Haas

[www.pbs.org/pov](http://www.pbs.org/pov)



## TO THE FUTURE, WITH LOVE

Caught between the expectations of his Guatemalan immigrant family and his desire to live “happy and gay” with his long-distance boyfriend, 19-year-old Hunter Pixel Jimenez takes us on an energetic and colorful journey through his life as a trans teen in LA and his dreams for the future.

Watch *To the Future, with Love* [here](#).

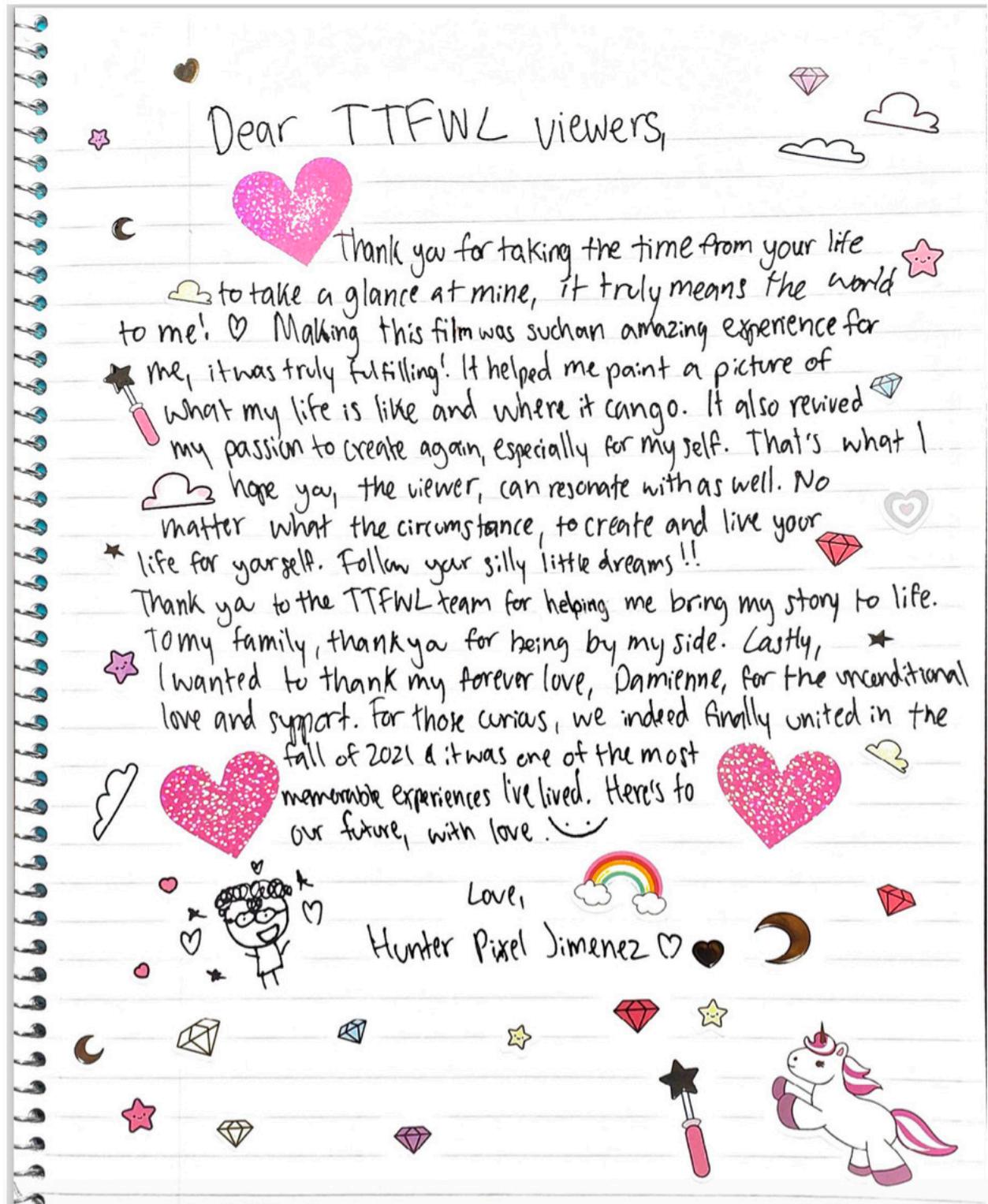
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This guide is an invitation to dialogue. It is based on a belief in the power of human connection and designed for people who want to use *To the Future, with Love* to engage family, friends, classmates, colleagues, and communities. In contrast to initiatives that foster debate, this resource envisions conversations undertaken in a spirit of openness in which people try to expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and actively listening to one another.

The discussion prompts are intentionally crafted to help a wide range of audiences think more deeply about the issues in the film. Rather than attempting to address them all, choose one or two that best meet your needs and interests. And be sure to leave time to take action. Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even in instances when conversations have been difficult.

For more event planning and facilitation tips, visit <https://communitynetwork.amdoc.org/>.



## PREPARING TO FACILITATE

Participants in any conversation arrive with differing degrees of knowledge and varied lived experiences with respect to the topics addressed in *To the Future, with Love*. It will be helpful to prepare for the conversation by grounding yourself in an understanding of the issues, and topics reflected in the film as you set an intention ahead of your event.

In your facilitation, we urge you to center the experiences and identities of those who have been marginalized. This will allow you to lead a conversation that maximizes care, critical curiosity, transformation, and connection.

The following resources will help you invite your community into a generative dialogue after screening.

**Definitions:**

**Cisgender:** Refers to people whose Gender identity aligns with their assigned sex at birth (cis- from Latin, meaning, “on this side [of].” In contrast to trans, from the Latin root meaning “across,” “beyond,” or “on the opposite side [of]”).

**Genderfluid:** Refers to people who have a gender or genders that change. Genderfluid people move between genders, experiencing their gender as something dynamic and changing, rather than static.

**Gender identity:** One’s deeply held, internal sense of oneself as male, female, a blend of both, neither, or something else. Identity also includes the words we use to convey our gender. Gender identity can correspond to, or differ from the sex we were assigned at birth. The language a person uses to communicate their gender identity can evolve and shift over time, especially as someone gains access to a broader gender vocabulary.

**Gender role:** The set of functions, activities, and behaviors commonly expected of boys/men and girls/women by society.

**LGBTQI+:** This is an acronym for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex” The “+” sign recognizes the limitless sexual orientations and gender identities used by individuals.

**Nonbinary and/or Gender Queer:** Terms used by people whose gender identity falls outside the categories of man or woman, male or female. Nonbinary people may define their gender identity as both man and woman, as falling somewhere between these gender “binaries”, or falling outside the “gender binary” altogether.

## PREPARING TO FACILITATE

**Sex:** Used to label a person as “male” or “female” (some US states and other countries offer a third option) at birth, this term refers to a person’s external genitalia and internal reproductive organs. When a person is assigned a particular sex at birth, it is often mistakenly assumed that this will equate with their gender; it might, but it might not. It is also possible to have a sex other than male or female, as is the case with people who are intersex.

**Transgender** or simply **Trans:** Sometimes this term is used broadly as an umbrella term to describe anyone whose gender identity differs from their assigned sex. It can also be used more narrowly as a gender identity that reflects a binary gender identity that is “opposite” or “across from” the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Transition:** “Transitioning” is a term commonly used to refer to the steps a transgender, agender, or nonbinary person takes in order to find congruence in their gender. This term can be misleading as it implies that the person’s gender identity is changing and that there is a discrete moment in time when this takes place. More typically, it is others’ understanding of the person’s gender that shifts. What people see as a “transition” is actually an alignment in one or more dimensions of the individual’s gender as they seek congruence across those dimensions. A transition is taking place, but it is often other people (parents and other family members, support professionals, employers, etc.) who are transitioning in how they see the individual’s gender, and not the person themselves. A person can seek harmony in their gender in many ways:

- Social: changes in social identifiers such as clothing, hairstyle, gender identity, name and/or pronouns;
- Hormonal: the use of medical approaches such as hormone “blockers” or hormone therapy to promote physical, mental, and/or emotional alignment;
- Surgical: the use of surgery to modify of gender-related physical traits ; and
- Legal: changing identification documents such as one’s birth certificate, driver’s license, or passport.

**Queer:** A multi-faceted word that is used in different ways and means different things to different people. Some definitions include: 1) attraction to people of many genders; 2) nonconformity to cultural norms around gender and/or sexuality; 3) a general term referring to all non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender people. Some within the LGBTQI+ community, especially older people, have experienced the use of the word “queer” as a hateful epithet and are reluctant to embrace it.

This article from, “[Understanding Gender](#)” from Gender Spectrum is a helpful primer on gender identity and gender expression. The definitions above come from Gender Spectrum’s terminology page “[The Language of Gender](#),” and from [Vanderbilt University’s LGBTQI Definitions](#).

## KEY PARTICIPANTS

- **Hunter Pixel Jimenez:** 19-year-old nonbinary trans man and son of immigrant parents from Guatemala. Hunter lives in the Koreatown neighborhood of Los Angeles with his family.

## KEY ISSUES

- Trans and Nonbinary Youth
- Central American Immigrants
- Gender Binaries
- Family Relationships (Familial obligations and loyalty)
- Trans and Queer Love
- LGBTQI+ Networks
- Envisioning Futures
- First-Generation Youth
- Long-Distance and Online Relationships
- Parenting LGBTQI+ Children

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION****Helping the Family:**

Many children of immigrants often take on tasks and responsibilities, or act as social and cultural “brokers,” to support their family (Delgado, 2020). People immigrate to the U.S. from other countries for a myriad of reasons: for job opportunities, as economic and political refugees; to avoid persecution based on their gender or sexuality; to seek health care; and for family and community networks. Children in immigrant families often become translators, primary caregivers of siblings, income earners, and legal assistants at a very young age. As immigrant parents make sense of their new social and cultural context in the United States, many rely on their children to help navigate the complexities of their new circumstances. Some research suggests that for children of immigrant families, this process of “brokering” can lead to feelings of empowerment and validation. For example, translating documents for their parents can encourage young people to maintain fluency in their parents’ first language and can reinforce a sense of pride in helping the family. At the same time, these responsibilities and commitments can lead to stress and overwhelming expectations for children of immigrants (Delgado, 2020). Oftentimes, the responsibilities are unequally distributed by gender and age, as in the cases where girls and/or the eldest children are asked to be the primary “brokers” for their families.

**Queer and Trans Migrations from Central and Latin America:**

There has been a long history of trans, queer, and other LGBTQI+ people immigrating to the U.S. in order to find sanctuary from abuse and persecution in their home countries. For example, the first organized Trans-Gay Migrant Caravan in 2017 established a network of trans and queer people from Central America who were seeking asylum in the U.S. Many LGBTQI+ people from Central and Latin America make this treacherous journey in order to escape violence associated with homophobia and transphobia, sexual violence, kidnappings, forced sex work, and governmental neglect. Some LGBTQI+ people are also rejected or harmed by their immediate families because of their gender and/or sexual identity. LGBTQI+ people seek refuge in the U.S. because, despite the transphobia and homophobia that still exist, the U.S. has more established systems of support through the government, non-profits, and humanitarian organizations in comparison to their home countries.

**Anti-Trans Legislation in the U.S.:**

Although LGBTQI+ people enjoy some protections under federal and some state laws, other states are actively working to limit the rights and freedoms of trans and nonbinary people. In the film, Hunter mentions that Arkansas is a difficult place for trans people to live and work. In 2021, Arkansas passed two anti-trans laws, one restricting trans youth

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participation in sports and the other prohibiting healthcare professionals from providing or referring transgender youth for medically necessary health care. Though the health care restriction bill was [blocked by a federal court](#), the efforts to restrict trans rights continues. In the first weeks of 2021, the governor of Arkansas proposed legislation that would make it illegal for prisons to house inmates according to their gender identity.

Arkansas is not the only state that has proposed or passed anti-trans legislation in recent years. In 2021 alone, 33 states introduced more than 100 bills aiming to limit the rights people, 17 of which were passed into law. These include “bathroom bills” that require the bathroom a person uses be determined by their sex assigned at birth; bans on transgender students participating in sports consistent with their gender identity; bans on access to gender-affirming medical care for trans people; and religious exemption laws that permit people, churches, non-profit organizations, and/or corporations to seek exemptions from providing services that burden their religious beliefs.

But the harm of anti-trans legislation extends far beyond the confines of the law itself. Such policies, even if they are not enacted, send a message that trans people are dangerous, deceptive and disposable, dehumanizing tropes that lead to increased discrimination and violence. For example, in 2021 more anti-trans laws were passed than in any previous year and this was also the most deadly year on record for trans people; with trans women of color accounting for those who were most harmed. In this way, local and state politics can compound the risk of discrimination and violence for all trans people.

### **Supportive Networks for LGBTQI+ People:**

Despite the ever-changing legislative landscape in the U.S., LGBTQI+ people have continued to build and sustain networks of support through community groups, nonprofits, and advocacy organizations. Efforts by groups such as those in the “resources” list below enable LGBTQI+ people to live healthier, safer, and more connected lives. Hunter invites us all to dream of a future where all LGBTQI+ people, no matter their race, class, ability, or immigration status, have all the support and care they need to thrive. These resources can support us in moving those dreams towards a reality.

### **Sources:**

Delgado, V. (2020), Children of immigrants as “brokers” in an era of exclusion. *Sociology Compass*, 14: 1-11 e12832. <https://compass.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/am-pdf/10.1111/soc4.12832>

Equality Federation - <https://www.equalityfederation.org/state-legislation>

Transgender Law Center - <https://transgenderlawcenter.org/equalitymap>

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



- Take a moment to think about the film. What moments stood out for you? Why?
- Why do you think the filmmakers chose the title *To the Future, with Love*?
- What aspects of Hunter's story resonate for you personally?
- In the film, Hunter tells his story in drawings. How did this illustrated approach (rather than live action) affect your engagement in the film? How did this creative representation impact your openness to connecting with Hunter and his experiences?
- What was different about this film than others you have seen that feature trans or nonbinary people?
- Where did your personal beliefs and ideas about gender, sexual orientation, and biological sex come from?
- Hunter is a nonbinary trans man who is in a romantic relationship with another trans man. What does this invite you to think about regarding gender and sexual orientation?
- Did anything about Hunter and Damienne's relationship surprise you? In what ways might online or long-distance relationships for LGBTQI+ youth open possibilities that might otherwise be difficult?

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- Hunter shares that he sometimes doesn't allow himself to have "nice things" because it might jeopardize his family's financial security.
  - Are there times when you've experienced tension between your personal desires and your responsibilities to others? How do you navigate those moments?
  - How might our cultural or class backgrounds influence how we think about these tensions?
- In the film, Hunter talks about how his family members love him, but don't necessarily understand or acknowledge his gender identity. What are your beliefs about family support? How can we show people in our lives that we love them, even if we don't fully understand them?
- Hunter is the protagonist, illustrator, and writer of *To the Future, with Love*. How might the film have been different if someone else tried to tell Hunter's story from the outside? What might be lost?

**TAKING ACTION:**

Following your discussion of the film, you may choose to invite people to go deeper. Below are two ideas for ways to take action:

***Express Yourself***

Take a cue from Hunter. Invite participants to use drawing to explore important aspects of their own lives and communities, placing special emphasis on the ways they experience their own gender. Provide art supplies (paper, markers, colored pencils, scissors, glue) and, if possible, leave time at the end for anyone who wants to share with others what they have created.

Time: 45-60 mins

Tools: art supplies including paper, markers, colored pencils (optional: scissors, glue sticks)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Write Your Legislator**

Whether your state is considering anti-trans legislation or you want to support more inclusive legislation on a city, state, or national level, writing to your legislators can make a difference. Invite participants to write postcards in support of (or in opposition to) pending legislation impacting LGBTQI+ people. It can be helpful to provide a template message with room for a personal note or testimonial. [The National LGBTQ Task Force](#) is a great resource for current actions supporting LGBTQI+ people, along with sample language for each campaign. The bipartisan [Freedom for All Americans](#) project provides a legislative tracker and resources to help win LGBTQI-inclusive nondiscrimination protections across the country.

Time: 30-60 minutes

Tools: Pens, postcards, potage, template language

**Resources:**[Trans Families](#)

Trans Families is a nonprofit organization that has been supporting transgender people and their families since 2008 and organize the annual conference Gender Odyssey. They run parent support groups (including a group for Spanish-speaking families), a trans youth leadership program, special topics groups, and youth support groups, with more programs in development.

[Gender Spectrum](#)

Gender Spectrum works to create gender sensitive and inclusive environments for all children and teens. They start with the child, then radiate outwards, working with adults and institutions that affect all children to create gender-inclusive environments from birth through young adulthood.

[PFLAG](#)

PFLAG is the first and largest organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) people, their parents and families, and allies. With nearly 400 chapters and 250,000 members and supporters crossing multiple generations of families in major urban centers, small cities, and rural areas across America, PFLAG is committed to creating a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected, valued, and affirmed.

[The Trevor Project](#)

The Trevor Project is the world's largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for LGBTQ young people.

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[GLAAD](#)

As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. GLAAD protects all that has been accomplished and creates a world where everyone can live the life they love.

[The National LGBTQ Task Force](#)

The Task Force organizes the grassroots power of the LGBTQ community, supporting action and activism on behalf of LGBTQ people and advancing a progressive vision of liberation.

***Regional Resources***[Somos Familia](#) (SF Bay Area / online)

Somos Familia supports Latino families with children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ\*) and conducts education to create family and community acceptance. The group was started by two mothers to support other families with similar experiences.

[Latino Equality Alliance](#) (Los Angeles / online)

Based in Los Angeles, the mission of the Latino Equality Alliance is to advocate for liberty, equality and justice for the Latino/a LGBTQ community.

[The Audre Lorde Project](#) (NYC)

The Audre Lorde Project is a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two Spirit, Trans and Gender Non Conforming People of Color center for community organizing, focusing on the New York City area. Through mobilization, education and capacity-building, we work for community wellness and progressive social and economic justice. Committed to struggling across differences, we seek to responsibly reflect, represent and serve our various communities.

[QLatinx](#) (Central Florida)

QLatinx is a grassroots racial, social, and gender justice organization dedicated to the advancement and empowerment of Central Florida's LGBTQ+ Latinx community.

[Entre Hermanos](#) (Seattle, WA / online)

Entre Hermanos promotes the health and well-being of the Latino Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and questioning community in a culturally appropriate environment through disease prevention, education, support services, advocacy and community building. Their work includes legal support for immigrants and asylees from the LGBTQ Latinx community.

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[Galaei](#) (Philadelphia, PA)

Serving the Latinx community while widening our embrace, GALAEI provides services, support, and advocacy for all Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, and people of color (QTBIPOC) communities.

[Brown Boi Project](#) (SF Bay Area)

The Brown Boi Project is a community of masculine of center womyn, men, two-spirit people, transmen, and our allies committed to changing the way that communities of color talk about gender.

[Transgender Education Network of Texas](#) (TENT)

TENT is an organization dedicated to furthering gender diverse equality in Texas. We work to accomplish this through education and networking in both public and private forums. Through our efforts we strive to halt discrimination through social, legislative, and corporate education.

[Trans Asylum Support](#)

[Transgender Law Center](#)

[Allgo](#)

[Audre Lorde Project](#)

[Undocoquer](#)

[Trans Student Educational Resources \(TSER\)](#)

## PABLO MONTES



Pablo Montes is a PhD student at the University of Texas at Austin in the Cultural Studies in Education Program. He is the son of migrant workers from Guanajuato, Mexico, the ancestral territories of the Chichimeca Guamares and P'urhepecha. He currently serves as the Youth Director for the Indigenous Cultures Institute with the Coahuiltecan community in the Lands of Yana Wana (spirit waters of central Texas). Additionally, through a generous grant by the University of Texas at Austin's Green Fund, he is working with co-author Judith Landeros and other Indigenous people to create a Land Based Education Curriculum. His interests include the intersection of queer settler colonialism, Indigeneity, and Land education.

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