

# NEWSLETTER



## KhushDC

SOUTH ASIAN LGBTQ COMMUNITY  
est. 1994

### DEAR KHUSHDC MEMBERS NEW AND RETURNING,

Happy Pride and thank you so much for signing up for our email list! We are so excited to launch our quarterly newsletter and connect with our community in this new way. Each newsletter will be sent out mid quarter and will include reflections on past events, what events are coming up, resources and member spotlights. If you have any questions, concerns, feedback or suggestions for us, please leave us a message in our [KhushBox](#)!

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## WHAT'S NEW?

Pride is a time when we come together as a community, celebrate our history and honor our queer and trans lineages of resistance. This Pride, we wanted to introduce an updated mission statement that reinforces KhushDC's commitment to supporting struggle against systems of oppression within ourselves, our lives and our communities:

*KhushDC is a social, support and political group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) South Asians in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. We represent a broad array of nationalities including those of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka and those who have roots from these countries.*

*Our mission is to create a safe and empowering space for LGBTQ+ South Asian people to celebrate their identities, forge lasting relationships and work towards dismantling systems of oppression within our community including, but not limited to ableism, anti-blackness, biphobia, casteism, internalized racism, misogyny, transphobia and Islamophobia. We aim to stand in solidarity with other oppressed communities as we work towards our shared liberation. We are committed to educating ourselves and each other from a place of mutual respect and love.*

Late December 2020, the (new) board also hosted a town hall event in which community members assisted in the sprucing up of our bylaws and inclusivity statement. They are available for public viewing on our website:].



**KhushDC**  
SOUTH ASIAN LGBTQ COMMUNITY

## NEW LOGO & WEBSITE

We are proud to reveal our new logo and website! Head over to [khushdc.com](https://khushdc.com) and check it out!

# Meet The Board!

Sonali



(SHE/HER)

Radhika



(SHE/HER)

Sweta



(SHE/THEY)



Kevin



(HE/HIM)

Sam



(HE/HIM)

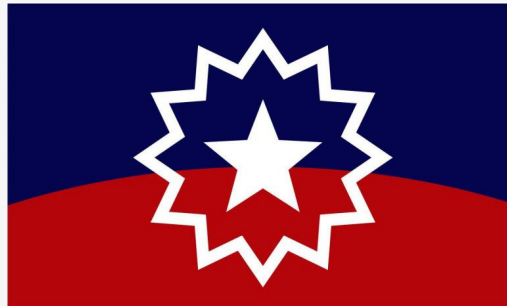
# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: SAMMY (SHE/HER)

## About Sammy:

I feel like it's tough sometimes to fall at the intersection of different groups that have both shaped your identity growing up. You're always explaining queer things to the South Asians and South Asian things to the queer folks (and all of the above to your therapist). Having a community like KhushDC has been nice because I've found it a lot easier to connect with people about more nuanced or meaningful issues when we have a similar base level of understanding of what it's like to be both queer and South Asian.

## Is there a book, film or other media you'd recommend to other queer South Asian folks?

The Paths of Marriage by Mala Kumar was one of the first books I read with a queer South Asian character. Despite being a debut novel, it had a lot of bits that rang true, and helped me have some conversations with my mom about queerness and the immigrant experience



## JUNETEENTH

June is also the month we celebrate Juneteenth, the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the end of slavery. Juneteenth is a great time for non-Black folks to move money to Black people and organizations fighting for racial justice. Here's a list of places to donate to support Black queer and trans folks and here's a great guide to Juneteenth prepared by Autostraddle.



Despite the distances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, KhushDC members have been coming together to build community, create shared healing spaces and educate ourselves:

### WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Join us for a conversation around the impact of trans women on women's history with **Alexis Blackmon** (Casa Ruby) and **Samia Lalani** (KhushDC)



**SAMIA LALANI**  
(Any/All)

Host, Board Member  
**KhushDC**



**ALEXIS BLACKMON**  
(She/Her)

Director, Government and Public Affairs  
**Casa Ruby**

**MARCH 26TH 2021, 6-7PM**  
**@KHUSHDC INSTAGRAM LIVE**



**LISA RAY SHEETAL SHETH**  
A FILM BY SHAMIM SARIF  
Based on her Award Winning Novel  
**THE WORLD UNSEEN**  
Nothing Can Stop You From Falling In Love

### Meet our Reading Group Lead

**AQDAS AFTAB**  
(THEY/THEM)



**11th South Asian Film Festival**



**Lisa Ray Sheetal Sheth**  
**Two Cultures. Two Women. One Love.**  
**I CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT**  
A Film by Shamim Sarif  
Based on her Acclaimed Novel  
**11th WINNER INTERNATIONAL AWARDS**



### CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

**THROUGH BLACK & BROWN SOLIDARITY**

**02/11 at 7 pm on KhushDC's Instagram Live**  
**Black History and Me:**  
Celebrating from a Different Perspective

**02/18 at 7 pm on KhushDC's Instagram Live**  
**Black Power: Inspiration to Explore Global Activism**

**02/25 at 7 pm on CEP's FacebookLive**  
**Black Queer & Trans Activism: How Did We Get Here?**

**02/28 at 7 pm on CEP's Facebook Live**  
**Drag Dinner & Black Activism: Where Do We Go From Here?**

**Caribbean Equality Project**  
**KhushDC**  
SOUTH ASIAN LGBTQ COMMUNITY

### KHUSHDC PRESENTS



**A FORUM ON MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS**

**23RD MAY 2021 5-630**

**SWIPE LEFT FOR PANELIST**  
SEE INFO IN BIO/CLOSED CAPTIONING WILL BE PROVIDED

**KhushDC**

### KhushDC Presents

## QUEER DESI BOOK CLUB



**MAY 27, 7PM EST 2021**  
**REGISTRATION LINK IN BIO**  
FIRST BOOK: MARRIAGE OF A THOUSAND LIES - S.J. SINDU  
CLOSED CAPTIONING AVAILABLE

**KhushDC**



# COMMUNITY

- KhushDC & Sher Vancouver (@shervancouver) hosted streams of films: 'I Can't Think Straight' and 'The World Unseen' followed by a Q&A Session with creators Shamim Sharif (@shamimsharif) and Hanan Kattan (@hanankattan).
- We held virtual happy hours and game nights alternating third Tuesdays, as spaces to de-stress and chat or play games with other queer and trans South Asian folks. **The next happy hour will be Tuesday, June 15 at 7 PM!**
- We held confidential peer support groups every third Saturday from 1:30 to 3:30 PM for folks to talk about what was on their minds in a secure, judgment-free space. **The next group is scheduled for Saturday, June 19 from 1:30 to 3:30 PM.**

# HEALING

- On March 10, we held a self-love and shadow work workshop with self-worth coach Taran Walia(@taran.walia), where we identified our shadows and brought them to the light.
- On May 18, we offered a free community yoga session with queer south Asian yoga teacher Pooja Virani (she/her) (@poojaviraniyoga)
- On May 23, we organized an incredible panel on QTBIPOC mental health with therapists and mental health professionals, Dee Browne of Caribbean Equality Project, Radhika Segal of Desi Rainbow Parents and Allies and Samia Lalani (they/he) of Black and Pink National.



- In January, KhushDC started the **Intersections: Caste, Gender, and Sexuality Reading Group** in partnership with writer and educator Aqdas Aftab (they/them). The reading group meets on the first Tuesday of every week. Please sign up here if you're interested!
- In February, we celebrated Black History Month by holding a **series of panels on Black-South Asian solidarity**, in partnership with the Caribbean Equality Project (@caribbeanequalityproject), featuring panelists like Rajani Gudlavalleti (she/her) (@ruhjuhnee), Ambalika Williams (she/her) (@jazzmademegay89), Ceyenne Doroshow (she/her) (@doroshow), Darren J. Glenn (he/him) (@darrenjglenn), Jahlove Serrano (he/him).
- In March, we celebrated Women's History Month by uplifting the voices of trans women of color and hosting a **conversation with Alexis Blackmon (she/her)**, director of government and public affairs at Casa Ruby.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Our next Happy Hour will be held **virtually on Tuesday, June 15 at 7pm.**
- Our **Peer Support Group** will be held on **June 19th from 1:30-3:30PM**
- Join us for the second meeting of our **queer South Asian book club** on **Thursday, June 24 at 7 PM!** Book clubs will be held every fourth Thursday.
- Our first in-person event of 2021 will be a **Pride picnic** held on **Saturday, June 26 at 5PM at Crispus Attucks park!**

## EVENTS FROM OUR PARTNERS

- Join AQUA DC on a hike on **Sunday, June 20th from 11AM-3PM at Billy Goat Trail!**
- Join AQUA DC for their **Pride Picnic on June 27th from 1PM-4PM at P Street Beach Park!**
- API Unity March happening **June 26th on Pennsylvania Avenue between 3rd and 4th from 12PM-3PM.**

## RESOURCES

Since May was Mental Health Awareness Month, here is a list of some resources we compiled with our panelists:

- **Desi Rainbow Parents and Allies** support group:  
<https://www.desirainbow.org/events>
- **Caribbean Equality Project:**  
<https://www.caribbeanequalityproject.org/mental-health-services>
- **DesiQ Hotline:** <https://www.deqh.org/>
- **National Queer and Trans Therapists of Color Network:**  
<https://nqttcn.com/en/>
- **Rest For Resistance:** <https://restforresistance.com/>
- **Fireweed Collective** – Fight to heal, heal to fight:  
<https://fireweedcollective.org/>