

Date:

Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee  
C/O Stamp Development  
U.S. Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 3300  
Washington DC 20260-3501

**Re: Honor Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera and José Julio Sarria**

Dear Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee,

I respectfully request that commemorative stamps be issued soon honoring three LGBTQ2S+ icons for their work in the LGBTQ2S+ movement for civil rights and equality.

**Marsha P. Johnson 1945-1992:**

**Marsha P. Johnson** was an activist, self-identified drag queen, performer, and survivor. She was a prominent figure in the Stonewall uprising of 1969. She was initially referred to as 'Black Marsha' which later evolved to Marsha P. Johnson. The "P" stood for "Pay It No Mind," which is what Marsha would say in response to questions about her gender.

As trans awareness is now more accessible to the world, we are grateful for Marsha's defining role as a trailblazer in diversity and the spectrum of gender identity. Marsha Johnson and Sylvia Rivera co-founded the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) organization which offered shelter and support to the trans community.

Her life and untimely death resulted in her legacy of hero status for LGBTQ2S+ humans worldwide. Unapologetically herself in a time when it truly was not safe to do. The Marsha P. Johnson Institute protects and defends the human rights of black transgender people. Organizing, advocating, creating an intentional community to heal, developing transformative leadership, and promote collective power.

**Sylvia Rivera 1951-2002:**

Latina Civil rights pioneer **Sylvia Rivera** along with close friend Marsha P. Johnson was a veteran of the 1969 Stonewall uprising, Sylvia was a tireless advocate for all those who had been marginalized as the "gay rights" movement has mainstreamed. Sylvia fought hard against the exclusion of transgender people from the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act in New York, and was a loud and persistent voice for the rights of people of color and low-income queer and trans people. The Sylvia Rivera Law Project continues Sylvia's work by centralizing issues of systemic poverty and racism, and prioritizing the struggles of queer and trans people who face the most severe and multi-faceted discrimination.

**José Sarria 1922-2013**

**José Julio Sarria** -Absolute Empress I de San Francisco was a drag performer, a political activist, a veteran, and a community leader for the LGBTQ2S+ and Latinx communities. He was the first openly gay person to run for elected office in the United States and was involved in the founding of multiple LGBTQ2S+ organizations including the League for Civil Education, the Tavern Guild and the Society for Individual rights.

Sarria declared himself "Empress José I, The Widow Norton" and in 1965 founded the International Imperial Court System. The Imperial Court System now exists as chapters in 70 cities across United

States, Canada and Mexico. It is one of the largest LGBTQ2S+ oriented charitable fundraising platforms in existence.

During the gay bar raids of the sixties and seventies, Sarria stood tall in the face of discrimination and encouraged men to resist by pleading not guilty, forcing trials to occur. This bogged down the court dockets with unnecessary trials, which caused judges to revisit the laws against sodomy. Sarria was also a huge advocate against "moral laws", insisting that these laws served no purpose other than to subjugate gay people. He worked for most of his life to affect change in this regard, which he did in many ways.

The International Court System under the leadership of Queen Mother I of the Americas Empress Nicole the Great continues to honor José's legacy of noble deeds. Raising funds and awareness to community resources that contribute to the strength and freedom of our LGBTQ2S+ communities.

Please give serious consideration to this worthy cause

Thank you.

Sincerely,