

## outstanding

### R.E. Szego Breathes Free

**R**.E. Szego is focused on saving some queer lungs. Szego is the program coordinator for Breathe Free: Oregon LGBTQ Coalition Against Tobacco, the only program provided by Portland's Sexual Minority Youth Recreation Center that serves both youth and adults.

"Learning more and more about the social justice issues relevant to tobacco prevention, I've become hooked," says Szego. "These issues include how the tobacco industry targets underserved groups, such as poor people, people of color, LGBTQ people and youth who then have to live—or die—with the impacts of the effects of tobacco use."

But Szego's job of getting this message out isn't always easy. "Tobacco prevention isn't super popular or cool. I think that people are worried that if they talk to me about tobacco and they currently smoke that I'll shame them—which is totally not what I'm about."

Originally from Charleston, W.Va., Szego is a smart and serious activist. Szego has organized first aid and health/safety workshops for demonstrations and activist gatherings. In addition to co-facilitating anti-oppression trainings, Szego helped put together a zine on sexual violence. Some of Szego's goals as program coordinator of Breathe Free include supporting queer bar owners, event plan-



**R.E. Szego is keenly aware of the tobacco industry's moves to hook queer youth.**

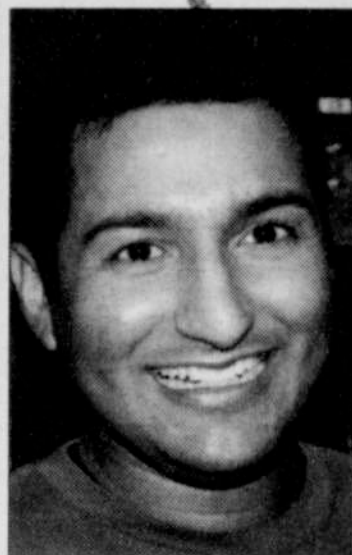
ners and performers who create 100 percent smoke-free spaces and events; joining others in celebrating a comprehensive smoking ban in Oregon; ensuring continued funding for the lifesaving programming provided at SMYRC; and creating a core of youth community educators to speak about risk behaviors and tobacco prevention.

Add to that list quite an accomplishment for someone who claims to be shy: Szego is a former member of the acclaimed drag king troupe DK PDX.

—Malka Geffen 10

## just asking

Portland Pride is a month away. What would make you really excited about attending Pride this year?



**KOMO BAINS**  
Hairdresser

"I didn't go to Pride last year, but I heard it was really low-key. I hope it's not so reserved this year."



**SIMONE STREETER**  
Porsche Saleswoman

"I mostly go to the parade to show Portland and Oregon that we're here. Hoping the weather is good this year, I'm looking forward to outdoor music on the waterfront."



**ANGELA CARTER**  
Firestarter

"I would love if someone would put together an old-fashioned queer picnic in the park, especially now that Peacock in the Park is defunct. The parade isn't interactive. I'm thinking of something like Dyke March in San Francisco."



**CHRISTOPHER CUTTONE**  
Librarian

"I'd be excited if Pride were about being who we really are and not about excessive partying and dressing up like sluts."



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