

Education

B.S. in Psychology, B.S. in Sociology and Criminology, *magna cum laude* Blacksburg, VA
Virginia Tech Polytechnic Institute and State University Aug. 2016- May 2020

- Minor in Peace and Violence Prevention Studies

M.A. in Developmental Psychology Santa Cruz, California
University of California, Santa Cruz Sept, 2022- June, 2025

Doctorate of Developmental Psychology *in progress* Santa Cruz, CA
University of California, Santa Cruz Sept. 2021- Present

Relevant Work Experience

Graduate Student Researcher, The Diversity Center Santa Cruz, CA
University of California, Santa Cruz April 2024-Present

Director: Meggie Pina & Cheryl Fraenzl

- Conduct mixed-methods research on LGBTQ+ youth development, including the design, implementation, and analysis of pre- and post-program surveys to assess identity exploration, wellness practices, and community belonging.
- Develop and evaluate community-based interventions, contributing to program logic models, theory of change frameworks, and grant deliverables that support inclusive education, advocacy, and affirming spaces for queer and trans youth.
- Collaborate with interdisciplinary teams and community partners to produce policy-relevant findings, present at academic conferences, and support data-informed decision-making within youth-serving organizations.

Queer Student Union Program Facilitator, County Office of Education Santa Cruz, CA
In collaboration with The Diversity Center Sept. 2024- May 2025

COE Contact: Andres Ortiz

- Designed and led data collection efforts to assess the experiences of LGBTQ+ youth in local schools, including survey development, distribution, and analysis to inform student-led advocacy priorities.
- Represented the QSU at statewide LGBTQ+ Advocacy Day, meeting with legislators to share youth-driven policy recommendations and promote inclusive education reforms.
- Mentored LGBTQ+ youth leaders through skill-building workshops, one-on-one support, and facilitation of intergenerational dialogues to strengthen confidence, advocacy, and community organizing capacities.

Teaching Assistant, Department of Psychology Santa Cruz, CA
University of California, Santa Cruz Sept. 2022-March 2024

Department Contact: Kathy Montano

- Teaching course content related to: Culture and Technology, Introduction to Developmental Psychology, Gender & Development, Theory of Mind
- Grading capacity of 60 students per quarter for 20-hours per week
- Guest lecture: Culture and Technology, Gender & Development

Program Facilitator, The Diversity Center

Santa Cruz, CA

California, Santa Cruz

July. 2022-Sep. 2024

Director: Cheryl Fraenzl

- Developed and implemented a four-part gender diverse support program to serve local trans and non-binary youth in gender affirming practices.
- Facilitated and created weekly programs for LGBTQIA+ community members between the ages of 11 and 60+
- Collaborated on resource database for local Pride clubs in schools to access a variety of LGBTQ+ curriculum, content, media, information, and more.

Writing Tutor, Queer Intimacies Senior Seminar

Santa Cruz, CA

University of California, Santa Cruz

Jan. 2023-March 2023

Department Contact: Phillip Hammack

- Closely collaborated and instructed with faculty advisor centering prominent pieces of literature relating to Queer relationships and concepts.
- Contributed to pedagogical practices centering LGBTQIA+ lived experiences and co-constructed learning environments with students.
- Held office hours to support students integrating class content into personal narratives.

Researcher 1, Social and Behavioral Sciences

Houston, TX

Social Development Lab, University of Houston

Sep. 2020-Aug. 2021

Director: Dr. Julie Dunsmore

- Extensive training in childhood socio-emotional development, behavioral and language-based coding.
- Independently leading research project on non-verbal communication of emotion via tactile expression in 9-year-old children and their mothers
- Responsible for mastering multiple coding schemes, training and supervising new lab members, and organizing lab meetings and presentations.
- Organizer and literature collector for multiple systematic reviews related to grandparent roles in emotion socialization and gender narratives in media literature.

Professional Presentations

Keith, Z., Franzel, C., & Pina, M. (2025, TBD). *Phoenix from the ashes: Rebuilding an LGBTQ+ center.*
Paper to be presented at the CenterLink Annual Leadership Summit, Washington DC.

- Keith, Z.** & Manago, A. (July 18–19, 2025). *LGBTQ+ Voices: Qualitative Insights for Community Action and Advocacy*. Paper to be presented at the Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology (SQIP) Annual Conference, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI
- Keith, Z.**, & Laflin, N. (April 7, 2025). *Beyond Inclusion: Building Active Allyship and Protective Spaces for LGBTQIA2S+ Voices in Academia*. Talk presented at the UCSC Developmental Psychology Department Colloquium, University of California, Santa Cruz.
- Keith, Z.** (January 22–26, 2025). *Attended Creating Change 2025: the National LGBTQ Task Force’s political, leadership, and skills-building conference*. Rio Hotel & Casino & Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV
- Keith, Z.**, Manago, A., & Garcia, G. (June 2024). *Qualitative methodology for mapping family systems and LGBTQ+ digital experience*. Paper presented at the Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology (SQIP) Annual Conference, Boston College, Boston, MA (June 14–16, 2024)
- Keith, Z.**, Manago, A., & Garcia, G. (June, 2023). Social media as tools for identity exploration with families among Latiné and White LGBTQ+ youth. Poster presented at the Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology (SQIP) Annual Conference, University of California, Santa Cruz.
- Keith, Z.**, Manago, A., & Garcia, G. (April, 2023) Social media as tools for identity development among Latiné and White LGBTQ+ youth. Poster presented to Society for Research on Adolescents, San Diego, CA.
- Keith, Z.**, Manago, A., & Garcia, G. (March, 2023) “Adolescents’ Cultural Contexts and Competencies across Digital Landscapes.” Symposium presented to Society for Research on Child Development, Salt Lake City, UT.
- Terry, J. B., **Keith Z.**, Zhu D., & Dunsmore J.C., (March, 2023) Independent and Interdependent Self-Constructual’s Within Chinese Parent-Child Dyads: Children’s Drawings and Parents’ Self-Report. Poster presented to Society for Research on Child Development, Salt Lake City, UT.
- Keith, Z.** and Manago, A., (October, 2022). The importance of family in LGBTQIA+ Online identity. Flash talk presented to UCSC Networking and Research Conference.
- Keith, Z.**, Liu, T.Y. & Dunsmore, J.C. (July, 2022). A systematic review: Gender and emotion in media for adolescents. Poster presented to the biennial meeting of the International Society for Research on Emotions, Los Angeles, CA.
- Gacria, M., **Keith, Z.**, & Manago, A., (May, 2022) Digital tours: A new method for understanding LGBTQ identity development on social media. Poster presented to Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference, Los Angeles, CA.
- Keith, Z.**, Talley, K.E., Bell, M.A. & Dunsmore, J.C. (April, 2021). Mother-child emotional communication through physical touch: Connection, intensity, and associations with child behaviour problems. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Affective Science, Virtual. *Note: Selected as a highly-ranked abstract and published as a peer-reviewed abstract in a supplement of Affective Science*
- Brinberg, D., Brinberg, M., Jaccard, J., **Keith, Z.**, and Herr, P. (2019). Is Science “Good Story Telling,” Talk presented at Association for Consumer Research, Atlanta, GA.

Publications

Keith, Z., & Manago, A. M. (in preparation). *Disrupting the white and binary: Social media and LGBTQ+ Latiné youth experiences*. Manuscript in preparation for submission to *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*.

Community Leadership, Training & Advocacy

Director of Youth Cultural Development, Safe Schools Project (Santa Cruz, CA, April 2022–Present): Lead LGBTQ+ curriculum implementation in middle schools, coordinate faculty assessments, and facilitate cross-district collaborations for inclusive education.

Board Member, LGBTQIA+ Task Force, Santa Cruz County Office of Education (SCCOE) (May 2022–Present): Partner with county leaders to improve LGBTQ+ student safety; contributed to initiatives like the Top 40 LGBTQ Booklist, Pride flag-raising events, and the Queer Youth Leadership Summit.

Entertainment Coordinator, Monterey Peninsula Pride (Monterey, CA, Aug. 2022–Present): Manage entertainment scheduling, accessibility planning, and permitting for Monterey Pride and After Dark, in collaboration with a 25+ member planning team.

Event Producer & Entertainment Coordinator, Santa Cruz Pride (Santa Cruz, CA, Jan. 2022–Present): Produced the first-ever Boardwalk Pride event and coordinated entertainment for both youth and main stage events through partnership with venues, sponsors, and performers.

Producer & Host, Queer Performance Art Series at Pearl Hour (Monterey, CA, July 2022–Present): Curate and manage monthly drag and variety shows serving 120+ attendees, overseeing performer bookings, logistics, finances, and community engagement.

Student Facilitator, Narrative Identity Research Group (NIRG), UCSC (Dec. 2022–Present): Organize monthly qualitative research discussions for graduate students and faculty; coordinate materials and manage group funding.

Planning Committee Member, Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology (SQIP) (Jan.–June 2023): Co-planned and executed the SQIP conference at UCSC, supporting logistics, program design, and communications for 100+ attendees.

Trainer, Queer Youth Summit – Gender 201 Workshop (Sept. 2023): Led a training session for ~80 parents and educators focused on gender expansiveness, youth affirmation, and creating inclusive educational spaces.

Triangle Speaker Panelist & Moderator (2023–Present): Facilitate and participate in community conversations sharing lived LGBTQ+ experiences and promoting empathy and understanding in schools, universities, and professional settings.

Committee Member, CA LGBTQ+ Student Rights Coalition (2023–Present): Contribute to statewide policy and organizing efforts to safeguard and expand the rights of LGBTQ+ students in California schools through legislative advocacy and resource development.

PRISM Group Trainer, LGBTQ+ History & Educator Workshop (2023–Present): Provide training for educators on LGBTQ+ history, representation, and affirming classroom practices through the PRISM education initiative.

Welcoming Schools Certified Trainer (May 2024–Present): Deliver nationally recognized professional development rooted in creating inclusive school environments using evidence-based strategies from the HRC’s Welcoming Schools program.

Committee Member, DataShare Santa Cruz (April 2024–Present): Collaborate with local stakeholders and data stewards to advance equitable data practices, increase accessibility of county data, and promote community-informed evaluation.

Funding & Awards

Evidence for Change Fellowship, Stanford Impact Labs (2024–2025)

Awarded \$50,000 to support research and community-engaged impact work on Theory of Change for The Diversity Center of Santa Cruz

Ally to Queer Youth Award, Nominee (2024 & 2025)

Recognized by the State of California for outstanding advocacy, mentorship, and support of LGBTQ+ youth across the Central Coast.

2024 Ruthellen Josselson Student Grant, Awardee (2024)

Awarded \$1000 grant for commitment to SQIP Conference planning and ensuring graduate students attendance at following years conference.

Note: If you would like more information regarding the queer performance art, please provide your inquiry to receive artist portfolio and event specific details.