Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual+ (LGBTQIA+) Pride Month is celebrated each year in the month of June to honor the 1969 Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan. In June of 1969, patrons and supporters of the Stonewall Inn in New York City staged an uprising to resist the police harassment and persecution to which LGBTQIA+ Americans were commonly subjected.

This uprising marks the beginning of a movement to outlaw discriminatory laws and practices against LGBTQIA+ Americans. As social progress has gradually been made over the years, Pride Month has become a time to celebrate diversity and an occasion to work towards establishing equality among LGBTQIA+ members from all over the world. The Stonewall Uprising was a tipping point for the Gay Liberation Movement in the United States. While Pride parades, picnics, parties, workshops, symposia, and concerts attract millions of participants around the world, Pride Month is also filled with sobering memorials for those members of the community who have been lost to hate crimes or during the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The purpose of the commemorative month is to recognize the important impact and many contributions that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and asexual individuals have had on history locally, nationally, and internationally.
To show support for the community, as well as to build greater harmony among allies and LGBTQIA+ individuals in the STEM field, NYGC staff were asked to share what Pride Month means to them or what it means to be an ally to the community.

Pride month to me is about reflection, love, and raising awareness. I reflect on my own journey toward becoming a proud LGBTQIA+ community member and commemorating the individuals involved in the Stonewall riots of 1969. I spread love and acceptance to every member of our community, and I raise awareness around current LGBTQIA+ issues. We have made great strides, but we still have a long way to go!

- **Brian O’Toole**, Associate Scientist, Production Lab

I think of Pride Month as celebrating who we are. Celebrating those who fought and stayed true to themselves so we can have the rights we do today.

- **Claire Borron**, Manager, Sponsored Research

Pride is a display of resilience in the LGBTQIA+ community as well as a celebration of self-acceptance. It’s a time to appreciate the diversity of our community and to stand out and proud. It’s about feeling surrounded (even if virtually!) and supported by a community that celebrates us just as we are, particularly in a world that often does the opposite.

- **Alexi Runnels**, Scientific Project Manager

To me, Pride Month is about celebrating a marginalized group who up until recent history was persecuted and told to hide who they are. Obviously, these injustices are still present but to be open and celebrated is a step towards more universal acceptance and normalization.

- **Jaime McClintock**, Sequencing Operations Manager
As an ally of the LGBTQIA+ community, and one who still has a lot to learn, Pride Month is a time for me to learn more about the LGBTQIA+ community and educate myself on the challenges they’ve faced and how they’ve overcome these challenges. I realize I have a lot to learn, and Pride Month is a reminder for me to do the work it takes to make myself and all of society more inclusive of LGBTQIA+ individuals.

- Banke Fagbemi, Director, Business Development

Pride, to me, is loving the inner child who never had the chance to express themselves growing up, the one who had to minimize their true self to appease others around, the one who tried so hard to fit in and still could never figure out how to. Pride Month is a gift activists like Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera unknowingly gave to a queer kid growing up in Bangladesh who thought life would never get better.

- Mir Asgar, Project Management Operations Associate

Pride means to fight for the rights for everyone to live freely!

- Justin Maldonado, Senior Network Engineer

Pride Month is a celebration of diversity and inclusion. It’s a recognition of the struggle that the LGBTQIA+ community has experienced, and continues to experience, and a time for us to reflect on ways to make our community more inclusive, safe, and supportive. It is an opportunity for us to expand our education and understanding of LGBTQIA+ issues and experiences.

- Hannah Goulding, Senior Director, Human Resources

Pride Month is an important recognition of the achievements of the LGBTQIA+ community. It also serves as a reminder of the challenges the LGBTQIA+ community has faced and continues to face. It’s also a celebration of their courageous commitment to fight discrimination and be catalysts for societal change. Pride Month helps ensure that their voices are heard.

- Karen Zipern, Senior Director, Communications