

Gender studies

Just in time for back-to-school, Sundance Channel presents a new documentary series that follows the everyday lives of four transgender college students
By Angie J. Han

For many young people, leaving home and going to college provides the first opportunity to live openly as a gay man or lesbian. But what's the experience like for trans folk? A new documentary series premiering September 20 on Sundance Channel offers some perspective. *TransGeneration* is a touching and frank eight-episode study that follows four very different transgender college students over the course of a school year as they deal with schoolwork and family life in addition to the highly personal process of transitioning.

"I really wanted to participate in a project that looked like it wanted to show the diverse perspectives of the trans community," said FTM (female-to-male) subject T.J. Jourian. "There are things that we share and some experiences that we might all have, but in the end, we're all individuals."

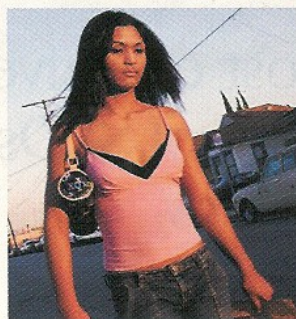
A 24-year-old Michigan State graduate student who hails from the island nation of Cyprus, Jourian hopes to find work as a GLBT campus coordinator. "There aren't that many trans folks who are working on college campuses, so I'm hoping to be a resource for a college student coming out." In the meantime, Jourian keeps himself busy with activism, particularly with Phi Tau Mu, an on-campus FTM group, and Drag King Rebellion, a local troupe.

Covering a wide range of transgender youth experiences, the other participants in the show are Lucas, a needle-shy—all things considered, it's an issue—FTM enrolled at a women's college in Massachusetts; Gabbie, a peppy blond MTF (male-to-female) in Colorado counting down the days to her sex-reassignment surgery; and Raci, a hearing-impaired MTF in Los Angeles originally from the Philippines.

Director Jeremy Simmons believes that the college students in his documentary are particularly well-equipped to present the



■ Clockwise from top: *TransGeneration's* T.J., Gabbie, Lucas, and Raci



transgender perspective to a wide audience. "I think anybody can relate to being in college and going through issues of identity...so the issue of gender becomes something the mainstream audience can understand," said Simmons. "It humanizes an issue that a lot of people haven't spent a lot of time thinking about." ■

MUSIC



LD Beghtol, renegade popster

LD Beghtol, gay front man for Flare, says he's currently focused on a new, surprisingly upbeat band, LD and the New Criticism. Their contagiously poppy debut album, already finished, is awaiting a label. "New Criticism is very different from Flare," Beghtol insists.

"It's about delivering your lines in a loud, clear voice. More pop, more immediately engaging, and pretty fucking funny." —Lawrence Ferber

TRANSGENERATION: COURTESY SUNDANCE CHANNEL; (4): BEIGHTOL: JACOB COLCHER