

THIRD WAVE FUND

English Transcript

Mic Check! Podcast

Episode 02: Disruption, Healing Justice, and the Necessity of Creating Autonomous Spaces

Guests: Xyra and Crystal of Trans Queer Pueblo

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- Person:** 00:00 Can you say Mic Check? [*Multiple people follow by saying Mic Check!*]
- Monica Trinidad:** 00:07 You're listening to Mic Check, a podcast featuring conversations with young women, intersex, queer, and trans folks of color about what it's really like on the front lines and back lines of the fight for gender justice, and how listeners can best support grassroots movements.
- Music background:** 00:22 *Nina Simone speaks over music:* Our honest duty, as far as I'm concerned, is to reflect the times.
- Tara Tabassi:** 00:27 For over 20 years, Third Wave has funded youth- led activism and organizing across the United States, and it's supported emerging organizations that lack access to philanthropy. We believe that young women, intersex, queer, and trans youth of color of vital to all movements for justice.
- Music background:** 00:42 *Nina Simone speaks over music:* I think that is true of painters, sculptures, poets, musicians.
- Tara Tabassi:** 00:49 Third Wave Fund exists because the precise communities that experience the bulk of oppression still exists at the margins of philanthropy.
- Monica Trinidad:** 01:04 We did it! And by we did it, I mean we're bringing you episode number two of Mic Check podcast, a long form interview podcast housed by Third Wave Fund, a national feminist fund ensuring that young women, queer, and trans youth of color, have the tools and resources they need to lead powerful movements. I'm Monica Trinidad here with my co-host, Tara Tabassi, and we're bringing you episode

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two live from the Allied Media Conference in Detroit, Michigan. For those that aren't familiar with Allied Media Conference, it's an incredible conference held every summer in Detroit bringing together a vibrant and diverse community of people using media to incite change. The conference features over 300 hands-on workshops, panels, film screenings, bus tours of Detroit, art and music events, strategy sessions, karaoke, bowling, collaborate art, and so much more. In other words, if you haven't been, you have to go.

- Monica Trinidad:** 01:56 For this episode, we sat down with two young Phoenix-based organizers, Xyra and Crystal of Trans Queer Pueblo, an autonomous LGBTQ+ migrant community of color who work wherever they find their people, creating cycles of mutual support that cultivates leadership to generate community power for liberation. Xyra and Crystal dive deep into the importance of healing justice within anti-criminalization work, the value of disruption, and the necessity of creating alternative autonomous spaces for queer and trans people of color.
- Monica Trinidad:** 02:29 But before we dive into that conversation, we had two quick chats with two rad young organizers from grantee partner organization Southerners on New Ground, and Black LGBTQIA Migrant Project. They stopped by our table to say hello in the AMC Exhibition Room. So we asked them how their AMC was going, what knowledge they're bringing back to their organizations back home, and of course how funders can do better at respecting organizers' time and labor. Check it out, and then stick around for our full conversation with Trans Queer Pueblo right after.
- Monica Trinidad:** 03:07 Let's do a Mic check.
- Paige Ingram:** 03:09 Mic check.
- Monica Trinidad:** 03:09 Mic check. All right. Cool. All right, will you tell me what's your name and what organization are you with?
- Paige Ingram:** 03:14 Yeah. So my name is Paige Ingram. I am here officially with an organization called Black Lives of Unitarian

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Universalism. I'm also a Lord's Work fellow. That is a leadership development program run by SONG, what up?

- Monica Trinidad:** 03:31 Yeah, SONG. We love SONG.
- Paige Ingram:** 03:31 Yes. So I have the pleasure of being here in multiple ways, and I represent all to the fullest, I would say.
- Monica Trinidad:** 03:39 Awesome. Well, Third Wave Fund is a huge, huge, huge fan, and we admire so much the work that SONG does, that's Southerners on New Ground. So what has it been like here at the Allied Media Conference?
- Paige Ingram:** 03:50 Well, this is my first time.
- Monica Trinidad:** 03:52 Hey!
- Paige Ingram:** 03:52 I have been hearing about this conference and things have been getting in the way, and I'm like, "No, I need to do this," so this is an act of self-love and self-care.
- Monica Trinidad:** 04:00 Yes.
- Paige Ingram:** 04:01 Honestly transformative.
- Monica Trinidad:** 04:03 So were you coming to the Allied Media Conference with any questions going through your head about ... Or how are you making connections with the work that you're doing back home, and then what's your learning and grappling with here?
- Paige Ingram:** 04:16 Right. So one of the things that I'm doing as part of Black Lives of UU is, I brought a cohort of 12 folks who are ... Have various experiences with organizing, who all want to come together and collectively do organizing work and become an organizing collective. That's where the work really begins. AMC is the breeding ground for all sorts of amazing projects, as we know, and so how can we be part of that fabric?
- Monica Trinidad:** 04:46 Right. Right. What can funders and the philanthropy field do better to respect organizers' time and labor?

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- Paige Ingram:** 04:55 Sure. So I heard about Third Wave Fund because I had run across a post or a tweet about the-
- Monica:** 05:03 That's probably from me.
- Paige:** 05:04 Probably from you about getting some funding, and so when I'm looking in it, I'm like, wow. There's so much brilliance in so many spaces that I'm in, and the main barrier that prevents folks from being able to do what they need is getting funding.
- Monica:** 05:19 Yep. Exactly.
- Paige:** 05:21 Especially trans folks. It has been a challenge as a person who works for an organization that tries also to mobilize resources to get folks behind trans-led projects, and what happens is that even though we're talking about how we want to uplift trans folks, and this is part of our values, somehow we're falling short. And so I appreciate the breadth of all of the different organizations that you have funded and just created an opportunity for folks to just to be creative and to figure things out without having this underlying dread of where is this \$7,000 going to come from.
- Monica:** 06:04 Right.
- Paige:** 06:04 Right? So like uplifting voices, there are so many names of grantees that I've never heard of, and that makes me excited, too.
- Monica:** 06:13 Me too!
- Paige:** 06:14 We need new voices.
- Monica:** 06:15 Yes.
- Paige:** 06:15 Everyone's doing dope stuff, but we need new voices, so this is what really feels revolutionary to me. I'll just speak on my behalf about Third Wave Fund.
- Monica:** 06:25 Right. What kind of support does your organization need right now for our listeners to hear?

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- Paige:** 06:29 Wow. I think we need folks to get serious about doing the work and get serious about ways in which they can tangibly support folks who need it, right? So this is like a part of our mission. It's a part of what we care about. We started something called Blue Supports, so each month, we're amplifying different projects. So last month was our first month, and we amplified something called the Black Trans Prayer Book. Please look it up if you haven't.
- Monica:** 07:01 Yeah.
- Paige:** 07:02 This is something that is revolutionary and that I've never heard of, and we did a webinar with them, and it was really transformative. We just want to create opportunities for other folks to do this work, just like how y'all are doing, and so really putting our money where our mouth is in terms of what our values are, who we say we support, and what can we do, because thanking folks for their work is great, but it can't end there.
- Monica:** 07:28 Yes. Exactly.
- Paige:** 07:28 So it's about taking action. It's about getting real. It's about gathering ourselves and doing support that's meaningful and that can bring a project into fruition.
- Monica:** 07:41 Yes. Awesome. Well, thank you so much, Paige. Thanks for talking to us.
- Paige:** 07:43 Absolutely. Yes.
- Didi:** 07:50 My name is Didi, and my pronouns are she and her. I am with the Black LGBTQ Migrant Project, BLMP.
- Monica:** 07:56 How's your AMC going?
- Didi:** 07:58 It's going well so far. I've met really amazing people and seen really amazing presentations, so it's been good.
- Monica:** 08:07 And you all led a workshop yesterday, right?
- Didi:** 08:09 Yes.

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- Monica:** 08:10 What was the workshop about, and what was it called?
- Didi:** 08:14 It was called Coming Home. The Black LGBTQ Migrant Project, which is the organization I'm part of, and we were trying to get people where there are a lot of African queer folk, because the first things we started hearing when a lot of African countries started criminalizing queer identity was, "Oh, there's no queer African." And so we just wanted to first dispel that myth, and just be like, "Yeah, there's a lot of queer Africans out here. We out here. We're alive," you know?
- Monica:** 08:44 Yep.
- Didi:** 08:44 And then to also share with people some experiences we have in our home country and also here when we arrive as migrants.
- Tara Tabassi:** 08:51 Yeah, and how about like zooming out of the AMC, how about can you talk a little bit about the work that you're doing at Black LGBTQ Migrant Project here in your home city of Detroit?
- Didi:** 09:02 Yeah. So Detroit, we're not as established in Detroit. We're more established in the Bay Area and in the DMV area. We're trying to be established in Detroit, and this summer we're gonna be doing a lot of outreach to get more members here. But most of our members right now are in Minneapolis, DMV, and Oakland Bay Area. But what we have been doing so far is Know Your Rights training, organizer trainings. We are doing a campaign to free Ukoda Nweke, who's a gay asylum seeker currently in immigration detention, and we're doing convenings just to connect people and share stories to affirm other ones like myself who are, we are the only ones in our areas, so we know, "Hey, you might be the only one in your area, but there are a lot of you."
- Monica:** 09:47 What can funders do in general? I think a lot of the times, we don't really have the space to talk about how funders could do better. How do we respect your time and your labor? How do we not have you all working overtime and

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trying to get funding, right, because we're really here to support you?

- Didi:** 10:05 Awesome. Thank you for that question. I think funders can stop making so many rules. There are so many rules, and that is a form of policing people, like you have to do this, you have to do that, you have to use this one X, Y, Z, you have to do it this way. It's okay to ask people how are you already doing your work and what is your community telling you, you can improve on, and then let's find a common ground instead of coming in like, "Oh, this is what we want you to do, X, Y, Z with this money," because yeah, the foundations have the money, and the people funding the foundations have the money, the donors, but honestly, we're all paying taxes.
- Didi:** 10:50 Even homeless people pay taxes. They pay sales tax on items that they get from the store, and we're all contributing to this world, so no one can really say, "Oh, it's my money," in that way, because we've all generated the wealth we see in the world today. So it's okay to have the people affected making the decisions or finding common ground with them instead of coming to them with, like, "We're gonna tell you what to do."
- Monica:** 11:14 Yeah. Yes. Bless. Yeah. Funders in service to organizers. That's a beautiful world. Thank you for that vision. Good to talk to you.
- Didi:** 11:24 Thank you.
- Monica:** 11:31 Okay, Xyra, let's start with you. Who are you, what do you do, and why?
- Xyra:** 11:39 I am part of Trans Queer Pueblo's leadership program with the Promotor@s. What I do is, I go and do outreach at bars and things like that to help get LGBTQ immigrants access to medical services, because often that's something that they lack. And I'm also a drag queen at Trans Queer Pueblo, but only sometimes, especially when there's food. I don't feel like I have a lot of connections in my life, and Trans Queer Pueblo has been a place where I can remedy that. I've met a lot of beautiful, wonderful people, and through the organization, and nationally, I've also gotten to

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meet even more beautiful, wonderful people that do beautiful, amazing work.

- Monica:** 12:34 Awesome. Thank you.
- Xyra:** 12:34 And free food.
- Monica:** 12:34 And free food. Always have food at your meetings, at your gatherings, at your events. Food is central.
- Xyra:** 12:42 Yes.
- Monica:** 12:44 Crystal, who are you? What do you do, and why?
- Crystal:** 12:47 I am figuring who I am out, but I'm the Health Justice Coordinator at Trans Core Pueblo. I coordinate and put together a curriculum for them to go through, so every week they go through a different politicization forum. We also coach them on different leadership tools, like outreach, retainment, and how to tell their story in two minutes, you know, just essential organizing tools. I coordinate a free clinic for undocumented LGBT folk who are migrants or people of color without access to healthcare. Also working on creating a network of non-Western medicine healers to provide other services for our community, understanding that they all come from different backgrounds, different roots, and different practices, so paying respect to that. Also networking with organizations, foundations, amazing collectives, and just people in general to broaden our resources and build solidarity across the nation, especially in the type of work that we do.
- Crystal:** 13:56 I am first generation Mexican. My parents migrated from Mexico when I was ... I mean, when they were younger. And typical story. They wanted a better future for their kids. They wanted more work opportunities and to help sustain their families. But growing up in a very small migrant town, I saw the lack of access to healthcare that not only my parents had but I had, and then family and friends that I grew up with. And then when I accepted my queer identity, I realized that it was really difficult to have those types of conversations with medical doctors, specifically around sexuality. They automatically assumed I was straight, and they automatically assume I'm a cis woman,

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and while I'm figuring that out, it's still kind of uncomfortable to have those conversations.

- Crystal:** 14:48 And it took a solid seven years to have a diagnosis of what was going on with me, because they weren't listening to me. It was always about my weight, or the type of food my family eats, but it wasn't until after the sixth doctor that I had gone through that I got the diagnosis of polycystic ovarian syndrome and endometriosis, which explained a lot of these symptoms that I've been having, and then aside from that is just understanding that health is much more than just Western medicine. It's spiritual. A lot of us have intergenerational trauma that's been passed on by our parents, by our grandparents. A lot of us don't have connections to our identities or to our roots and understanding how to figure that out, or how to build that connection and go back to who we are, and everything that makes up our identity.
- Crystal:** 15:40 So when I found Trans Queer Pueblo, it was kind of like everything that I have been looking for in one. We focus a lot on where we come from, our roots, understanding migration, understanding colonization, understanding different identities and different indigenous identities, different forms of healing that aren't just Western medicine, pop a pill, and you're good, but like learning about herbs, learning about sage cleanses, about all of these traditional healing methods that our ancestors used and continue to use, which is why we're still here today. So I'm gonna stop talking, because it's a very long answer, but basically that is why I do what I do.
- Tara:** 16:13 Thank you for that, and I love that. I'm also very interested in healing justice, so it's good to hear that from you. As you know, we're at the Allied Media Conference right now. We're in it. What questions are you coming to this conference with, and what feels possible when you're in spaces like this with other organizers and activists in terms of connecting across communities or connecting across our smaller local-based campaigns?
- Xyra:** 16:37 I'm very new to the organizing scene, so I don't really know all that much about what I should want to know. I do know that as someone who does drag to heal myself and

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hopefully to heal other people or at least get a good gag out of it or two, that I love to make people feel loved and accepted, and so one of the things that I wanted to do coming here was figure out how is it that I can make myself more accepting and especially vulnerable to other people. That way they see that there's places that we can be where we can be vulnerable with each other and grow and create and become magic. That's what I came here to do, and see squirrels. I didn't get to see a lot of squirrels, but I saw one the other day, and I'm just gonna say that if you've never seen a squirrel, it changes your life. Squirrel magic.

- Crystal:** 17:47 Yeah. I'm very interested in healing justice, so that's what I've been thinking about a lot specifically during the health justice program with TQP. Yeah. I just keep wondering how can they do better, and what kind of feedback can I give them so they can do better
- Tara:** 18:03 So what does taking care of, and y'all put it, physical and mental liberation for LGBTQ migrants look like in the struggle for criminalization? So, I feel like y'all are pushing this healing justice kind of like as a core, right, in your work, but what does that look like on the day-to-day? Because I think that y'all could be a model for a lot of other communities on how to do that.
- Crystal:** 18:24 Well, thanks. That's nice. Never thought of, at least the work that I do, as like a model for others, but I think it comes from understanding that, every day we wake up, we relive our trauma and every day that we do this work of resistance and organizing and manifesting and all of these other things that we do for liberation, opens up wounds that we didn't even know we had.
- Crystal:** 18:49 And, at least, that has been my experience working with a lot of trans women who are coming and seeking asylum and going through their asylum process and like opening up all of those wounds that they had that they didn't even know existed, sometimes, and like, how we've realized it's so essential for our liberation to heal. We can't truly be liberated if we are still tied down by those chains that hurt us every day.

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- Crystal:** 19:13 And, if we don't focus on much more than putting a bandaid on or taking some pills to relieve some pain, we're never really gonna reach healing, and healing isn't linear. It's up and down and there's no stopping point. You're gonna continuously heal and, when you fall back down, it may not be as far as it has been in the past, but you're still gonna fall.
- Crystal:** 19:34 And learning and coping and depending on a community to uplift yourself again and knowing that you have power. You just have been told you don't have it. So, once you believe that you do have that power and use that power that you have, then you can reach true liberation and it's much more than blocking the streets with your body, but it's understanding why you're blocking the streets with your body, and why your body is so important and so symbolic and how you heal from blocking the streets afterwards, because there's residual pain.
- Crystal:** 20:05 There's residual trauma and sometimes it manifests in anger or frustration or a lot of sadness or a lot of energy. And understanding why that happens after certain actions or after certain conversations or after a visit with the doctor, you know? So I think for me, personally, and what I've been trying to be more open about in my work, is allowing my story to come through because I only know what I know and do what I do based off of my experiences and never assuming someone else's story, but instead, listening, taking a step back, and together, healing and reaching for liberation.
- Xyra:** 20:42 And to sort of follow up on that point, I think one of the most beautiful things that we as an organization also helps support, we're obviously not the only one that does it, but that we offer alternative methods of healing. It's not just go to a doctor, get some medicine, or talk with a therapist. It's also about getting the community involved with itself and with its own healing and that can be extremely powerful. When you feel so beaten down and hurt ... I had an experience where I was just feeling really, really shitty and I couldn't shake it for anything. And it was when I spoke openly about it at that I could start healing from it, because everyone then came together and told me something that

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they loved about me. Or they found encouraging about me and these were things that a lot of times I overlook for myself.

- Xyra:** 21:54 It was just really powerful in seeing how the community that I'm trying to help really come up and help me. And it's in very small ways that we can show up for each other, but there often the most powerful.
- Monica:** 22:07 I have to say that I'm a huge fan of Trans Queer Pueblo. From afar, just seeing the work that ya'll do is so impactful and so powerful and something that I hope spreads across the country. And I know it's happening in other parts of the country that we don't see, but I just really respect and admire all the work that you all are doing in your communities. So you all are both Mobilize Power Fund grantees of ours, but also the Grow Power Fund grantee as well, which is our long-term, six-year grant making for sustainability. And so it's really awesome, I'm going to see some of y'all in two weeks at our Grow Power Fund convening in Albuquerque.
- Monica:** 22:50 And so, I just really wanted to talk more about the current work that you all are doing in Phoenix. I know last summer you all disrupted the Phoenix Pride Parade because of their ties and cooperation with police and ICE. And this summer, after tons of back and forth conversations with the Pride board, to no avail, ya'll disrupted again. I guess the first question is for folks that don't know, why disrupt pride? I know why disrupt pride because I've done it before. It was the first time I ever got arrested in Chicago. So I know.
- Monica:** 23:21 But for those that are listening, why disrupt Phoenix Pride Parade?
- Xyra:** 23:26 Awesome. So, Phoenix Pride, itself ... as a community we know that police don't protect us. It's not that we don't feel protected. People like to say that, "Oh well, we don't feel protected," it's that we aren't protected. The police, this year already, have already shot and murdered 18 people and last year- and now it's more- but last year we had a total of 17 people. And so we're halfway through the year and already we've matched what we had last year. And so, when we talk about police not deserving a place at Pride and shouldn't be

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celebrated at Pride, we're talking about the fact that police operate within white supremacy.

- Xyra:** **24:16** They operate to hurt the queer community, the LGBTQ community, in every way that's legally possible. When queer youth is kicked out of public parks for being homeless, when queer people are removed from workspaces because employers feel like they don't want to deal with a queer person at work, or it's just easier for them to not have to deal with talking about sensitivity toward trans people. That these are all things and ways that actually, tangibly, hurt LGBTQ people. And especially LGBTQ people of color. And on top of it, ICE and police are allowed to collaborate within the city of Phoenix.
- Xyra:** **25:05** And it makes, especially for migrant people, Pride a very dangerous place.
- Crystal:** **25:12** So to piggy-back off of what Xyra was saying, we disrupted Pride for a lot of different reasons. The roots of Pride come from Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera and a couple of other trans women of color who were fighting against police and fighting against police coming into their safe spaces. And that is what the whole ... that is the foundation of what Pride is. And Phoenix Pride continues to collaborate with Phoenix PD and like Xyra was saying, they're very violent. They are the second most violent police department in the nation. And this year they already passed the number of last year and we're barely six months in.
- Crystal:** **25:54** It's also really expensive to go in to Phoenix Pride and a lot of our community can't afford it. So when we talk about LGBT rights and human rights, we talk about freedom from jails, economic opportunities, community security, safety from violence. From people and from the police, respect for trans people and trans bodies. Identities that reflect our own identities and allow us to work, regardless of our status. Space for our whole family and culture, which is something that Phoenix Pride lacks a lot.
- Crystal:** **26:26** And not just within the organization itself, but within the festival. And they are also in support of businesses that mistreat us, that don't want to help us, that don't want to

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have us customers, don't want to employ us. And we just decided after this year of interrupting Phoenix Pride and within minutes Phoenix Pride telling Phoenix PD to arrest us, and then Phoenix PD starting to put pressure and push us out of the streets with their bikes. A lot of our community members who were at the protest had physical bruises from the police. And some ... Monica Jones was being yelled at by police and they grabbed her at one point.

- Crystal:** 27:15 So seeing that Phoenix Pride had absolutely no hesitation on telling them to arrest us, knowing who we were and knowing what we've been ... what our demands are. We just decided to create our own Pride and that's what we're organizing and that's what we're working on. A Pride that's rooted in trans, queer, gender non-conforming leadership of color, rooted in our multiple identities and cultures. In mutual support and rooted in shared struggled toward the worlds we envision, which is a world of liberation.
- Xyra:** 27:47 I kinda wanna go into some of the laws that police are made to follow. One of them is if you hail for a cab, or look like you're hailing for a cab, you can be arrested on the grounds of inciting sex work, or solicitation.
- Monica:** 28:06 What?
- Xyra:** 28:06 If you carry more than two condoms, you're also in violation of these laws, you can be arrested. If you ask a cop if he's a cop, you can be arrested. If you are talking through the window of someone's car, you can be arrested. And so, there's a lot of things that cis-gender people can get away from but these laws will ... do criminalize trans individuals.
- Crystal:** 28:36 That's what I was gonna say, that most of these laws affect trans women of color. Because you see these police activities and you see these arrests and this criminalization in our lower income area. Or in a area where there are a lot of trans women of color. And that is how one of our own Arizona residents got arrested and got in this huge- Monica Jones. Have you heard of her? Yeah, that is how it happened, because of this manifestation law.

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- Tara:** 29:03 Fucking entrapment. So was how was creating your own Pride- People's Pride- and then relating back to our conversation a little earlier about healing justice, taking care of yourself, how ... What does that look like? And how is that a response to the laws you're just talking about and the repression and the violence from the state?
- Crystal:** 29:26 Something I didn't mention earlier is that Phoenix Pride receives money from these massive banks that finance detention centers. Detention centers hold our people and detention centers kill our people and create some pretty disgusting violence against our people. So creating this Pride- Pride to the People or Pride of People of Color or whatever it ends up being called- is, in a way, the beginning of our healing journey. Because we won't have a Pride that is too expensive for our people to be a part of. We won't have a Pride that has police presence, knowing the traumatic triggers that some of our community has with seeing people in uniform.
- Crystal:** 30:09 We won't be receiving money from big banks that fund jails and detention centers that incarcerate our people and kill our people. We won't have exclusivity, we're gonna make sure that every single one of our identities is represented. That we have people of color, who identify as gender non-conforming, queer and trans in leadership and in collaboration with the community to know exactly what they want, how they want it, what they want to celebrate, how long it's gonna be. And being excited and celebrating together that we are a community that has resisted for 500 years. And no matter how long police and how long the white man has tried to erase our identities, we're still here, we're still present, we're still fighting. We're resilient as fuck and we're not gonna let them erase us like they have been trying.
- Monica:** 30:58 Ya'll's work is super ... is a really good example of how critical disruption is, right? Disruption is a really important tactic in our communities.
- Crystal:** 31:09 Absolutely.

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- Monica:** 31:12 And it's ... especially because I know last year y'all were one of the first organizations to disrupt a Pride parade and then so many followed after that. Including in Chicago and Boston and all over the place. But then there's also value and beauty and just saying "screw it, we're gonna create our own autonomous space. Our own liberation space because we're not gonna waste all of our energy putting pressure on something that's not gonna change."
- Monica:** 31:47 But the disruption and ... I think the disruption and the creation of new alternative spaces are both so important, and to continue doing in a variety of ways.
- Xyra:** 31:58 If I could have it my way I would disrupt every Pride, but, unfortunately, I don't have all the money in the world. But hey, if a Sugar Daddy wants to come and support me and my disruptive lifestyle ...
- Monica:** 32:12 Speaking of money, speaking of money ... you know we fund you all and there's not a lot of spaces that exist where organizers and activists can talk about the ways in which philanthropy exists as it is. Like there's not a lot of space to talk about what are your experiences with philanthropy field? What have been both good and bad? I feel like the conversations are always just sort of centered on, "We need money" or "We have money," but never "How can funders do better at respecting organizers time and labor?"
- Monica:** 32:55 So I guess, my question is, how can the philanthropy field do better? How can we do better at respecting y'all's time and labor an energy?
- Crystal:** 33:06 Remember what it's like to be an organizer. I mean, a lot of people in philanthropy have been organizers in the past. And just ... organizing doesn't sleep. At all hours of the day, I will get an email, a call, a text that I have to tend to, because there's people out there who need services or who need someone to talk to. Everyday we wake up to a new law, to something new that happened with today's administration and so there's always work and I think what I've seen ...

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- Crystal:** 33:39 With my experience in philanthropy with Trans Queer Pueblo is very limited, but I have- because of school and stuff- I had to write grant proposals and I took a whole course on grant writing. Just going through all of that was exhausting in itself because the what the dynamic seems to be is ... we have a lot of money to give you, because we want change. But we don't want a lot of change, we want you to do things the way we say so to give you the money and then pretend that we're creating change. But in reality, we want to play these respectability politics and not trust you, even if it's your first time organizing.
- Crystal:** 34:13 And that happens a lot, and I think something that I believe in is the power that our community has and it's okay to fail. We all fail at some point. And because of those failures we get back up and we try to do better. And a lot of the times, when it comes to funding, it's like, "We're gonna give you this money, but you can't fail. You have to give us the numbers, you have to give us the reports, you have to give us ..." whatever they demand from us. And that is how a lot of organizations end up being like Phoenix Pride. Because they want the money, because they want the publicity, because they want these huge funders on their resumes or on whatever they put these funders lists on.
- Crystal:** 34:59 And I think, for me personally, an ideal world is having foundations trust the people on the ground. We are the experts in our own lived experiences. We know what we're fighting for, we know what we need to do in our communities to make sure we reach that liberation that we want. And sometimes we're not gonna give you those numbers. Sometimes we're not gonna give you the reports that you need on time. It happens. Coming from experience, it happens. And just ... at one point, y'all were organizers too and y'all know what it's like to work with community and what it's like to work with specifically low income people of color who are gender non-conforming, queer and trans.
- Crystal:** 35:48 Who are undocumented, who are migrants, who don't have access to a lot of things that I have access to as a person who was born in the United States. So it's just ... not just

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saying you believe in people and you believe in organizing, but genuinely being okay with ...

- Crystal:** 36:00 We believe in people and you believe in organizing but genuinely being okay with someone failing with the money you give them.
- Monica:** 36:08 Here's a quick message from Third Wave Fund staff on our monthly rapid response grants. Yes, you heard us right, monthly rapid response grants.
- mai:** 36:16 Hey, Joy, what's the Mobilized Power Fund?
- Joy:** 36:24 That's a great question, mai. The Mobilize Power Fund is a monthly rapid response fund for direct action, community mobilizing and healing justice. We launched this fund in 2015 so that powerful movements can respond to and heal from immediate threats and opportunities with flexible and responsive funding opportunities.
- Mai:** 36:48 Wow. That's so cool. Who can apply?
- Joy:** 36:51 The Mobilize Power Fund supports group led by and for young women of color, and queer and trans young people of color organizing in their communities around gender justice. Groups don't even need a 501c3 status or fiscal sponsor and can even apply over the phone or using a cellphone video.
- Mai:** 37:11 That sounds amazing. How do folks get more info?
- Joy:** 37:15 That's easy. Just visit our website at thirdwavefund.org and find more information under grants by clicking the Mobilize Power Fund tab. You can also reach out to us at progams@thirdwavefund.org.
- Tara:** 37:41 So besides this badass work you were just talking about disrupting Pride, what other work is TQP working on right now?
- Crystal:** 37:48 So we have economic justice that supports people who have been in detention or coming out of detention get back on their feet, learning how to create their own small

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business for what we like to call queer economics or queer economy I think is what they are calling it. There is community defense, which has two programs. One of community defenders who give know your rights trainings and different things like that. They also put trans women, train them to represent their own cases for asylum. Queer politics, there is one shifting the narrative and the culture around queer politics in Arizona and doing research with our community to understand exactly what they need and how we can influence politics.

- Crystal:** **38:34** There is family acceptance, empowering our mothers through healing in writing, in theater and doing mini performances around social justice topics. There's also ... I know liberation is one of the bigger ... not bigger but it's a very important one too. They're all important but in liberation, we're constantly looking for people who can come to detention centers with proper documentation to visit our people because sometimes a lot of liberation campaigns are focused on families and leaving children behind. But sometimes our queer and trans and gender non-conforming ... doesn't have family to support them, doesn't have family to claim them, so they are incarcerated all by themselves and sometimes don't have visits in years and then we're one of the first ones to visit them and bring them hope. And they're like, "I was thinking of ending my life yesterday, but I was told I had a visit and I was so surprised." And then also learning how to create liberation campaigns and learning how to create those campaigns around the political climate we live in right now with this administration and constantly having new laws thrown at us every day. And then, also, if anybody wants to be a penpal to someone inside a detention center, please, these are the little things that give them hope to liberation one day. So liberation is doing some pretty dope work.
- Monica:** **40:03** That's incredible. I actually had no idea that you could visit folks in detention centers. So that's a really valuable thing to know. Do you all do training on when you visit someone what to say, what to talk about or what to not talk about or things like that?
- Xyra:** **40:22** I actually go to some of the detention visits and so what we generally have is this link to some sites where we have

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survey questions and we're supposed to memorize a bunch of the questions but they come very easily once you start actually thinking about them. Like, do you have anyone that supports you? Do you have any letters? What are organizations that actually visit? How do you identify? Are you free to talk about this?

- Xyra:** 40:59 And other sort of questions like that that you know, help flesh out whether or not someone wants our help, need just a little bit of help or how much help do they really need. That's mostly the training that we have, and then we talk about it afterwards and we all discuss how our different visits went with each other, and seeing, well, this is the work that we need to do.
- Tara:** 41:33 Maybe relatedly actually, what gives you or what brings you hope and resilience from organizing or being a part of TQP?
- Xyra:** 41:43 I see this quite a bit at TQP and I know it's ... I say it in a joking fashion, but it's how I cope. My coping mechanism are valid.
- Crystal:** 41:58 Yes. They are. They are.
- Xyra:** 42:00 But I say often that without TQP, I don't think I'd be here. I didn't have a whole lot of people in my life who supported me and it wasn't until after I started going to TQP and really seeing the power that I can have and the power I have through a community, and the power that I can give back to my community, that I saw that my life has meaning and it's not just meaning that is assigned to a community. These are people that care for me and love me and they see my pains as their pain and I see my pain as their pain.
- Crystal:** 42:39 It's nice to hear it in this serious way.
- Crystal:** 42:48 I know. That got you nothing on the feels, but that got you.
- Monica:** 42:52 Are you sure you're not a Scorpio?
- Crystal:** 42:55 No, it's all that fire.

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- Crystal:** 43:00 Oh man, what brings me hope? What was the question? What brings me hope.
- Monica:** 43:04 What brings you hope and resilience from organizing with Trans Queer Pueblo?
- Crystal:** 43:08 I was talking about this earlier with one of my friends who came to the conference that I just realized it's been nine year ... Wait, I'm terrible at math, so give me a second. It's been nine years that I've been loosely organizing, I volunteer at a lot of different organizations since I was 16. I forged my parents' signature and shit. Sorry mom and dad. Actually not really sorry.
- Monica:** 43:38 Sorry not sorry.
- Crystal:** 43:40 I was involved in a lot of different things but it wasn't until I went to Trans Queer Pueblo where I felt seen I guess. And like no organization is perfect, no offense TQP I love you guys but no organization is perfect. There are some things that we got to iron out and stuff but I am a light skin Latina, my mom is Mestiza, my dad's [inaudible], he's a brown man, my mom is very, very light skin. And growing up I was always too brown to be in white spaces but I was never brown enough to be with my family. And just being queer added even more on that because of the deep homophobic beliefs in our culture.
- Crystal:** 44:20 When I got to Trans Queer Pueblo, I was like, "I can talk about menstruation and gender non-conforming bodies and like what? They let me do forums around this, how crazy?" I've also did a lot of menstrual activism so I'm very passionate about reproductive health for non-conforming bodies and trans bodies. The fact that I was never shamed and the fact that they thought I was decent enough to be their health justice coordinator was amazing because I was always so used to being told that one the shit that I do is gross or weird, or just not being heard because I used to volunteer for Phoenix Pride and then it was like I was invisible.
- Crystal:** 45:01 Some of the people I used to organized or volunteer with don't even recognize me till this day.

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- Monica:** 45:04 Wow.
- Crystal:** 45:07 I'm just excited to have a community that understands me or is willing to understand me if they don't. So it's amazing to see how fast it's grown in two years just in the health justice project. When I got there we had 80 patients so far and now we're at 190 and growing. We have a waiting list.
- Monica:** 45:28 Wow.
- Crystal:** 45:30 We're in June right?
- Monica:** 45:30 Yeah.
- Crystal:** 45:30 July is full. August is full so now it's we're got to ... We're pushing for more days and more funding so ... y'all have extra cash for health, let me know.
- Tara:** 45:43 Funders, that's for you.
- Crystal:** 45:47 But yeah, it's amazing and it gives me hope on days that I wake up feeling like we're screwed.
- Monica:** 45:57 We're gonna pause for just a moment to hear some quick words from Third Wave Fund staff on how easy it is to support this work you're hearing about as a donor activist.
- Rye:** 46:07 Hey Nicole, can you tell me about donor organizing?
- Nicole:** 46:10 It's not gonna shock anyone that philanthropy has been a home for the most wealthy and privileged, but Third Wave is a home in philanthropy for people of color, women, queer and low-income folks who are consistently the first to throw down for social justice movements.
- Rye:** 46:23 You're so right. From house party to selling art, our communities have used their talent and magic to support Third Wave Fund and our brilliant grantees.
- Nicole:** 46:32 Yes exactly. Folks can head to our website at thirdwavefund.org and become a monthly sustainer today.
- Rye:** 46:40 Woo hoo.

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- Nicole:** 46:40 Woo hoo.
- Monica:** 46:47 If you could imagine a future where your work is completely funded within Trans Queer Pueblo, what would be possible?
- Crystal:** 46:57 Dang.
- Xyra:** 46:57 We won.
- Crystal:** 46:57 Yeah.
- Monica:** 46:59 Yeah, we won. What does it look like?
- Crystal:** 47:04 It looks like having not just a clinic but a whole hospital for our people and not like a Western medicine hospital but having a place for Reiki practitioners for curanderas, for santeras, for shamans, for any other sort of healing practice along with Western medicine, that's important sometimes. But also free from the chains of detention, from incarceration, from criminalization. Free to be who you want to be, right now we have a little casita but having a huge house to help people coming out of these places and they can crash there and get back on their feet and having an actual small business incubator where people can just create their LLCs and go through that training and have our own queer economy. Having trans women of color in leadership leading a lot of this badass work, having trans women of color at the top of these foundations and philanthropy. That would be dope as fuck.
- Monica:** 48:12 Yes. Yes.
- Xyra:** 48:13 Everyone of course gets a drag queen. Drag queen gets a drag princess and I want to say that cis-het society has to go to Yuma and that's where they find their place and Phoenix is just for us.
- Crystal:** 48:33 That's so close to Mexico.
- Xyra:** 48:36 Do you want to live in Yuma??
- Crystal:** 48:37 No.

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- Xyra:** 48:38 It's hot there.
- Crystal:** 48:39 Phoenix is not much better.
- Xyra:** 48:39 Pero.....is it though???
- Monica:** 48:50 So I am filled with so much joy right now. I feel like the Allied Media Conference is sometimes very overwhelming and I feel ... this is the first time I felt grounded since I got here. Thank you for just being here.
- Xyra:** 49:07 Glad I can help. [laughter]
- Monica:** 49:11 Tara, do you have anything else to add?
- Tara:** 49:15 No. I'm also just feeling a lot of gratitude for you all and for the work you do and I hope that folks can listen to this podcast and learn about it more because this is the kind of work that is gonna get us to where y'all was just talking about around ... When we've won, when liberation is for all of us.
- Crystal:** 49:32 No, but in all seriously, thank you. Thank you you two for holding this space for us and for listening and for being excited to sit with us.
- Monica:** 49:39 And last thing is what is y'all's Twitter account or website or how can people get in touch with you or follow your work?
- Crystal:** 49:46 Like my personal one or Trans Queer Pueblo?
- Monica:** 49:47 No, sorry. Trans Queer Pueblo.
- Crystal:** 49:49 I was gonna say. Add me.
- Monica:** 49:52 But also if you're looking like also personal.
- Crystal:** 49:55 You can find me through TQP. It's all good. So our Facebook is just Trans Queer Pueblo. Instagram is @TQPueblo, our Twitter is @TQPueblo. Our Snapchat is @TQPueblo. Our Tumblr I believe is transqueerpueblo.tumblr.com.

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- Tara:** 50:14 Cool. Follow y'all. Follow dope work.
- Crystal:** 50:18 Thank you.
- Tara:** 50:19 Dang. This episode was filled with so much geniusness. It's not often that you get to learn about work that is both disrupting violence but also practicing healing and building the alternative world that we want to live in as well. I got to rewind and listen again right now.
- Tara Tabassi:** 50:33 Before I do that though, some thank yous. So much love and gratitude to Third Wave Fund grantees, Southerners on New Ground, Black LGBTQIA Migrant Project, Trans Queer Pueblo and especially Xyra, Crystal, Paige and Didi. Big shout out to Allied Media Conference for providing beautiful community space for activists to come together. And finally, so much love to my brilliant co-host and audio genius, Monica Trinidad, and the amazing Third Wave Fund for hosting this podcast and for amplifying resourcing the work of young women, intersex, queer and trans youth of color, who flow with the wealth of wisdom, campaign tactics and visions for liberation.
- Tara Tabassi:** 51:11 June Pride month is over, but we know we reclaim justice, dignity and liberation for our communities every damn day. Abolish borders, policing and militarism y'all and keep healing and dreaming big everybody 'cause we got this.