

### More about Me, Joshua Moon-Johnson (he/they)

Hi Y'all. I go by Joshua and I use he and him or they and them pronouns. I use "Moon-Johnson" as my last name although legally my last name is "Johnson" and "Moon" is my middle name. "Johnson" is my dad's family name, which is an English family name, and "Moon" is my mom's family name, which is a Korean family name. I started using both as I began to embrace my multiracial identity and learned about feminism. I grew up on the Mississippi Gulf Coast where I lived until I was 18 and then moved to Alabama for most of my college life. My mom is a native of South Korea and my dad is a White-American man from a military background. I was home-schooled with my four older siblings until I went to a public high school.

Much of my early life was shaped by my church community. My parents are Pentecostal ministers, and I spent most of my time in a small-town church. My faith and spirituality are still very important to me; however, I no longer participate in the types of churches I grew up in. My passion for Social Justice, Racial Justice, and LGBTQ+ activism was spurred by early socialization, stigmatization and hate I observed or experienced from life in Mississippi, the church, and family. I feel privileged to be in a career where folks pay me to be a social justice educator, advocate, and activist mostly around LGBTQ+ and intersecting issues.

My current life is spent advocating for marginalized students in higher education systems. My entry into education and advocacy came as I was a graduate student at Binghamton University where I focused my thesis on transgender student services in higher education, and then I moved into researching how religious identity, racial identity, and sexuality identity conflict in the lives of college students for my dissertation. Through my research I began involvement with education focused non-profits, hosted queer Bible studies, and then became the director of the LGBT center at UCSB. All of these moments and activities were ways I could help others, but more than likely they helped me heal and find peace. I currently work as a dean of student services and Title IX Coordinator at American River College where I get to focus on equity, justice, and liberation. I am also able to help other colleges around the country improve their equity efforts and continue researching and writing about LGBTQ+ issues and BIQTPOC issues in higher education. I know this is all very "career" focused, but I feel it is my purpose in this world and I will likely do this work until I die.



In pursuit of personal and career opportunities, I've moved lots, but I am very happy to call Sacramento home since 2017. Before Sacramento I was living in Malta (southern Europe) helping to start a university. I was also on the Malta National Pride Planning committee. My husband, Aaron, and I both have focused our careers on international education. He spent much of his career in study abroad, and I have always tried to live abroad, but have not been super successful at it yet. My times abroad keep getting cut short. In graduate school I was able to study in the Philippines and South Korea. As an educator I taught a winter term in Tokyo, taught on Semester at Sea (cruise ship full of 500 students sailing to 12 countries), and then I was a Dean at the American University of Malta. While in Malta a local homophobic newspaper took this photo (above) from my Instagram to shame me in some way. Turns out I looked fabulous and the crowds loved it. After I retire from the California Community College system I plan to spend time educating abroad again.

I am super happy that I get to spend my life with my husband Aaron. He comes from an education and social justice background as well, but currently spends his time working in the tech industry focused on learning and development. We have tons of fun together and recently celebrated 6 years of marriage. You can see us below hanging out on the beach.



Some of our most fun times involve the art of drag. Before we were together, we were both back-up dancers for the same drag queen in Santa Barbara. Nowadays, we have fun getting all done up. He loves “beating” my face and dressing me up like his barbie doll. You can see below my (very amateur) photo where he did all my make-up. I recently got to do a speaking engagement for a corporate pride event, where I got to do a drag performance and give a lecture on LGBTQ+ inclusion. I do college talks, birthday parties, bachelor parties, and thinking of doing princess parties soon (mostly jokes, but I am excited to incorporate drag into more of my speaking engagements and training).

I am honored to be a part of the Great Deans Planning Committee. I have found memories of my time as a participant in Great Deans 2018. Excited to get to know everyone.

