



# POZ Awards 2023 / Best Reason to Keep Acting Up

Read about the nominees, then scroll down to vote for your favorite!

October 1, 2023

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Welcome to the 8th Annual POZ Awards, spotlighting the best representatives of HIV and AIDS in media and culture.

The POZ editorial staff selects the nominees, but POZ readers choose the winners.

Eligible nominees were active or were presented, published or produced between October 1, 2022, and September 30, 2023.

VOTING IS CLOSED

BEST REASON TO KEEP ACTING UP

## [Education in Florida](#)

As if there weren't enough problems going on in the Sunshine State, governor Ron DeSantis has reshaped Florida's education standards that includes materials from PragerU, a conservative education site that retells history with a decidedly false and conservative bent. In the materials, talking heads such as Candace Owens and Tucker Carlson denounce the idea of climate change, talk about why Christopher Columbus was a great guy and links the Black Lives Matter movement to increase crime. If students in Florida are not allowed to learn what actually happened throughout history, they won't be equipped to handle the circumstances when it repeats.

## [Long COVID](#)

Health activism has found a renewed fight in raising awareness about the ongoing effects of long COVID, even when much of the country has decided to move on from the pandemic. Despite millions of Americans being affected by this condition, which is still being studied and is not yet wholly understood, many states have stopped implementing any protocols to lower COVID transmission, leaving the door open for more people to become infected with long COVID and blocking those who are already diagnosed from participating fully in public life.

## Trans Rights

As we know, transgender people have often been counted last when it comes to fighting for the rights of the LGBTQ community. That has made them an even bigger target in the last year, as state houses around the country have moved to criminalize and ban parts of trans life, including removing information about gender identity from school shelves and making sure trans youth cannot access gender-affirming care. AIDS activism was a health care movement, and one that asked that people be allowed to access life-saving medication and make the decisions that are best for their health. As trans youth face a system looking to block them from flourishing, this fight is a clear continuation of what AIDS activism was all about.

## Drag Bans

If there's something from this year that can sashay away, surely it can be the swelling tide of hate against the art of drag. The anti-drag crusade has manifested in legislation that has aimed to keep drag underground and keep the artists who participate impoverished. Whether kings or queens or those in between, drag performers teach us that gender is a limitless expanse rather than a binary, something that simply doesn't jibe with some people's worldviews and political agendas.

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