



Youspeak Radio Episode 3 – United, We Are Strong – With Karina Samala

Audio transcript

Full audio: <https://www.onearchives.org/youspeak-radio-ep-3-united-we-are-strong-with-karina-samala/>

Youspeak Radio (00:00):

This is Youspeak Radio.

Gabriel DuBransky (00:03):

A project by ONE Archives Foundation with generous support from the California Humanities.

Gabriel DuBransky (00:15):

Hi, I'm Gabriel DuBransky. My pronouns are they/them, and I was lucky enough to interview the amazing Karina Samala.

Gabriel DuBransky (00:22):

When I learned who I was going to be interviewing, I was really excited to be able to speak to a trans woman. As I've been navigating my own identity as a trans femme person, I haven't had a lot of role models in my life that I could speak to or learn from.

Gabriel DuBransky (00:34):

So, as I read about Karina and all the things she'd done, I was not only happy to interview someone interesting, but I was also really excited to just get to talk to another trans person, especially an elder in the trans femme community.

Karina Samala (00:46):

Being there for each other. We need to be united as a community. We need to work together. We still... Even with our community, I see this breakout. United, we are strong. And also, the thing that... We must all stand together, proud and empowered, to tell the whole world, in one voice, that we are members also on the human race. Nothing more, nothing less. We're equal.

Gabriel DuBransky (01:16):

I got a little emotional after this interview because it was just such a breath of fresh air to see a trans person so successful and happy. She really is an inspiration to me, and I hope she'll be an inspiration to you, too. Enjoy.

Gabriel DuBransky (01:35):

Content warning. Topics of trans rejection and violence are discussed in this interview. Please listen with your safety in mind.

Gabriel DuBransky (01:43):



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I'm really excited to be able to talk to you. I read an article on you. And I was just... I had so many questions. The things that you've done are so interesting and cool to me. So, I guess, I don't really feel like you need an introduction.

Karina Samala ([01:58](#)):

Thank you so much for inviting me. It's quite an honor to be here with you, being interviewed by you. Yes. And my name is Karina Samala. She/her, pronoun. I call myself an activist and also an advocate activist for the transgender community. I've been doing this for over 25 years, almost three decades now, more than. So, that's what I've been working with the community.

Karina Samala ([02:31](#)):

And I am really... I'm so glad to see young people like you greatly inspired by the passion and energy that our community, most especially... Particularly, they're optimistic to see a lot of young and upcoming trans leaders and activists like you because we cannot be... I cannot be here together. We cannot be here forever. You are our future. To carry that torch and flame, which hold a spirit of our movement as a community, and will be kept alive as we pass the torch to the next generation of transgender leaders like you. And thank you for stepping up.

Gabriel DuBransky ([03:15](#)):

Thank you. So, as I was reading, I saw one of the first things that you talked about was doing pageants. So, just to break the ice, what was your favorite thing about doing pageants?

Karina Samala ([03:30](#)):

As a matter of fact, that was where I started, that's what's my beginning, the pageants. I started, I was just a gay boy working defense contract for Northrop Grumman. I was an engineer. I had a degree in chemical engineering from MIT, Philippines, and I was working with them as an engineer.

Karina Samala ([03:53](#)):

There was a bet... The Imperial Court System, which has... as of right now, 72 chapters of the United States, Canada, and Mexico. It's a three-nation organization, it's a nonprofit organization, 501(c)3, nobody gets paid. Everybody is a volunteer, and everything that we raise goes back to the community. That's where I started.

Karina Samala ([04:22](#)):

They had a pageant back then, the Imperial Court of Los Angeles and Hollywood. They had a pageant called the Closet Ball where you get in. And the thing about that is, for a bet, they said, "Come on, Karina. Why don't you join the pageant? The price money is a roundtrip ticket to Hawaii," they said. I said...

Karina Samala ([04:46](#)):

And the Empress of Los Angeles, at that time... Well, let me... The Empress is elected by the community. And they have one year to do fundraising events and they have their own courts.

Karina Samala ([05:02](#)):



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So, now, "Come on, join the pageant." And the pageant is like, you come out as yourself... They have judges... Judge you as yourself, and then you go backstage, and then they transformed you to...

Karina Samala ([05:19](#)):

For me, for example, I came out as what I am, a man, at the time, a gay boy. And then, they judge me with that. And then, I go backstage, they transform me to a female, and come back as a female, and then judge me as a female. And they add both scores. They call the pageant, the Closet King and Queen of the Ball.

Karina Samala ([05:43](#)):

And I was so fascinated by the whole thing, being on stage and doing this. And I won the competition, and that triggered me to join other pageant, bigger transgender pageants. So, every time I joined, I started winning the pageants.

Karina Samala ([06:03](#)):

So, I was Miss California. I was... And then, I became Queen of the Universe, which is the biggest transgender pageant, which later on... Because the pageant started in 1970... It used to be King and Queen of the Universe. But then, it was 1998 when I won it. And so, at that time, the producer of the pageant... She's getting old and she wants to retire.

Karina Samala ([06:35](#)):

So, she sold the rights to me. So, when I took over, I separated it to... It's no longer King and Queen. I just did the Queen part of it, the Queen of the Universe. So, it's still going on.

Karina Samala ([06:53](#)):

As a matter of fact, I started to produce it, I believe, 1998. And Geena Rocero was also one of my past winners of that pageant. It's been going on, but...

Karina Samala ([07:06](#)):

Since it is an international pageant, my current winner hasn't stepped down because of coronavirus, so over three years, she is in Thailand. She is from Thailand. She represented Thailand and she won the pageant. She hasn't stepped down for the past three years because of the pandemic, so that's why.

Karina Samala ([07:31](#)):

And then, I created the Queen USA, which is a preliminary to the Universe, and the Queen California. So, those are the pageants that we do right now here in LA.

Gabriel DuBransky ([07:43](#)):

That's cool. So, would you say that, being able to do pageants is what helped you come to terms with your trans identity and accept yourself?

Karina Samala ([07:53](#)):



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Yeah, it did. It opened my eyes and stuff like that. I started going out in a bar. But the thing about that is, also, I would like to point out... During the time when I was working for defense contract, Northrop Grumman, I was a senior engineer when I left them.

Karina Samala ([08:11](#)):

When I was working with them, I have to have a top security clearance because of the work that I do for defense. And aside... The thing that really triggered me, that really is... One of the questions that they ask... And they also go to our neighbors and ask, to make sure that we are on the level.

Karina Samala ([08:35](#)):

One of the question that's being asked is, are you a homosexual? The word transgender is not even used at the time, or gay and stuff. They just put in there... "Are you a homosexual?" And I had to lie all the time to get my top security clearance, because they're afraid that it could be used to blackmail us, to get information out of us. And I had to lie, and say, "No," and that's about it.

Karina Samala ([09:05](#)):

But it really hurt me to say things like that because I'm really afraid of myself. And then, as a beauty queen, I represented [inaudible 00:09:14]. I did shows in, at a time, West Hollywood, all our bars, they'll be performing. It's in West Hollywood, the Queen Mary, and the Valley. And that's all the places that we'd go to.

Karina Samala ([09:26](#)):

And because of my situation, I have to take all my makeup off before I can go home. I put my makeup in the car. I can't even go home as Karina. That's why Karina was born in West Hollywood, that's how I started that.

Karina Samala ([09:48](#)):

But then, there was a time in my life because, of course, my secretary and all the people around me are noticing the changes already with me. I started growing my hair long, so I wasn't just bundling up. I have to go to work in a suit and tie during the day, and at night, I was doing shows in West Hollywood as Karina.

Karina Samala ([10:12](#)):

I was practically living a double life at that time. I can't even... And the thing about that is... My secretary is talking about me to other secretaries at lunchtime and I overheard them, and saying that, I'm so unprofessional with a long hair. And of course, they're noticing my eyebrows being plucked and everything else. So, they were talking about me.

Karina Samala ([10:34](#)):

So, I set her aside. And I said, "Listen," I said, "I wasn't hired here for my looks. I was hired here for what I have up here." And I told her... But she reported me to HR, so... But then, that did not go well, but it's okay. I just moved on.

Karina Samala ([10:55](#)):



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But there was a time in my life already... That doing a double life, it doesn't really suit me and I'm not comfortable about it. So, I decided to quit my job because... Even if Northrop Grumman even sent me to school to learn all of this, plus my degree and stuff like that, I decided to just walk away, and said, "Life is too short for me to live a life that I'm not happy." So, I choose to live as myself, as my authentic self, and do that. And in order [for me to 00:11:30] do that, I had to quit my job.

Gabriel DuBransky ([11:31](#)):

Do you ever wish that you were able to live as both Karina and do your engineering work?

Karina Samala ([11:38](#)):

I would very much... Yeah, but they won't allow me. It was not allowed. But I was not happy... Living that life.

Gabriel DuBransky ([11:46](#)):

Yeah. Definitely. Do you think that the pageants that you run now, do you know of any stories or any other people who have been in them or won them that have had a similar story to you and been able to come out to themselves because of the pageants? Do you think that that helps younger generations?

Karina Samala ([12:07](#)):

It helped and it helped them a lot. I meet a lot of the girls out on the streets of Santa Monica in Hollywood. Several of them I had mentored and trained because they used to... Just outside and something like that. But when they become a beauty queen, it changes them because you are now considered to mentor the young ones. They are looking upon you, as somebody who is there, that they want to be us.

Karina Samala ([12:41](#)):

One of my girls... I met her when she was 16 years old. She is from Cuba. She was... Because in Cuba, they're very strict but [inaudible 00:12:51] there. She was adopted by her grandparents into care when she was only 13 years old. So, she grew up on the streets of West Hollywood, that's where I met her.

Karina Samala ([13:03](#)):

And then, one night [inaudible 00:13:04] entered my pageants and stuff like that and she won. She became... Really... Somebody that the younger generation, the younger girls, look up to. And a lot of the people even said, "She has changed so much."

Karina Samala ([13:18](#)):

But the bad part about that is this. Because of some problems with here... With housing, and... The grandfather passed away, they had to move. She moved to, at first, in Las Vegas, and then moved to Miami, Florida. Unfortunately, December last year, she was stabbed 36 times by her live-in boyfriend.

Karina Samala ([13:50](#)):

It really hurt me so bad. We still have that problem and they haven't resolved it. He's in jail right now. And it really hurt me a lot reaching out to her. And I know I'm very worried and concerned about her grandmother, who's 89 years old, living there. So, it's still... a big problem with our community.



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Karina Samala ([14:12](#)):

She went home that night at 4:00 in the morning. The live-in boyfriend, when she went to bed, stabbed her 36 times in her face with a fork and knife, and killed her. And he blamed it on meth drugs. But we have the highest rate right now. This year, alone, we already have 360, nationwide, of transgender [raped 00:14:42] and killed. So, it was very difficult and special for me, because... This is my family, my transgender family. I devoted my time helping my, I call, family.

Karina Samala ([14:57](#)):

A lot of them call me Mother Karina. Because of the [inaudible 00:15:01] and mentoring that I help them with. I'm involved right now with several organization. I'm the President of Board of Directors at the Imperial Court of Los Angeles and Hollywood. I'm also on the International Court System, also an Heir Apparent on that board.

Karina Samala ([15:21](#)):

So, with that also, because of the things that I saw with our community at that time, especially with law enforcement, we had a lot of problems with them, targeting us all the time at that time. So, the thing about that is... The one that really helped and mentored me, helping the community also, is Jeffrey Prang. At that time, he was the mayor and council member of the City of West Hollywood. But his day job, at that time, with the Sheriff Department. He was with [inaudible 00:16:02]... He was an undersheriff and working there.

Karina Samala ([16:06](#)):

They started a GLBT Advisory Council at the Sheriff's Department. And he came to me, and said, "Karina, can you be a part of this Sheriff's County, LGBT Advisory Council?" So, I said, "Okay," but at that time, I didn't know anything about government policies.

Karina Samala ([16:28](#)):

I used to meet with him on weekends, Saturday or Sunday, because I have a lot of questions and I have a lot [inaudible 00:16:35] because I'm an engineer. I didn't know anything how the city runs and the policies that they create within the city. And so, when I got involved, I learned so much from him. He was the one that really pushed me to help... For the community. So, I helped them do the policies. My assignment was to do transgender policies, dealing with community and law enforcement. That's what I did.

Karina Samala ([17:04](#)):

But then, because our community was just emerging at that time. There's a lot of complaints within the City of West Hollywood regarding all our girls out on the streets. The neighborhoods are complaining. Although West Hollywood is only a 1.8 square miles, it's a very small city. But still, because it is a gay city, a lot of our girls and our bars are there in West Hollywood. And it's creating a lot of problems within the neighborhood. So, at that time, my assignment was to do that.

Karina Samala ([17:37](#)):

So, at that time also, West Hollywood had a task force, but Transgender Task Force, under the Gay and Lesbian Advisory Board. And at that time, there were only nine years, at that time, almost going 10 years



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when this happened. And he was the one who encouraged me to join that. So, I was on the Board of the Transgender Task Force at that time.

Karina Samala ([18:06](#)):

But then, I went to the city. I went to him and asked the city, "How come we're just an advisory council? We're not even a board. We're just a task force." So, I went to the city, I went to him and asked, I said, "I would like to redesignate this task force to become an advisory board because we want the same positions and [inaudible 00:18:34] with the city."

Karina Samala ([18:35](#)):

And he said, "That's a great idea." And the city council... Abbe Land, John Heilman, John Duran, and all those other people, at that time, on the city council, because there's five in West Hollywood, five city councils at that time. Agreed.

Karina Samala ([18:54](#)):

And so, we were the first in the whole country, that was in 2009, to have the first transgender advisory board within any municipality within the United States. It happened in West Hollywood.

Karina Samala ([19:11](#)):

And the second one is the City of LA. When I started also doing the policies with LAPD and stuff like that, because they came to me to help. The [inaudible 00:19:23] was how we started in 2016. It was a second in the country. They have the second advisory council. I called it council to designate... For the other one is a board, the other one is Transgender Advisory Council [in the city 00:19:37] of LA.

Karina Samala ([19:38](#)):

The third one is Minneapolis, Minnesota. They started 2017. I got a call from them. And also, Minneapolis Tribune interviewed me because there is a third city in USA to have a separate Transgender Advisory Board that advises the mayor, the city council, and all the government [inaudible 00:19:59] within... On any issues with the transgender community, employment, and housing, and all those... Any issues. They [advise us 00:20:10]... The city. That's where it started and begun.

Karina Samala ([20:15](#)):

And also, the policies that are currently being used by the Sheriff's Department and also by LAPD, from the work as a chair, is being used right now and is approved, but right now, by those [inaudible 00:20:30] on dealing with our community. That's where it started.

Gabriel DuBransky ([20:35](#)):

So, you said that Jeffrey taught you about policy. And so, I guess this is a two-part question. Besides him, what would you say... got you into activism, motivated you to become an activist? And also, how has your activism changed over time? Because you talked about being able to establish these boards across different places. And so, how has that become... whatever you're working on now?

Karina Samala ([21:04](#)):



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We have come a long way. At that time, we were nothing, living below only. There was even a time, when I was just starting, that we were not allowed at some of our gay bars in the City of West Hollywood. They didn't allow the transgenders in there. We have come a long way. The equality is not there. They treat us so differently. We have the highest rate of people perpetrated against us as a community. And really broke my heart. And I saw all these things that we were experiencing, that I have experienced myself, on the streets of West Hollywood and LA.

Karina Samala ([21:47](#)):

Because they look at us differently at that time. We're not equal to them. We are... It's just so different. And the treatment that they give us is really... They're not the same. And it hurts. It hurts me so much to see this happening because I have experienced it myself.

Karina Samala ([22:13](#)):

Nonacceptance is a really, really big thing. And especially with parents, that's the reason why a lot of... Come out. They're out on the streets because of parents' nonacceptance.

Karina Samala ([22:23](#)):

I even heard... Two other girls said to me, "Mother, Dad wants me out." And they said that she [learned 00:22:32] that her dad wants to see her dead, just seeing her acting that way. So, they end up on the streets of West Hollywood.

Karina Samala ([22:42](#)):

And again, they end up on the streets doing survival sex. I call it survival... I don't even call it prostitution. For most of them, it is survival sex. Guys are giving them money [inaudible 00:22:56] survive. And most of them don't have jobs because they are out there so young because of, again, relatives' and parents' nonacceptance.

Gabriel DuBransky ([23:07](#)):

What do you think is... It's such a complicated question because, obviously, if we had an answer, it would be happening. But how would you start? Or how would you continue the activism towards acceptance?

Karina Samala ([23:21](#)):

Well, to begin... I am so grateful that we live in a city, Los Angeles and West Hollywood. We have government officials who are there helping and really understanding, and is there right now for us. Other cities... That's the reason why a lot of our community coming from everywhere. They moved to LA because of this.

Karina Samala ([23:48](#)):

But we still have a lot of people here who are still... Not really accepting or still treat us differently. That's why equality is very, very important. There's a lot of laws right now out there, I'd say, that is really, really needed, that we need to work on.

Karina Samala ([24:08](#)):



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Those are the things that I think is really good for us. I always say... For this progress to continue, is we should have, I call, the three Vs. It continued as long as... I call three Vs.

Karina Samala ([24:28](#)):

That is... That we are vocal, that we are vigilant, and that we vote. That's why it's very important for us to vote. As long as we engage in these three Vs, we cannot be ignored. Because of this. So, that we can change the policies, [inaudible 00:24:49] policies right now being created are there. And also, vote so that we know who are there to support us.

Gabriel DuBransky ([25:00](#)):

I love that. This is... moving onto a different point. But how do you think that your identities, as being a Filipina and being trans, have intersected and...

Karina Samala ([25:13](#)):

At the beginning, it was really hard. And I know there's still a lot of prejudice and also hatred, especially at this time, because of the coronavirus. The Asians brought this pandemic here, and every Asians are being targeted right now because of those. There's always been...

Karina Samala ([25:34](#)):

Right now, that I experienced, also myself. They called me out in the streets. And even... Especially, when I was starting... Another thing, when we were starting, I go to speak at City Hall and stuff like that, after I give my report, even at the Police Commissioners' meeting, some group of people who's under... They use religion sometimes, especially the religious group who are targeting us.

Karina Samala ([26:04](#)):

They said that, "It says on the Bible, that we, that I am an abomination to the Lord." And they say that after I give my report speech. Even at City Hall, even Commissioners' meeting. And then, when they see me out on the streets, [inaudible 00:26:20] walking, they scream at me on the other side of the road, saying that. Just [starting on dress code 00:26:26], give me all those things.

Karina Samala ([26:29](#)):

I used to get really irritated with that. And the city did something about it because the police would get them all out. And from that time on, they changed it now, they call it the freedom of speech, that's why. Under the Brown Act Rule, events like that, they are allowed to speak, give public comments, freedom of speech. So, we have things like that.

Karina Samala ([26:58](#)):

They've been thrown out in a lot of meetings because, after I did, several of them would stand up and say things against us, against me, for being a transgender woman. But that's why I said, they changed the policies, and even the city's [changed the 00:27:15] policies, but they cannot no longer...

Karina Samala ([27:18](#)):



They have all the public comments now at the beginning of the session not to target those things. And they've been thrown out of a lot of the city meetings at City Hall because of that demeanor, and all those targeting words that they bestow upon us.

Karina Samala ([27:37](#)):

And I was even interviewed, and on radio, at one time. And somebody called in, and they said... Against things about me. And I said, and again, phrases from the Bible. And I said, "I believe in a God of love. And I was created here because God loves me."

Gabriel DuBransky ([27:57](#)):

That's right. So, then are you religious, would you consider yourself religious or more spiritual?

Karina Samala ([28:03](#)):

Well, the thing about is this. Again... So, I was born with seven sisters. I was the seventh child of seven sisters. They waited for so long to have a boy. Especially with Asian culture, because they put the male higher because of the fact that the male is supposed to carry the family name. That is always the thing.

Karina Samala ([28:31](#)):

And I felt like, when I transitioned, both my parents already passed away. I was raised by my sisters. I was very spoiled because of... The only male born in the family.

Karina Samala ([28:45](#)):

But the thing about that is, again, I was raised in a Seventh Day Adventist home. My mother's side of the family, even my grandfather is a minister, Seventh Day Adventist. And they're very strict. And back in the Philippines, I went from elementary up to high school in a Seventh Day Adventist school. So, I was raised that way.

Karina Samala ([29:10](#)):

I still believe in God, between me and the Lord... I go to church. But I'm not practicing as strictly as I was, when I was young. Because of that. But it's between me and the Lord, and I believe, and I'm a Christian. And my father was a Catholic, by the way. My mother's side was Seventh Day Adventist.

Gabriel DuBransky ([29:38](#)):

So, obviously, in a social sense, you just said how you don't practice as much because of the way you had been treated. Do you think that coming out as trans and being trans has affected your relationship with God?

Karina Samala ([29:57](#)):

No, that's why I said, that's why I told them, "I believe in God of love. And I was brought here in this Earth because I was loved." And that's why I'm saying... It's not for them to decide. But one thing that really [inaudible 00:30:16] my mind is this. And I'll give you an example of this, parents' nonacceptance.

Karina Samala ([30:24](#)):



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One of my girls, who was thrown out of the house, was killed because she was staying at a... I'm not sure what it's called right now. A facility, like a weekly hotel, because she couldn't stay at home. And one of her customer dates attacked her and killed her, strangled her. So, it was brought to my attention. We did a fundraising event at the bars, to raise money, to help her.

Karina Samala ([31:00](#)):

And with that, it was publicized, big publicity. When I got there, the family is also a religious family. When I got there, the mother... And this is the viewing. I got there, the mother came up to me, gave me a hug. She was really sobbing and crying on my shoulder. There was the casket, there was 8x10 picture of her as a female. There's a big, large picture of her as a male.

Karina Samala ([31:36](#)):

When we walked down, I got in right there at the casket. She was dressed in male clothing, as a male. I look at the mother, and said, "Why?" I said, "Who decided this? Why was it done?" And the thing about it... And hit me really hard.

Karina Samala ([31:59](#)):

The mother was sobbing and crying on my shoulder. And the mother said to me, "He was given to me by the Lord this way. And I'm returning him the same way." With that, I was flabbergasted. I couldn't say anything because of the situation. And she was crying and sobbing. And it was the oldest brother who decided it, so...

Karina Samala ([32:28](#)):

And this was way back. And it happens with our community. I'm sorry.

Gabriel DuBransky ([32:36](#)):

No, of course.

Gabriel DuBransky ([32:37](#)):

So, I guess, in a similar vein, what do you think, right now, are the biggest problems that the trans community faces?

Karina Samala ([32:56](#)):

We still have to... I get it. People are always attacking everyone right now, especially at this pandemic. I think that's one of the things is we have to... I would like to push on vaccinations. We're always working with a lot of groups right now to do this.

Karina Samala ([33:13](#)):

And also, being there for each other. We need to be united as a community. We need to work together. We still... Even with our community, I see this breakout. United, we are strong. And also, the thing that... We must all stand together, proud and empowered, to tell the whole world, in one voice, that we are members also of the human race. Nothing more, nothing less. We're equal.

Karina Samala ([33:45](#)):



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That is one other thing. Because I see this also happening with all my children. And I've been brought a lot of things when this happens with our own community. Being a mother, I help them, and guide them, and mentor them the way I can. And that's why I say, we need to be there for each other and be helpful.

Karina Samala ([34:07](#)):

There's a lot of people already against us, targeting us. So, we need to be united. And also, build bridges because there's a lot of people out there, even law enforcement people, who are there to help us. That's why we have all those policies. And I have good relationship with Chief of Police and also with our Chief Girmala and Chief Moore. They're there for us. That's why we have the policies and we always go there to help us.

Karina Samala ([34:39](#)):

The thing about is, we still have a lot of attacks, especially on some of our parks, like MacArthur park. That's one of the things that we're looking into. Although, I also sit on the board of APAIT, which we do the Midnight Stroll. Because this was brought to our attention also, where...

Karina Samala ([34:59](#)):

Once in the past, before the pandemic, we used to do it twice a month. We go out on the streets of Santa Monica and also LA, and give food and resources, and also testing to our community. Of course, we focus also on transgender, but we help everyone out there. We give them food and also resources for them. And we do that.

Karina Samala ([35:23](#)):

Now, because of the pandemic, we drive and we do it only once a month, and we drive in our cars, and just reach out to them, and give them the food, so we only do that once a month. So, we're still out there helping our community... and guiding them.

Karina Samala ([35:41](#)):

I'm working right now with two young ones, 16 years old, who also don't have any parents here. So, finding them housing and also helping them to move forward. Again, because they don't have any... Because of, again, parents' nonacceptance. And they're from out of state, they moved here. The one's from Tennessee and the other's from Colorado. And we try to help them and guide them the right way, the best we can.

Karina Samala ([36:11](#)):

And thank goodness, we have the Gay and Lesbian Center. I reached out to the cities also, the mayor and city councils, and also other agencies, like Latino Coalition, and also [Shayla's 00:36:24] group, which is [Invincible Band 00:36:28], for the trans men also. So, we have organizations, right now, that are helping us. Unique Women's Coalition, Transgender Law Center, and all those... The Imperial Court of Los Angeles and Hollywood. We have a lot of them that... Sometimes, I can't even remember all of them. That we worked with, that is really there to help our community. And thank goodness. That's why I said...

Gabriel DuBransky ([36:59](#)):



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That's cool. Yes. So, my final question. What advice would you give to young trans people now?

Karina Samala ([37:08](#)):

Be there for each other. Number one, be true to yourself and be where you are happy, where you feel that you are happy within yourself. That's the most important thing. Loving yourself, being there for yourself, being... Also, choose your friendship because you need people around. You need people that are there, that you can trust. Stay away from those people... And avoid trouble. And also, especially with drugs right now, and stuff like that, it's on the rise. Please stay away from those. And the influence that give... Find people that are there, that you can trust, and be there for you. And be true to yourself, where you are going to be happy. Treat people as you want them to treat you.

Gabriel DuBransky ([38:07](#)):

I love that so much. Thank you. All right. I think that's the end of our time today. But honestly, you are an inspiration to me. Thank you so much for being able to talk to me.

Karina Samala ([38:17](#)):

Thank you.

Youspeak Radio ([38:23](#)):

This is Youspeak Radio. We are...

Cassidy All ([38:26](#)):

Cassidy All.

Savi Bindass ([38:27](#)):

Savi Bindass.

Dean Campbell ([38:28](#)):

Dean Campbell.

Gabriel DuBransky ([38:29](#)):

Gabriel DuBransky.

Jaileen Vargas-Garcia ([38:30](#)):

Jaileen Vargas-Garcia.

Tea Wagstaff ([38:33](#)):

Tea Wagstaff.

Erik Adamian ([38:34](#)):

Erik Adamian.

Umi Hsu ([38:36](#)):



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And Umi Hsu.

Gabriel DuBransky ([38:37](#)):

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