



## **Jaci Adams memorial collection, 2012-2014 : Ms.Coll.55**

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Finding aid prepared by Toby Makowski on November 15, 2017

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## Summary Information

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| <b>Repository:</b>               | John J. Wilcox, Jr. LGBT Archives, William Way LGBT Community Center   |
| <b>Title:</b>                    | Jaci Adams memorial collection   |
| <b>ID:</b>                       | Ms.Coll.55   |
| <b>Date [inclusive]:</b>         | 2012-2014  |
| <b>Physical Description:</b>     | 1 Linear Feet (1 document box and 1 flat box)  |
| <b>Language of the Material:</b> | English  |
| <b>Language of the Material:</b> | English  |
| <b>Abstract:</b>                 | Jaci Adams was a vocal transgender and HIV/AIDS activist in Philadelphia from 2001 to 2014. The Jaci Adams collection spans 2012 to 2014, and is comprised of awards she was given, official governmental proclamations, and memorial objects. |

### Preferred Citation

Jaci Adams Memorial Collection, 2012-2014, Ms. Coll. 55, John J. Wilcox Jr. LGBT Archives, William Way LGBT Center, Philadelphia, PA.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Jaci Adams, often known as Miss Jaci, was a transgender Philadelphia-based activist who was most well-known for advocacy of trans and HIV/AIDS issues. Born in Beckley, West Virginia, her family moved to Philadelphia when she was young. After her parent's divorce, conditions in the house worsened and she ended up leaving an abusive household at the age of nine to live on the streets, where she became entangled with drug abuse, crime, and sex work. She was sent to jail, where she earned a GED. Diagnosed with AIDS in 1983, Miss Jaci did volunteer HIV outreach work by passing out condoms. Adams decided to go into activism in the aftermath of Nizah Morris' death. Nizah Morris was a transgender woman who passed in 2002 from traumatic head injury complications, later declared a homicide. There was significant controversy in the LGBT community about how the Philadelphia Police Department had handled her case, including allegations of cover-ups or police involvement in

Morris' death, with suspicions that her case had been mishandled because she was an African American transgender woman.

In a 2013 interview with the *Philadelphia Gay News* Adams said "I had an 'aha' moment and decided that instead of being angry, maybe a career criminal like me could use that familiarity with the cops to slither in and become part of the solution." Adams sat on the planning committee for the Morris Home and the Philadelphia Trans-health Conference, was a founding member of Temple University's Community Advisory Board, and was the longest-serving member of the Philadelphia Police LGBT Liaison Committee. She was instrumental in transforming the way that the Philadelphia Police Department interacted with the LGBT community, and in establishing similar respectful citywide policies. Miss Adams was an active volunteer as well, spreading her energy to organizations like Philadelphia FIGHT, the AIDS Law Project, the LGBT Elder Initiative, and the Mazzoni Center. She passed February 15, 2014, at the age of 56 due to complications from cancer.

(Source: PGN Staff, "Jaci Adams: From the Unsteady Streets to the Strength of Bridges", April 25, 2013. *Philadelphia Gay News*. <http://www.epgn.com/arts-and-culture/portraits/5850-22345579-jaci-adams-from-the-unsteady-streets-to-the-strength-of-bridges>)

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection is made up of awards, proclamations, and memorials, organized chronologically.

The items within the collection are broadly grouped by the physical awards that Adams received; official consolatory and remembrance correspondence from government entities, and photos. Some of the objects were likely used for funerary purposes.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

John J. Wilcox, Jr. LGBT Archives, William Way LGBT Community Center

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## Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research use.

## Conditions Governing Use

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## Immediate Source of Acquisition

Donated by Gloria Casarez, 2014

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

At William Way LGBT Community Center:

Ben Singer papers

Gloria Casarez papers

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Awards
- HIV/AIDS awareness
- Letters of condolence
- Transgender people -- Civil rights
- Transgender people -- Women

## Collection Inventory

| Title/Description  | Instances         |
|--|-------------------|
| 1st Annual LGBT Youth Conference Lifetime Achievement Award, 2011-12-11                      | Box 1             |
| Philadelphia proclamation of transgender health awareness day, 2012-05-31                    | Box 2             |
| Center City Crime Victim Services Excellence in Volunteer Services Award, 2013-02-28         | Box 1             |
| POZ 100 Award in recognition of outstanding work in the HIV/AIDS community, 2013-12          | Box 2             |
| Mazzoni Center Activist Leader Award, 2013   | Box 1             |
| Keystone Award acceptance speech, 2014-02-15   | Box 2             |
| Pennsylvania House of Representatives condolence resolution, 2014-02-21                      | Box 2             |
| Philadelphia Police Department certificate of appreciation, 2014-02-28                       | Box 2             |
| Philadelphia City Council resolution of tribute, 2014-03-13                                  | Box 2             |
| Philadelphia Mayor's Office memorial tribute, 2014-03-21                                     | Box 2             |
| Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility letter of condolence, 2014-03-21 | Box 2             |
| Funeral home bag, undated  | Box 2             |
| Memorial photo, undated  | Box 2             |
| Party photo, undated   | Box 2             |
| Large portrait, undated  | Oversize-Folder 1 |
| Memorial collage, undated  | Box 2             |
| Costume tiara, undated   | Box 1             |