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SCLGBTA Election Information

by Amber Sibley, University of Dayton

The Standing Committee for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Awareness is excited to begin the election process for positions opening in Spring of 2013.

Open Position Information

This year, the SCLGBTA will be electing five positions. The Chair election will take place with the general ACPA election in December. The other four positions will be elected from January 7-11, 2013. Here is a brief description of the four positions we are currently taking nominations for:

Vice Chair Administration: This position serves as the comptroller for the Standing Committee and oversees the Administration area, which includes the Director of Communication and Marketing, the Director of Administration and 2 Administration Coordinators. The Administration area oversees items such as: Out of Campus newsletter, the SCLGBTA website, convention guides, Convention Showcase booth and the silent auction.

Director of Marketing and Communications: This position maintains the SCLGBTA website, works with the ACPA International Office on technology needs, coordinates print materials for convention (i.e. Convention Guides and materials for specific programs)

and organizes and executes the Convention Showcase booth and the silent auction.

Director of Membership: This position maintains the membership list for the Standing Committee, coordinates volunteers at Convention, chairs the selection committee for the SCLGBTQA's Next Generation scholarships and coordinates schedules for the Next Gen scholarship recipients during Convention, and administers the Membership and Post-Convention surveys.

Director of Education: This position coordinates the SCLGBTQA's Sponsored Programs and Roundtables at convention, coordinates webinars and other educational opportunities for the general SCLGBTQA membership and works with our senior scholars program.

Nominations for the individual awards should include:

- The name, title, institution, and contact information of the nominated individual.
- The position for which they are being nominated.
- A brief description of why they would be great for the position.
- The name, title, institution, and contact information of the nominator.

Your submissions should be sent electronically to Amber D Sibley, Equity Officer at adsibley@gmail.com by Friday, November 9, 2012.

Slating Committee

The Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness is also seeking members to help with the slating process. Individuals who serve in this capacity are crucial to the success of the election process. The slating committee consists of three people who are leaving the current directorate and three people who have never been on the directorate. If you are interested, please e-mail Amber D Sibley, Equity Officer at adsibley@gmail.com by Friday, November 2, 2012.

SCLGBTQA Webinar - "From Identity Silence to Identity Salience"

by Kathleen Hobson, Alfred State University

The most recent webinar sponsored by the Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness, From Identity Silence to Identity Salience: Personal and Professional Reflections from a Student Affairs Educator, was the most impactful webinar that I have attended in my career as a new professional. Dr. Claire Robbins led webinar participants through a

discussion of why individuals are silent about their identities and how they evolve into feeling comfortable enough to speak up about those identities. In addition, she shared her personal story of developing identity salience, and eventually closed with the implications that these journeys have in the roles of student affairs professionals. Each part of the webinar was valuable, but what really resonated with me were the implications of identity salience in my career, both my own salience and that of my students. I work in a residence hall with resident assistants, but have volunteered my time to being the advisor of Rainbow Union, the LGBTQQIA student group on my campus. It is my own identity as a fluid woman that has driven me to work with the students of Rainbow Union; but after the webinar, I realized how little of my journey I have shared with the students. On a daily basis, I provide them support and advice, but am I truly helping them reach identity salience if I am not consistently demonstrating the path of how to get there?

Dr. Robbins asked stirring questions about what identities feel most salient to the participants and which of those did participants feel that they could share in their career. I am fortunate enough to work with supportive colleagues and student leaders, despite the fact that the rural area surrounding my institution is painfully unaccepting. Like LGBT students on campus, the unaccepting nature of the rural location of my institution creates conflict within me on how to feel about the fact that my home and place of employment are surrounded by an environment of ignorance and at times, hatred. I teach my students how to deal with the stress of their surroundings and help them reach a state of catharsis by allowing them to speak freely about their emotions.

When I divulge my raw feelings about these issues, they are primarily to colleagues or friends, but usually not to students. Dr. Robbins spoke about the need that administrators feel to stay strong for students and thus, administrators often contain their emotions or reactions so that they do not upset students. I realized how much I identified with this need, but began to question why the need was there in the first place. Dr. Robbins also stressed the importance of administrators' self-care and implied that sometimes that means allowing students to see the undone parts of ourselves. I have never really thought about the value this type of release could have for both students and me. By allowing myself the same freedom students have to express anger, frustration, and even ecstatic happiness about personal journeys and struggles in the LGBT community could be the best thing I could provide for students. I have been trained how to help students deal with emotions and how to tell them to process their feelings. What a better mentor and teacher I could be if I allowed myself to show them.

Dr. Robbins' insights and charges provided me with a new way of thinking about mentoring to students and helping them to achieve identity salience. These revelations will continue to impact the way I work and interact with students and the way that I express my identity salience. This webinar was one of the most thought-provoking professional development opportunities I have taken part in and have walked away with ideas for best practices for the future. I would like to thank Dr. Claire Robbins for sharing

her personal journey and professional insights, so that we could benefit from her experiences.

National Coming Out Day on Campus!

The Pennsylvania State University by Craig Leets

Each year, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Ally (LGBTQA) Student Resource Center at the Pennsylvania State University partners with LGBTQA student organizations to coordinate a week of programming to celebrate National Coming Out Day (NCOD). Because programming lasts an entire week, this series of events has come to be known as National Coming Out week (NCOW). This year, five events were offered by the LGBTQA Student Resource Center and the LGBTQA student organizations to celebrate October 11th. With NCOD falling on a Thursday this year, NCOW began on Monday, October 8th, and lasted through Friday, October 12th.



On Monday of NCOW, the LGBTQA Student Coalition and the LGBTQA Student Resource Center hosted the “HUB Takeover.” On the main level of Penn State’s student union, six tables were placed in the main corridor with a rainbow balloon arch at each end. One of these tables provided students with the opportunity to sign an ally pledge. At another table, students could take complimentary buttons that had various identifiers on them, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, activist, and ally. The LGBTQA Student Resource Center also offered a table with information about the Center and safe sex materials. Delta Lambda Phi, the Greek-letter organization for gay, bisexual, and progressive men, sold rainbow thread bracelets to raise money for the No H8 Campaign. One of the highlights of this event was various students throughout the day who stood in the middle of this corridor and offered “free gay hugs” to any passersby who were interested.

“Is Faith Straight?” was the question that a panel discussion focused on on the second day of NCOW. Four students from the LGBTQA Student Resource Center’s Straight Talks program comprised a panel of LGBT-identified students who have navigated the intersection of religion and sexual orientation during their lives. While one of the students shared a negative experience of coming out to devout parents, another student shared an affirming experience coming out in his home and his church. After each panelist

shared a brief story about their experiences with religion and faith, audience members were asked to pose questions to any or all of the panelists about their experiences at this intersection of identities. In response to the questions, the students spoke about their personal relationships with their higher power, continued struggles with navigating religion and sexuality, and hope for a more inclusive future.

Wednesday was the pinnacle of NCOW with a lunchtime rally and the Keynote Speaker, Chaz Bono. A group of LGBT and ally students, faculty, and staff gathered to speak out about coming out and NCOD. Three students shared prepared remarks, including a story of coming out, a spoken word piece, and an ally's journey. Following these students, NCOW Keynote Speaker, Chaz Bono, shared his thoughts about coming out. Chaz encouraged people to come out and be true to themselves, but he cautioned the crowd to be sure that they came out in ways and in spaces that were safe. Chaz also encouraged the crowd to vote in what he referred to as a very important election for the LGBT community. After Chaz spoke, members of the crowd were welcomed to the stage to share their stories and statements about coming out. One of the selections was among the most

powerful and had the audience in tears, as a gay student shared an email from his father that said:

“if someone who is coming out doesn't feel like they will have someone to love them afterward, tell them to come here because I love them for exactly who they are.”



On Wednesday evening, an auditorium of 250 people listened as Chaz Bono spoke about his experience growing up and never quite feeling like himself. Chaz shared that even after coming out as a lesbian, he still did not feel that this label quite fit or correctly expressed his identity. He told the crowd that after depression and substance abuse, he came to realize that he was trans and that after receiving testosterone for the first time, he finally felt like the self he had been waiting for throughout his life. Chaz ended his presentation with a call for people to be themselves and show others their true selves because he has found happiness in being his authentic self.

As a result of a canceled event on Friday, a candlelight vigil on Thursday night was the final NCOW event. One of the Co-Presidents of the LGBT Student Coalition told a group of students and several staff gathered on the edge of campus that the vigil was in honor of any fallen queer youth who had been a victim of hate or took their own lives because they could no longer handle the pain. Each candle was paired with a paper cup that acted as a shield for wind and melting wax and also had a name on the cup to identify LGBT people who were lost. Songs, poetry, and personal stories were shared, including “Hope is a thing with feathers” by Emily Dickinson and “The nutritionist” by

Andrea Gibson. In closing the event, one of the vigil's organizers promised to never stop fighting and to never stop speaking out until LGBT youth no longer lived in a world where hopelessness and violence lead to tragedy.

As the week came to a close, after celebration, speaking out, and remembrance, students deflated the rainbow balloon arches with a renewed sense of hope and purpose for the work that still remains to bring widespread safety, affirmation, and equality to the LGBT community.

Tulane University

by Megan Karbley

Coming Out as Trans*: A Femme Ally Perspective

One of the most rewarding experiences I have as a higher education professional is the opportunity to dialogue about identity. And I mean, really talk about identity. Thrive in its up-close-and-uncomfortable parts. Then, finally find some words that suits you—I like to think of it as a word blanket—comfortable and cozy. It is so liberating to say, “I am a femme and I am queer,” in the same sentence. It liberates me and each time I say it, gives me the opportunity to afford others that same liberation...or does it? Gender identity and expression play a large role in how and when we choose to come out.



This year, National Coming Out Week was a milestone on our campus. After several years of feeling silenced and in the closet, our LGBTQ student population had its most successful PRIDE week in recent memory. Students gathered to create a Pride Wall and to organize many coming out events like our BBQueer, Queeraoke, and Lavender Lunch. For the first time in four years, we had an event every day of PRIDE week. Undoubtedly, the LGB movement has arrived via our energized and empowered student organizations.

Throughout the week student organizations, including Student Women Embracing Equality at Tulane and Gender Exploration Society, lead meetings that served as safe spaces for students to finally say, “I’m out on campus, but not at home,” and to battle with the question, “Why is it important to come out?” Is the personal political, and the political personal? For many students, the personal is...well, personal. And coming out is a matter of safety.



As trans* and gender non-conforming students seek to navigate our campus communities, there is much we should do to be open about “coming out.” First, we must understand that not all trans* students want to be identified as trans*. For students who are stealth—do not identify with the trans* or LGB communities—being outed can be perceived as an insult to their gender presentation. Alternately, some students find that

someone using their correct gender pronouns affirming; a sigh of relief is bellowed as one less person needs to be corrected.

So, what does National Coming Out day signify to the trans* population on your campus? How can we ensure that the coming out process for trans* students is liberating versus stifling and safe versus harmful? In the case of our campus’ experience, coming out is manifested in several ways: providing safe space for tough conversations, spreading words of love through our pride wall and, most importantly, allowing students in the room to say, “all I know is who I am today.”

I am a femme, queer, trans* ally. And I am evolving.

Alfred State University by Kathleen Hobson

Alfred State is a small SUNY School of Technology, located in western New York, in Allegany County. Allegany County, one of the poorest in the state of New York, is a rural area, and not overtly accepting of and familiar with the struggles of the LGBT community. That said, the students of Alfred State have overcome these obstacles in order to maintain the group, Rainbow Union, the college's only link to the LGBT community. Rainbow Union is a student organization, but is often looked to by the administration as being responsible for running any LGBT awareness campaigns or events on campus. With such a large responsibility, Rainbow Union recognizes National Coming Out Day and the week surrounding it as one of the focal points of their year.

This year, with a completely new executive board, the members of Rainbow Union wanted to command the attention of their fellow students in celebrating National Coming Out Day and educating about LGBT issues. Because the student body loves t-shirt sales, Rainbow Union ordered over 300 t-shirts in a rainbow of colors, with the slogan "Love is Love" and a picture of three couples: two men, two women, and a man and a woman. The group absorbed the majority of the cost of the shirts so that they could be sold to the students for a low price. Rainbow Union pledged to donate half of the profits to The Trevor Project, the leading national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide intervention services for LGBT youth. The shirts were sold in the central dining hall on National Coming Out Day and a few days after. Rainbow Union was elated to report that they sold over 200 shirts in the first round of selling, meaning over \$400 for The Trevor Project!



In addition to the t-shirts, one of the student Civic Engagement Coordinators secured a civic engagement grant to purchase rainbow colored wristbands, with the message "Alfred State I'm Coming Out." The wristbands were also sold to students and almost sold out in the first two days! At the same table as the wristbands, students leaders provided free pamphlets and information about National Coming Out Day and the coming out process. Available earlier in the week were rainbow colored cupcakes with rainbow sprinkles, which were baked and handed out to students by a Rainbow Union member. On the evening of National Coming Out Day, Rainbow Union co-sponsored a free movie entitled "Leave it on the Floor." "Leave it on the Floor" is a musical coming out story of a young black man in Los Angeles, who is thrown out of his house by his mother and left homeless. He stumbles into the wonderfully flamboyant LA ballroom scene and finds a new family of others like him. The film shows the struggles of coming out to a parent, but also sends the positive message that young teens who are coming out can create their own families and support systems.

Last but not least, Rainbow Union was excited to learn that other student leaders were reaching out to help educate students about the LGBT community and the coming out process. At the end of National Coming Out Week, a group of RAs began filming an "It Gets Better" video for Alfred State. The editing will be done over the next month by some of the digital animation students, and will premiere at Rainbow Union's Anti-Bullying Panel in November. The students of Rainbow Union are overjoyed with the success of their campaigns but were even more touched to learn that they have inspired others to join in the cause to help the student body to understand the struggles and triumphs of the LGBT community.

The First Year

by Petey Peterson, Vanderbilt University

This year, the SCLGBTQA will be featuring a column in each newsletter, chronicling one higher ed professional's journey from graduate school to a full time LGBT-focused professional position. Petey Peterson just started a position as the Program Coordinator for Vanderbilt University's Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex Life (LGBTQI). This is the second article in a 5-part series highlighting different moments in Petey's first steps in their full-time career in higher education.

As I am approaching my fourth month in my first full-time professional position, it is clear that there are just some aspects of full-time work for which no Master's program can prepare you. For example, cracking the screen of your new work iPhone, your car breaking down on an interstate on your way to present at a professional conference, morning rush hour traffic that no matter how you time it always makes you late, on campus parking permit rates, and using your skills as a Justin Bieber drag king to persuade students to attend a keynote speaker, to name just a few. Some of these may seem just plain ridiculous or everyday life occurrences, but all of these obstacles can seem even more challenging in a new place and especially, in a new position.

I am learning that when in a new position, it takes far longer to build relationships with other colleagues and students to feel comfortable even sharing or working through small, every day challenges. Managing more difficult topics and conversations, such as coming out, supporting students, and gender inclusive policies, can seem insurmountable at times. From these experiences, I have learned three important lessons thus far in my transition to being a professional:

- 1) Even though you are "professional," you can still laugh at yourself. You need to be able to laugh when you make a ridiculous mistake, such as leaving your car lights on three nights in a row, thus making you late three times that week for work.
- 2) You need to be honest. You will never create trust or build strong relationships with your colleagues and supervisor if you are too afraid to be honest. Just because you are in a new position does not mean you cannot be honest, even if that honesty occasionally conflicts with the rest of your staff.
- 3) Listen. As important as it is to be honest, it is just as important to listen. Often, we think we have all the answers, or that the institution we were at before did it the right way. Surprise! You are in a new place, new position, and around new people. You need to listen and understand the culture and processes in this new environment before you can have insight on how things should be done. However, do not let listening and learning cloud your ethics and your intelligence. There is a fine line between knowing when to sit back and listen and when the ideas, skills, and experiences you bring to the table are the

very aspect that a department, program, or even just one meeting may need to get things to where they need to be.

At first, I was only listening and was told by several of my colleagues that my silence was being read as me being upset or that I was not engaged. I immediately felt horrible and realized that I was approaching being “the new person” all wrong. I still have a lot to offer, but it is knowing when and how to offer ideas and opinions. I know now to approach meetings by gaining a full understanding of the topic at hand before so I am as prepared as possible; I also now know that I can not only view each meeting as an opportunity to learn even more, but also as a time that I can contribute and participate in the department's plans and ideas. That balance between listening and contributing is something I am working to find everyday. Luckily, I have passed my 90 days so I think I am pretty safe.

Election 2012 - Key LGBT Issues

by Myrinda Grantham, Saint Louis University

With election day just around the corner, the main focus in the media has been on the candidates. However, when the polls open on November 6th, there will be 176 measures on the ballots in 38 states. Same-sex marriage will be on the ballot in four states - Washington, Maryland, Minnesota, and Maine - with these votes holding particular significance for our community. This election year could be the first time that same-sex marriage is legalized through the popular vote instead of being granted through legislation.

In Maine, the question would overturn the ballot measure that passed in 2009, which banned same-sex marriage six months after it was signed into law by the governor of the state. In Maryland, a similar measure is on the ballot. Question 6 will allow voters to affirm the Civil Marriage Protection Act, which was signed into law by Governor Martin O'Malley in late February. The Civil Marriage Protection Act will give same-sex couples the opportunity to obtain a civil marriage license in Maryland starting January 1, 2013, and it will also protect the religious beliefs of clergy so that they are not required to perform marriage ceremonies under the law.

In Washington state, Referendum 74 will allow voters to decide if same-sex marriage should be legalized in the state of Washington. Legislative bills had been introduced in the state house and senate, but opponents of the bill argued that the question should be put to a public vote. After SB 6239 - the senate bill legalizing same-sex marriage - was signed by the governor in February, a referendum was filed to put same-sex marriage on the ballot in Washington in the ballot in November.

Unlike the previous three states where same-sex marriage is on the ballot, Minnesota is

working to limit rights for the LGBT community. Minnesota voters will see Amendment 1 on their ballot, which will define marriage in the state of Minnesota as a union between one man and one woman.

SCLGBT A Award Announcements

by Myrinda Grantham, Saint Louis University

Award Information

Each year, the Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness honors individuals and programs that make significant contributions to our field of higher education and to our work with college students. We invite you to make nominations for yourself or your peers for the following awards. Your submissions (with the information outlined below) should be sent electronically to Myrinda Grantham, Administration Coordinator, at mgranth2@slu.edu, by Friday, November 9, 2012. Award recipients will be announced in conjunction with the 2013 ACPA Convention in Las Vegas.

Julie B. Elkins Outstanding Service: For significant contributions to the SCLGBT A through their support of and efforts for LGBT awareness in ACPA.

Public Service: For significant contributions to higher education and to their institution (or other institutions around the country) through support of and efforts in LGBT awareness.

Val DuMontier New Professional: Recognition of a new professional (1-5 years in the field) who has made significant contributions in the area of LGBT awareness.

Research Recognition: Recognition for completed or ongoing research on LGBT issues.

Nominations for the individual awards should include:

- The name, title, institution, and contact information of the nominated individual.
- The award to be considered.
- Description of how this individual's work is consistent with the education and advocacy mission of the SCLGBT A.
- Explanation of how the individual has made contributions specific to the award (research, public service, Standing Committee service, new professional, etc.).
- The name, title, institution, and contact information of the nominator.

Remember: Your submissions should be sent electronically to Myrinda Grantham, Administration Coordinator, at mgranth2@slu.edu, by Friday, November 9, 2012.

Awards Committee

The Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness is also seeking members to help with the nomination review process. Individuals who serve in this capacity are crucial to the success of the awards process. Members of the committee will be asked to review nominations, and submit written feedback in order to help make the final decisions. If you are interested, please e-mail Myrinda Grantham, Administration Coordinator, at mgranth2@slu.edu, by Friday, November 2, 2012.

SCLGBTA Big Give Initiative Needs YOUR Help!

by Petey Peterson, Vanderbilt University

Each year, the SCLGBTA works to raise money to help continuously educate and provide support to the LGBT Community. This year the SCLGBTA will continue to raise money for our grant initiative. This grant will be open to all colleges and universities across the country, to provide support in their efforts to educate, support and provide LGBT specific programming on their individual campuses. The grant will be rewarded to individuals and/or organizations based on their commitment to raising LGBT awareness, advocacy, and educational opportunities for their specific institution.

In efforts to raise funds, the Standing Committee will host a silent auction, known as, the "Big Give Initiative," during the Annual Convention in Las Vegas. Last year, the SCLGBTA successfully raised funds in excess of \$2,000.00 at the Louisville Convention in 2012.

The Standing Committee is currently seeking donations to help with our "Big Give Initiative." While any donation would be greatly appreciated, we are specifically looking for items for our silent auction. All proceeds from your donation will go directly to the new grant initiative and support LGBT programming and advocacy efforts on college campuses across the country.

For more information about the SCLGBTA, please contact Petey Peterson Coordinator for Advancement via email at petey.peterson22@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you no later than February 15th, 2013.

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