



Message From the Chair

By Danielle Nied

Greetings SCLGBTA Members!

Can you believe it is the Fall term already?! If you are like me, you might not be sure where the summer went. Regardless of what feels like a quick summer, the Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness (SCLGBTA) Directorate has been hard at work on improving our education, advocacy and networking efforts. Since our last newsletter, the Directorate assembled in Chicago for our annual Mid Year Meeting, hosted this year by DePaul University. Additionally, as Chair, I attended the annual ACPA Summer Leadership Meeting in Louisville to represent the interests of our Standing Committee and conduct official ACPA business. Lastly, each of the three areas of the Standing Committee has met monthly via conference calls to discuss Standing Committee business. Given all of the activity this summer, I want to provide you with a few brief updates from each of our meetings.



First at our SCLGBTA Mid Year Meeting, we made several large but exciting changes to our Standing Committee initiatives. In an effort to re-align our initiatives with our [statements of commitment](#), we have changed the focus of the Silent Auction at Convention. Previously our Silent Auction efforts provided monetary support to an LGBT youth center local to the Convention site. As a Committee we espouse to support our own college and university campuses, professionals and students. As such, the Silent Auction will now be moved to fund annual grant opportunities for college and university LGBT organizations, LGBT Centers, and university groups supporting LGBT programming or spaces (e.g. a residence life department organizing Day of Silence). These grants will be distributed via an application process where we will seek information regarding the intent of the program(s) or service(s) and demonstration of monetary need. As for our involvement with the LGBT youth organizations, we felt our time and knowledge might be a better utilization of resources for youth than just a monetary donation. We are working with the Convention planning team to see if a volunteer opportunity can be identified with an LGBT center. Another major update from the Mid Year Meeting is the development of a Senior Scholar position and a community of scholars. At the end of Convention 2011, I charged an ad-hoc committee with researching and developing a Senior Scholar position. The committee worked to identify the potential for such a position as well as research and scholarship in the SCLGBTA membership. While, we are still in the process

of developing the specifics of such a position and community, the Directorate approved the committee to move forward with the integration of this vital component to our Standing Committee leadership. The last two quick items to mention from Mid Year Meeting are the development of C4, Creating Connections Conference Calls, and our SCLGBTQA Style Guide. We are rolling out a series of networking conference calls, which will occur monthly by community identities, in order to connect our members outside of Convention. More information will be advertised through our bi-weekly emails so stay tuned! Also, the SCLGBTQA is working on a Style Guide this year to assist with our marketing and branding. This is an exciting initiative for us and one that will hopefully appeal to all our members!

As for the ACPA Summer Leadership meeting, we developed lots of great partnerships with other Standing Committees and Commissions. We already started to work in partnership with the Commission for Housing and Residence Life, the Commission for Faith, Religion, Spirituality and Meaning, and the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals on webinars for the upcoming year. Additionally, we developed partnerships with the Commission for Career Development, Commission for Counseling and Psychological Services for Convention initiatives. Lastly, we have continued our great relationships with the other Standing Committees to work collaboratively in support of one another. We will be rolling out some awareness and advocacy joint initiatives in the near future.

One item, from the ACPA Summer Leadership Meeting, I would like to touch upon in more depth is the decision made by NASPA to break the contract for the Joint Meeting in 2014. There have been many conversations about this decision among the assembly leadership teams. I have always been a supporter of both associations and want to work for the betterment of our profession as a whole; however, I must admit I am struggling from an advocacy and social justice perspective with the decision NASPA has made around the Joint Meeting. NASPA chose to keep the contract for their 2012 conference in Arizona, despite the many concerns expressed by student affairs professionals given the immigration and gay rights issues in AZ. However, NASPA has now chosen to seek an alternative location for their 2014 conference, not honoring their contract, as the apprehensions and challenges of holding a Joint Meeting post no consolidation became too great. I hope you all will take some time to view the letters from both associations' [ACPA](#) and [NASPA](#) and engage our leaders in this conversation. I feel this is an important topic to bring to light, not as a political pull for ACPA versus NASPA, but rather for the advancement of LGBT issues in our profession.

I am motivated that we as a group have some important and incredible times ahead. We are at a critical point in time to enhance the work of our profession around LGBT issues. Together, we can improve the climate of our campuses and the climate of our profession for staff, faculty and students. I hope you will continue to engage in multiple ways through our various events and initiatives, but most importantly, I hope you join the conversation.

Same-Sex Marriage Recognition

By Stephanie Chang

The summer months for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community is commonly known as a time for pride and celebration with Pride Festivals throughout the country to honor the historic event at Stonewall and celebrate victories in the LGBT movement. This summer the LGBT community celebrates two victories in

same-sex recognition. The state of Illinois began granting civil unions on June 1st and New York just issued same-sex marriage licenses as well. According to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), Illinois joined seven other states that already recognize civil unions for same-sex couples.^[1] As for the state of New York, according to a New York Times article, New York is now the largest state to recognize same-sex marriages.^[2] These are two major victories that bring the LGBT community and movement closer to equal rights and benefits with heterosexual couples and families.

As the LGBT community thrives and builds momentum following these victories, higher education and student affairs professionals should begin to consider the implications of statewide same-sex recognition at colleges and universities. How does your institution recognize same-sex couples? Can LGBT undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and staff access partner benefits such as housing, health insurance, recreational amenities, and any other benefits currently offered to married heterosexual couples? These are the types of critical questions institutions will begin to face, and some institutions are already addressing, as more states negotiate decisions about legalizing same-sex relationships. However, as state political leaders discuss the issues of civil unions and same-sex marriage, institutions of higher education should not wait for states to make finite decisions about the recognition of same-sex couples. The critical questions about how your institution recognizes and supports the LGBT community is necessary with or without state recognition.



Nonetheless, there is much to be celebrated with Illinois and New York. The LGBT movement in Illinois and New York is testament to the power of individual and collective action. To honor the action of LGBT activists and organizations, professionals within institutions of higher education must ask critical and challenging questions to ensure that same-sex couples are properly recognized, supported, and affirmed on our campuses.

[1] National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) Relationship Recognition for Same-Sex Couples in the U. S. map, http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/issue_maps/rel_recog_6_28_11_color.pdf

[2] New York Times, New York Allows Same-Sex Marriage, Becoming Largest State to Pass Law, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/25/nyregion/gay-marriage-approved-by-new-york-senate.html?pagewanted=all>

How Will The "DADT" Repeal Affect Our Campuses?

By Craig Leets

The campaign for equal federal rights for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual (LGB) people experienced a victory on December 22, 2010, when President Obama signed into law the bill that would officially repeal the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) policy. After seven months of assessing the readiness of the military for this repeal, President

Obama, along with Secretary of Defense Panetta and Admiral Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staffs, announced that the United States Military is ready for the implementation of this repeal. The repeal is set to go into effect on September 20, 2011.[\[1\]](#)



Although there is much excitement for this victory, many questions remain about how the implementation of this repeal will take effect among the five branches of the U.S. Military. Questions are also arising in the minds of student affairs practitioners whose campuses may have issues to consider due to the repeal. For example, practitioners at institutions on the campuses, such as Harvard University, Columbia University, and Stanford University, where units of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) do not have a presence on campus, in part, due to DADT, may be asking themselves how their institutions will proceed following the repeal. Will these universities allow ROTC units to form on their campuses?

Questions surrounding climate may also be coming to practitioners' minds. If those universities mentioned above allow ROTC units on their campuses, how will ROTC administrators ensure a welcoming, friendly, and affirming climate for the LGB students who join ROTC? Similarly, how will practitioners on campuses that already have established ROTC units ensure positive climate after September 20? What strategies can be employed to partner with the officers who lead ROTC that will allow for a positive climate? And, how will LGB students be able to determine whether or not a unit is welcoming before they join? These questions surrounding climate are important to consider if practitioners want to provide welcoming, friendly, and affirming spaces for LGB students throughout their campuses.

Additionally, practitioners who create programs specifically for LGB students may be asking how this repeal will affect their work. Will they begin creating programs that promote LGB involvement in ROTC? Will they sponsor ROTC recruitment events? Will ROTC be present at welcome week or involvement fairs that provide information specifically to LGB students? These practitioners offering LGB services may also be asking themselves how they will connect with other practitioners who design programs to support veterans. What opportunities are there for partnerships between these two areas? How might these two areas work together to support veterans who come out after the repeal? With the end of DADT, practitioners will need to think critically about how their work will change in supporting LGB students and their open presence with the military.

Many questions that have been presented throughout this article will remain unanswered until the repeal goes into effect on September 20th of this year. However, it is important for practitioners in student affairs to begin considering the implications of this repeal as soon as possible, so they can be proactive in supporting LGB students who will choose to serve openly in the U.S. Military. Practitioners should prepare themselves for situations they have not previously encountered due to DADT and understand that they will need to work together to address the new issues that will arise with the removal of this policy.

In closing, we must recognize whom the U.S. military still denies access to serve. Although the repeal of DADT is a great victory for LGB people, Transgender people still cannot serve in the military. According to the National Center for Transgender Equality, identifying as Transgender or being diagnosed with gender identity disorder immediately disqualifies an individual from serving in the military under the current medical fitness standards.[\[2\]](#) This discriminatory practice, along with others, needs to end to allow Transgender people to serve. Because this

group still cannot serve in the military, students at Harvard University and Stanford University believe that ROTC units should continue to not have access to their campuses because these practices violate the non-discriminatory policies at these institutions.^[3] Practitioners should keep in mind which groups are still left out as they invite ROTC back to their campuses, and LGB people can begin asking themselves how they can work with the Transgender community to achieve ensure equal rights.

[1] Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (2011). About "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Retrieved from: <http://www.sldn.org/pages/about-dadt>.

[2] National Center for Transgender Equality (2011). Military. Retrieved from: <http://transequality.org/Issues/military.html>.

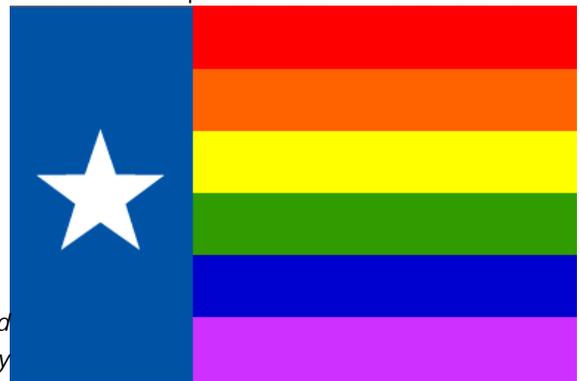
[3] Garcia, M. (2011). Ivy leaguers flight ROTC for trans rights. The Advocate. Retrieved from: http://www.advocate.com/News/Daily_News/2011/02/02/Ivy_Leaguers_Fight_ROTC_for_Trans_Rights/.

LGBT Political Climate in Texas

By Michele Richey

Rep. Wayne Christian, R-Center, tried through two different means to negatively impact LGBT students on college campuses by putting funding for LGBT resource centers at risk. The first attempt was with an Amendment he authored to be attached to the House Bill 1, the state budget. In the Special Provisions Relating Only to State Agencies of Higher Education section, Christian attempted to add the following:

It is the intent of the Legislature that an institution of higher education shall use an amount of appropriated funds to support a family and traditional values center for students of the institution that is not less than any amount of appropriated funds used by the institution to support a gender and sexuality center or other center for students focused on gay, lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, pansexual, transsexual, transgender, gender questioning, or other gender identity issues.



Fortunately, this amendment did not make it into the final budget that was approved. Christian also submitted an amendment to the fiscal matters bill that would have banned LGBT resource centers from public institutions of higher education in Texas. The following is what Christian proposed:

It is the intent of the Legislature that an institution of higher education shall not use any amount of appropriated funds and/or state property, facility and or building to support a gender and sexuality center or other center for students focused on gay, lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, pansexual, transexual, transgender, gender questioning, or other gender identity issues.

Fortunately, this amendment also did not pass. While neither amendment made it out of the legislature, they were seriously debated and there was strong support for both. It is clear there is still a lot of work to be done in

Out on Campus: Engaging LGBTQA Student with the University Before Move-In Day

By Dian Squire

Universities often focus their efforts on the students that are already at the university: those that have enrolled, are living in the residence halls, and are taking classes. We plan dances, small group meetings, address concerns, and effect campus climate. While these are all necessary actions, universities should also focus their energies on this population even before they register for classes. The first step in the process is the admissions process, usually followed closely behind by the orientation program.

Identifying these populations early on is integral to providing students with a successful student experience. Aside from the benefits to the student, the university also gains from asking about sexual identity on the application. Below, I identify some important reasons why universities should concentrate on the recruitment of LGBTQA students and how they can support them during orientation before they move-in on day 1.

- Universities must remain at the forefront of efforts surrounding diversity and preparation for the “real world.” Asking a question about sexual identity sends a message that universities are serious about issues of diversity, creating a safe and inclusive environment, and preparing students to work in an increasingly diverse workplace. Currently no university systematically collects data on these populations; though, Penn, Harvard, and Dartmouth collect information unreliably through student application essays.
- Retention is key as universities push towards 60% 4-year graduation rates. Asking a question about sexual identity provides service units with demographic information on this population so they can provide academically and socially focused intentional programming, including mentoring programs, gender-neutral housing initiatives, and academic support services.
- Students report coming to universities because of its LGB and T presence. Asking a sexual identity question allows prospective students to understand the accepting and diverse climate of universities. It also shows students who may not have met these populations that universities supports all students and does not tolerate discrimination.
- LGB and T people are part of diversity and fabric of all universities. Asking this question accurately defines and quantifies “diversity” to constituents including new applicants
- Asking this question may help in the recruitment of faculty and staff members (LGB and T and not) who support LGB and T student success. Asking this question may help show LGB and T faculty that universities support their LGB and T identities and the students who they mentor and educate.
- Identifying these groups allows for easier research and assessment on their academic success, retention, graduation rates, and involvement on campus. Many students feel unsupported in the classroom, cannot relate to the curriculum, feel discriminated against in their residence halls, and feel uncomfortable in several

facilities on campus. Asking this question can help universities better understand the LGB and T student experience and continue to be at the forefront of student success

After students are accepted to the university, there comes orientation. My job in orientation is not to necessarily think about the students who are already here, but those that WILL be here in the near future. Orientation has many goals; some of the main goals are to ensure that students have a successful transition into the university, to ensure that they are engaged academically and socially at the university, and to acculturate them to my particular institution. We work with many offices and organizations on campus to meet these goals.

When thinking about these goals and pairing it with thinking about LGBTQA students, we have had many conversations with both Admissions, LGBT Equity, student organizations, and individuals about how to best serve the population. Through these conversations, we are learning that just like academic rigor or sports teams, students are looking at schools based on the level of LGBTQ "friendliness" they exhibit. Students base this friendliness on the number of student groups, services provided, general campus climate and, I am sure, personal feeling of belongingness.

With this knowledge in hand, it is important that we also view orientation at a continuing recruitment tool. Based on orientation evaluations, there is a population of students who attend more than one orientation program. While the number is not large, it is still important to provide the best possible experience to all of our students including our LGBTQA students. At the University of Maryland, we engage with LGBTQA students in a multiple ways.

First, we provide table space to the LGBT Equity office at our My Maryland Resource Fair, a tabling opportunity for offices and organizations to provide students with information about the university. Students have an opportunity to talk with offices about their services and involvement opportunities. It also exhibits a diversity of services and community members.

Second, we have optional break out sessions at the end of the first day of orientation. The optional break out is a way for students to learn about additional resources at the university while also engaging with students outside their assigned orientation groups. It builds bonds while also engaging students with the university. We have five different sessions, but one focuses mainly on students who either identify at LGBTQA or wish to learn more about the community and resources. The session is mainly socially focused, but we also provide a handout with campus resources.

The third way we engage LGBTQA students is through providing information about The One Project UNIV100 course. The One Project is the first-year experience program for LGBTQA students at The University of Maryland (www.theoneprojectumd.com). The program is currently going into its second year of existence and aims to engage LGBTQA students with the university academically, socially, and civically. The core of the program is UNIV100, a one-credit transition course taught by my coordinator and myself. The course curriculum does not stray far from the standard curriculum of UNIV100, but what it does provide is a space for students to express their identities freely, to be a part of a supportive and open community, and it allows students to engage academically with the university as their true selves and through their LGBTQA identity. Students sometimes ask, "is this a gay class?" We answer that it is not a gay class, it is just UNIV100 where you can be yourself.

We can never forget about the parents of LGBTQA students. We think it is important to discuss concerns parents may have about sending their student away to a large university. On day two of our orientation while students are

registering, we have optional sessions for parents of minority students. Some time is spent talking about the many resources available at the university such as the Multicultural Involvement and Community Advocacy office, the many student groups, the Office of LGBT Equity and, of course, The One Project. Our goal is to provide them with resources and ensure them that their students will have a successful transition to the university if they utilize the resources available to their students.

Engaging students with the university before they come to campus on day one is an important and necessary activity that all universities should begin to discuss implementing on their campuses. It's not nearly enough to be responsive to student needs, but we should all be anticipating and programming towards the LGBTQA student population. Not only do we show our students that we are open and diverse places for them to live and study, but it also provide positive outcomes for the universities.

Out at Work

By Matthew LeBlanc

Earlier this summer we were reminded that even some of the most beloved workplaces in the country can still have their moments that disappoint us. This past June in the skies over Houston an airline pilot unknowingly broadcast a rant against the LGBTQ and female members of his recent flight crews. The airline quickly took corrective action and issued a corporate apology in addition to having the pilot personally apologize to those affected.

As we begin the new school year let's take the opportunity to have conversations with our students about how to navigate their job search process as LGBTQ and Allied individuals because the truth is, it can be different. The transition from campus to the working world can be a shock as people move from what are typically supportive campuses with active LGBTQ student organizations, institutional support, inclusive policies, and a spaces that encourage an open and honest social life.

From the beginning, LGBTQ candidates need to make some unique decisions about their job search. Are they only going to apply to companies with the highest score in the HRC Equality Index? An idealistic move, but is it realistic in this struggling economy and job market? Career and LGBTQ Centers alike have a unique opportunity for partnerships to address so any of these questions and concerns. We need to work with our students to help determine how out, or not, they want to be in their resume and cover letter. Recognizing that sexual orientation is only a small part of what defines them as a person and as a candidate, hiding or minimizing their sexual orientation and involvement on campus can be the equivalent to going back into the closet while recognizing the character of the career field they are applying into. Students need to be prepared for the potential moments in an interview where they as candidates needs to educate the employer on terms and definitions we may take for granted, you never know who is sitting on the other side of the table during that interview. Non-discrimination policies, diversity trainings, partner benefits, and employee resource groups are a great signal from the corporate level of responsible behavior and attitudes toward the LGBT community and signal an appreciation for greater diversity in other ways. At the same time we struggle with gender identity and sexual orientation as grounds for termination in 38 and 30 states respectively.

Regardless of our functional areas on campus, it's important that as out professionals we have these conversations with students looking for internships and employment opportunities. OUT for Work is a wonderful resource that

can assist you and your campus with their Career Center Certification Program and the Career Conference & PRIDE Career Fair September 23-25, 2011. The pilot over Houston was a disappointment but reminded me of the conversations I had as an airline intern during college. Equipped with the right tools from my supervisors and my university I was able to navigate the experience and continued on with the company in a consultant capacity for another 4 years. Lets set all of our students up for equally successful experiences.



From the gender neutral restrooms to hot discussion topics, be sure to follow the Standing Committee on Twitter using [@sclgbta](https://twitter.com/sclgbta) You'll get updates on Standing Committee news as well as topics and information related to LGBT issues in higher education and beyond



Gender Neutral Restrooms on College Campuses
by: Ashlei Tobin-Robertson

Many Student Affairs Professionals appreciate the effort that is made each year at ACPA's Annual Convention regarding gender neutral restrooms. Gender neutral restrooms offer a safe space for every convention attendee. Fortunately, this initiative can now be seen on college campuses throughout the nation.

The University of Colorado, Boulder has two gender neutral community restrooms



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on campus. One is in residence hall and the other is in the Student Affairs Center.

There are several initiatives in place to create more inclusive spaces. Additionally, most lobbies on University of Colorado, Boulder's campus are equipped with single gender neutral restrooms.

University of Colorado, Boulder recently won the bid to host the National Association of College and University Residence Halls (NACURH) Annual Conference in 2012. Part of the bid team's NACURH 2012 bid included taking some restrooms in the residence halls and making them gender neutral. This plan will definitely allow a space for every delegate where they feel the most comfortable.

Other campuses that have gender neutral restrooms are: Amherst College, Brown University, Hampshire College, Harvard University, Haverford College, Ohio State University, Reed College, Rice University, Sarah Lawrence, Stanford University, Swarthmore College, University of California, Berkeley, University of California, Santa Cruz, University of Chicago, University of Iowa, University of New Hampshire, Wesleyan University, and Williams College.

(<http://www.amplifyyourvoice.org/youthresource/genderneutral>)

The University of Arizona has a Statement on Restroom Access which states, "the University allows individuals to use the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity." (http://equity.arizona.edu/restroom_access) Campuses across the nation should look at these schools and others who have gender neutral restrooms or policy regarding access to gender-specific spaces. Hopefully with the

inclusive vision our upcoming student leaders, such as those at the University of Colorado, Boulder, we will be able to create safe spaces across the nations.

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