

**Indiana University
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender
Student Support Services
2013–2014 Annual Report**



GLBT Student Support Services Office Annual Report
July 1, 2013–June 30, 2014

Introduction

Doug Bauder, Office Coordinator

If one word could set the tone for the past academic year in the GLBT Office, it would be *assessment*. As a result of the retirement of our previous Office Supervisor last summer, the fall provided us with an opportunity to examine the roles of our current full-time staff and examine the most efficient ways to carry out our work. In collaboration with other units in the Division of Student Affairs, we kept a headcount every month of those who visited our office, e-mailed us, and called us, as well as the number of those with whom we related in classroom settings and at community gatherings. We worked at evaluating our programs more consistently and circulated a satisfaction survey among those who visited the office. We met with student groups using the office to discuss learning outcomes. Some of those comments will be included later in this report. And finally, during the spring, thanks to the efforts of one of the staff members of our Advisory Board, we considered a proposal for greater engagement of our Board members.

Statistics related to our headcount are available in the office for anyone interested in those numbers. A few interesting observations came from some of our assessment activities.

- Very few people use the telephone to contact our office anymore. The majority of our contacts were from visits to the office, e-mail messages, and interaction with our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/GLBTSSS.IU).
- Students still read books. Almost as many books as films were borrowed from our library, according to our Library Intern.
- Thanks to the renovated space we now enjoy, we were able to host regular meetings of a men's support group (Men Like Us), weekly HIV testing (provided by Positive Link), and the advocacy efforts of the award-winning group, Freedom Indiana, which met in our office three nights a week and on Sunday afternoons to advocate for marriage equality in Indiana.
- We complement the academic mission of the university in a wide variety of ways. And while more students visit our office than any other constituents, we receive e-mail contacts from an equal number of faculty members, staff, parents, community members, and alumni. An overview of those contacts will be included in the next section of this report.

One final note regarding assessment: a doctoral student from Indiana State University spent a week in our office during the spring conducting research on the role that campus offices like ours play in the experience of LGBTQ students. Ours was one of four universities in the Midwest surveyed. While his dissertation is being completed and he anticipates applying for a position in a center such as ours, a note of thanks from him to our staff included these words: "I hope to find a support center half as helpful and welcoming as this one has been. If not, hopefully you can provide direction and insight for starting a similar facility and homey environment. Thank you for the incredible work which you do and for assisting me in my research."

Since this report is a kind of assessment in itself, it is worth noting that as of July 1, 2014, the GLBT Student Support Services Office will no longer report to the Dean of Students as part of the Division of Student Affairs but to the Vice President in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs. We trust that these pages will enable our new colleagues to learn about the work that we do and

understand how pleased we are to collaborate more closely on issues of diversity and the intersections that bring us together.

Observations

Office Supervisor, Jamie Brazel

The 2013–2014 academic year has brought significant changes to the GLBT Office. Surely the office sets a record for a lack of employee turnover, as the two full-time staff members who were hired at the office's opening held the same positions for nearly two decades. The summer of 2013 saw the retirement of Carol Fischer, who shaped the office as well as the lives of students who visited it. I stepped into the position of Office Supervisor in November of 2013 and have experienced a whirlwind year as I took on these new duties. There is truly no better workplace than the GLBT Office. I am perhaps a bit biased, but I wholeheartedly believe this office attracts the most inquisitive, intelligent, and open-minded students on the IU campus.

This year also sees us making some administrative changes; we will no longer reside within the Division of Student Affairs but will join the other campus cultural centers under the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs (DEMA). This move reflects a positive cultural shift. At the opening of the GLBT Student Support Services, the office was a part of the Office of Student Ethics and was primarily thought of as a place to report harassment and find refuge from prejudice and discrimination. In the past twenty years, queer individuals have come to more openly enjoy a colorful, vibrant, welcoming, *visible* culture that is worthy of celebration, and I feel our move to DEMA reflects this significant societal change. We are proud to formally join hands with our fellow cultural centers in celebrating queer culture alongside and intersecting with African American, Asian, First Nations, and Latino cultures.

Reflection on the past year naturally leads to planning for the coming year. My personal hopes for the 2014–2015 academic year include promoting our library, HIV testing, and counseling services; planning programming that will excite and resonate with our students; and helping grow existing support and social groups, enabling students to take on leadership roles and support each other. In the coming year, we will seek to increase collaboration with other campus units. We recognize that issues of sexuality intersect with faith, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, and personal health, and we seek to become more aware of and honor those connections in the months ahead.

Serving Students, Parents, Faculty, Staff, and Alumni

A Representation of the Contacts We Encounter from Day to Day

While the month of **July** tends to be relatively quiet on campus, the GLBT Office still relates to an interesting array of constituents. A reporter from the *Indiana Daily Student* contacted us seeking information about a gay doctoral student who had received harassing comments in an evaluation of a course he had taught. The student decided he would allow his story to be told so that others would consider what is and isn't appropriate in evaluating an instructor. The doctoral student received many positive comments for his willingness to share his story. An undergraduate in crisis e-mailed us, having lost financial support from his parents after coming out to them. We made arrangements with the Executive Board of the GLBT Alumni Association to award the student an Emergency Scholarship so that the student could continue his education. A recent graduate of IU contacted the office asking the Coordinator to officiate at his wedding to his partner in October. Arrangements were discussed and agreed upon. And the granddaughter of the first Dean of the School of Education, for whom the house we occupy was built, visited us when she was in town to attend a family funeral. The woman had spent

many years in the house growing up and was pleased to see how it was being used, indicating that her grandparents had a passion for civil rights.

In **August**, a staff member of the Department of Athletics requested a meeting with the Coordinator as she hosted two members of the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) who wanted to discuss LGBTQ issues as they related to athletics. An Assistant Professor in the School of Education who was doing research on the incident teams on campus requested information on the GLBT Anti-Harassment Team. A representative of the Peace Corps asked to attend our open house to solicit any students interested in serving. We were happy to welcome her participation, as well as that of a variety of student groups. More than 100 students attended. We participated in the annual Resource Fair for more than 300 Resident Assistants. And once again, we served hundreds of students rainbow sherbet at the annual Culture Fest during Welcome Week.

During the month of **September**, a graduate student in Counseling and Ed Psych asked us to distribute information about her research studying gay men who have positive relationships with their fathers. A staff member in the School of Education met with us to discuss a new Living/Learning Center to be opened this fall dedicated to diversity. A graduate student who has interned with the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in Washington, DC met with us and agreed to continue his work on transgender issues by serving on our Trans Advocacy Group. An undergraduate who is planning to run for a state office here in Indiana and who advocates for marriage equality visited the office to discuss his campaign plans. The Director of Communication for the IU Foundation called requesting assistance with a Fox TV interview related to the GLBT Alumni Association Scholarship Campaign. Our Coordinator arranged to meet with a reporter and contacted a student scholarship recipient who was willing to be interviewed.

As **October** unfolded, a professor in the School of Journalism requested a speaker on current LGBTQ issues for students for his class. Another undergraduate student visited the office to seek counsel on relationship issues. The Director of Marketing for the Department of Athletics requested a meeting to organize a pride event at a women's basketball game in the spring. A former doctoral student who felt he had experienced harassment by his advisor submitted a complaint to the GLBT Anti-Harassment Team. The student now lives in Arizona, but two team members met with the professor to discuss the student's perception in an attempt to improve communication. The professor was very receptive to the conversation and requested additional resources to use in understanding the student's experience. The office also hosted a lecture by Judy Shepard, mother of murdered hate crime victim Matthew Shepard. A standing-room-only crowd responded well to the program in Whittenberger Auditorium.

In **November**, our Social Work intern began her oral history project, interviewing a variety of gay and lesbian elders from the community as she put together a collection of reflections for our archives on the changes in society over the past 50 years. A local author contacted us about arranging for the royalties from his gay-themed novels to be donated to the office. We connected with the IU Foundation on his behalf. Students from a Communication and Culture class invited staff to participate in a discussion with members of the Traditional Youth Network, a student group with what appear to be racist and homophobic tenets. And the Director of the IU Health Center asked to meet with our Transgender Advocacy Group to discuss ways to assist their staff to help transgender students feel more welcome at the Health Center. Follow-through included training on transgender issues for the entire Health Center staff.

As the calendar year came to a close, the Director of Bloomington Restorations contacted us in **December** about the upcoming visit of a gay author who is an expert on restoring historic buildings. We agreed to help publicize the event. We also initiated contact with the Office of International Services

regarding the distribution of an online survey to international students interested in LGBTQ issues. Staff agreed to circulate survey, and students who responded met to discuss ways in which we can better serve LGBTQ students from other cultures. The editor of *Bloom* magazine requested a book in our library in preparation for an article on gay Bloomington. Several students and community members who identify as straight allies wanted to learn more about the office and to get involved. Staff showed them around, distributed resource lists, and passed on information about volunteering with Freedom Indiana.

During the month of **January**, our Higher Education and Student Affairs (HESA) intern informed us that he had received a grant for travel expenses to the Midwest BLGTA College Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Forty students from IUB and IUPUI attended. A former IU Trustee and member of the board of the local Salvation Army contacted us about the possibility of building bridges with the local organization. Coordinator met with board member and director of the local Salvation Army to discuss the perception that the Salvation Army is anti-gay and to consider ways to address that perception. Scores of students continued to gather in the office during the evening and on weekends to phone citizens around the state to discuss the value of marriage equality. Students from Freedom Indiana received 2014's Dean of Students award for community action.

In **February**, a staff member in the Kelley School of Business called to seek information on the governmental policies in India regarding homosexuality in preparation for a student trip to that country that included a lesbian couple. Experts on the topic in the Office of Overseas Studies were contacted, and pertinent information was shared. A former practicum student in the office requested a letter of recommendation as he applied for an internship at the Smithsonian Institution. Our Office Supervisor responded to a request to speak to a fraternity to discuss how to become more inclusive of GBTQ individuals, and an undergraduate student who identified as gay came into the office to share concerns about his identity. Initially very nervous, the student relaxed and left the building feeling affirmed and supported. Within a short period of time, he became a regular visitor to the office, eventually forming a group called Students Against Intolerance and requesting space for one of its upcoming meetings.

The month of **March** brought news that our application to showcase a film entitled *God Loves Uganda* at the IU Cinema was approved. The film examines the influence of the American religious right on anti-gay policies in Africa. The showing will be in September 2014. A staff member in the Office of Student Ethics requested that we meet with a student sanctioned for inappropriate behavior and language during an incident in his residence hall. An instructor in Informatics requested a letter of support in applying for a waiver to allow him to remain in the country with his partner as he continues his studies. Letter was written, and waiver was granted. And a meeting was held with the Director of the Office of Admissions to discuss ways to identify services on campus for incoming transgender students, including allowing for students in transition to identify their preferred name and/or gender pronouns on their application.

During **April**, a staff member at Outdoor Adventures called the office to get advice on a problem that arose during a recent camping outing on which two women insisted on their right to share a sleeping bag as a couple in a group setting. Since heterosexual married couples are discouraged from doing so and that policy is clearly stated when individuals sign up for the event, it was determined there was no double standard. We brainstormed ways to approach the couple, as student staff didn't know what to do in the situation. A journalism student traveling to Uganda this summer visited the office, and the Coordinator agreed to make contact with the Dean of Students at a university there who had been a visitor to IU in 2012. The Dean was especially eager to learn how to be supportive of his gay students, even though governmental policies are largely anti-gay. A professor in the School of Education invited staff to attend her class and discuss ways in which our office addresses social justice issues in a

counseling context. And members of diversity clubs from several local high schools visited our office to learn of our services and discuss issues facing LGBTQ youth and allies.

As the spring semester ended, office staff met with various individuals during the month of **May** to consider summer activities and plan ahead for the fall. The Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs requested input on his new strategic plan, and the Coordinator offered several suggestions for expanding the perspective on diversity as it relates to IU's own unique history. An undergraduate student who identifies as transgender began working in the office to compile a resource for students who are transitioning while on campus or who identify as genderqueer or transgender. Our Office Supervisor developed a summer reading program for students, including the growing number of LGBTQ youth in the wider Bloomington community. Businesses provided incentives for reading program participants.

The month of **June** provided us with several new opportunities and some well-established connections. We cohosted a luncheon for the Summer Orientation leaders from the Office of First Year Experience in concert with our good neighbors at La Casa to help students learn about our resources. We collaborated with the GLBT Alumni Association as board members anticipated signing up new members during Indy Pride, and more than 100 new members joined. The Coordinator agreed to serve as a mentor for the men of the summer 2014 Groups Program. And in anticipation of our move from the Division of Student Affairs to the Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs next month, our office was represented at the week-long National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Indianapolis. The conference theme was "Intersectionalities," and LGBTQ issues as they related to race, religion, and ethnicity were addressed openly, according to long-time attendees, for the first time in the history of the conference.

Mining the Minutes

Members of the GLBT Office Advisory Board met 4 times during the academic year. The Board is comprised of undergraduate and graduate students, including a representative of IUSA; staff from various offices around the campus; and faculty representing a variety of disciplines. Cosponsored programs and LGBTQ issues are discussed at these meetings. Below are a few highlights from meetings held during the 2013–2014 academic year.

- A million-dollar scholarship campaign was launched in September by the GLBT Alumni Association. Over \$625,000 has already been pledged or received. The GLBT Office will receive a \$50,000 gift from this campaign to be used for programming needs.
- A variety of student groups responded to student needs and interests this year, including Men Like Us (for GBQT men), Connections (for LBTQ women), BiComm (for bisexual individuals), Gender Warriors (for transgender and genderqueer students), Grad Pride (a social group for grad students and young professionals), and a GSA (Gay/Straight Alliance).
- Working with a small group of international students, the office has begun to consider how to serve the needs of LGBTQ students from outside the United States.
- More than 100 students volunteered with the group Freedom Indiana and met in the office four times a week. Volunteers worked to educate Hoosier citizens about the value of marriage equality. Their efforts and those of others led to the defeat of an attempt to write discriminatory anti-gay language into the state constitution. The group was awarded this year's Dean of Students Community Award.

- Members of Transgender Advocacy Group (TAG) worked with various entities on the campus to address the issue of preferred names for transgender students and create a more welcoming climate for gender-variant individuals. The Health Center has been particularly responsive to our efforts, inviting transgender students to lead training sessions for their entire staff.
- Forty students from IUB and IUPUI attended the Midwest BLGTA College Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Grants were obtained to assist with bus transportation. Disability Services for Students assisted in accommodating a student who uses a wheelchair.
- In cooperation with the GLBTAA and at the invitation of the Department of Athletics, a Pride Night was held at a women's basketball game in January. The event included a reception prior to the game and speeches at intermission by teammates about the value of being true to ourselves.
- Proposal for greater engagement of Board members was discussed at length at our spring meeting.

Lessons Learned

In an effort to obtain learning outcomes from the students who use our services, we met with the volunteers from Freedom Indiana, the men who participated in the Men Like Us group, and the students who attended the Midwest BLGTA College Conference during the spring, and we surveyed those who attended the Judy Shepard lecture last fall. Below are some of the comments from those conversations, as well as the insights of several of the interns who worked in our office this past year.

Of those who responded to our survey after the Judy Shepard lecture, everyone rated Judy's lecture as good and most as outstanding. When asked, "What is one thing you will take away from the evening that might make a difference in your life?" participants answered,

- "The need for more of us to tell our stories."
- "The value of education."
- "The importance of coming out sooner rather than later."
- "One person *can* make a difference."
- "Times are changing, but there is still work to be done."
- "Don't be complacent."
- "Judy's witness gave me a spirit of hope!"

Freedom Indiana volunteers told us,

- "My faith in the democratic process was restored as I participated in this effort."
- "I was told when I signed up to help out not to expect much change in Indiana ... and look what happened ... we kept the state legislature from passing this obnoxious amendment on to the voters. That's *huge!* I honestly believe, now, that my voice matters."
- "Over the weeks in which I participated in this project to share my belief as a straight man in the value of marriage equality, I probably logged over 2,000 phone contacts. My passion for this issue just increased as time went on."
- "I've never done anything like this because I'm basically a pretty shy person. But I really believe in marriage equality. It's just not fair that people who love each other can't get married. I think I'm more hopeful about the future now."

- “I would do this again in a minute. It was the most amazing experience of my college years, and the people with whom I worked are now some of my closest friends.”
- “What amazed me was how much my communication skills improved. Talking to people who don’t agree with you helps that to happen. I think I’m a better educator. One of my friends said I’ve learned how to take charge of a room.”

Students who attended the Midwest BLGTA College Conference in Kansas City, Missouri in February 2014 said,

- “I learned about the politics of the gay rights movement and the issues facing queer people of color.”
- “I learned about privilege, my own privileges, and how not to take those for granted.”
- “I gained an increased self-confidence and respect for others.”
- “I learned about queering theology and how to be a better ally to transgender people.”
- “I learned more about the potential struggles facing LGBT student organizations and the importance of being a good advisor.”
- “The keynote speakers inspired me to take a larger role in supporting the community and not to wait for change to happen. I want to help make our campus more inclusive.”
- “There are so many people out there who feel exactly like I do, so I don’t have to feel alone anymore.”

Men who participated in the Men Like Us support group shared,

- “I felt so supported by the other men in this group.”
- “I really appreciate you letting me be a part of this group, for my own personal growth, but also for the research that I’m doing.”
- “As a black gay man on this campus, it is so important to be supported by some of my brothers in this group.”
- “I wish I’d joined the group sooner.”
- “The contributions of the men of color to this group were a special gift to us all. I learned a lot from you guys.”
- “You guys helped me to accept some things about myself that I never thought I could accept.”

Two of our interns also provided their insights. Our Library Coordinator shared,

I have been the library coordinator for the GLBT Office since mid-August 2013, and already it’s a place that feels like home, a place I’m excited to go to each morning. Our office is a special place; we serve a diverse community of LGBTQ students and community members as well as LGBTQ allies, and our library is at the heart of it. Within our collection, users often discover resources that change their lives—books and movies that might expand their perceptions of the world, support their coming out process, validate their feelings, and demonstrate that they are not alone. I get to work intimately with this small, special collection, purchasing, cataloging, processing, and then putting into circulation each new item. It’s so fun to arrive in the morning to a box of new materials on my desk. And then I get to do one of the most fun things a librarian can do: suggest the right title to the right user at the right time. While a large part of my day is spent on circulation tasks, I honestly never go a day without engaging with an enthusiastic user and having an interesting conversation. I also got to compile resource guides to support courses

at IU, promote the library at outreach events and through social media, create displays, and do some collection development. I'm lucky to be supervised by someone who values my input as a professional and who supports and encourages me in my career choice.

In a personal note to the Coordinator (used with permission), our HESA intern stated,

As promised, I wanted to stay in touch with you this summer ... First, thank you so much for taking me into your office this past spring. When I went to the Quarryland concert, I realized another thing I appreciated but would have gotten emotional if I said things in person. I know I told you in person that my practicum has impacted my own identity. I wanted you to know that it was important to have such a caring, intelligent gay mentor in my life this year. In a year where I lost my father, I was grateful to gain a man like you to provide guidance in my life. Thanks again for bringing me into the office. I am grateful for the experience.

Wisdom from the Washroom

When our building was renovated in 2012, we placed a small bulletin board in the washroom with scrap paper attached to solicit comments from those who felt inspired during their time there. Here are just a few gems from the notes we received over the last twelve months:

- "I love that this board is here. Life is about freedom of expression, and I want to express my love for you all."
- "Being single sucks." (Response: "Singleness is freedom.")
- "Be as you are."
- "I'm sure you guys played some part, but I really appreciate the gender-neutral and single-use facilities on campus. They are a secure reassurance that people do care."
- "Get tested!"
- "Thank you. I am no longer alone." (Response: "Welcome to a big, beautiful, wider world.")
- "I don't care what you believe. I care how you behave."
- "Freedom Indiana rocks!"
- "These people taught me that I am sometimes an ass." (Response: "Welcome to the human race. Your willingness to acknowledge this is probably a sign that, at heart, you're a very good person.")
- "How do you feel about the connotation of the word 'fruit'?" (Response: "It's better than being a vegetable. I'd take sweet, colorful, tasty and healthy over almost anything else.")
- "I'm afraid my depression will become too overwhelming and I will have to drop out." (Response: "Please talk to one of our counseling interns or someone at CAPS. Depression can be treated effectively.")
- "Some people don't always learn their life's calling, but I'm glad being an ally is mine." (Response: "We're glad too.")
- "This office is a safe haven for me. Thanks for all the kindness."

Those Who Served the Office in the 2013–2014 Academic Year

Full-Time Staff

- Doug Bauder, Office Coordinator
- Jamie Brazel, Office Supervisor

Student Interns

- Emily Stuvén, Library Coordinator, Fall 2013
- Jylisa Doney, Library Coordinator, Spring 2014
- Emily Walling, Social Work Intern, Fall 2013–Spring 2014
- Caroline Hippler, Counseling Intern, Fall 2013–Spring 2014
- Patrick Nagel, Counseling Intern, Summer 2014

Student Staff

- Xander Harty, Office Assistant, Fall 2013–Spring 2014
- Francisco Cardoza, Office Assistant, Fall 2013–Spring 2014
- Brendan Simison, Office Assistant, Fall 2013–Spring 2014
- Abigail Chester, Office Assistant, Fall 2013
- Korie Burdine, Office Assistant, Fall 2013

GLBT Advisory Board Members (IU Faculty and Staff)

- Doug Bauder
- Angela Courtney
- Craig Dethloff
- Kim Davis
- Paul Hafner
- Liana Hong Zhou
- Trish Kerlé
- Barry Magee
- Thomas Nelson-Laird
- Melanie Payne
- Jennifer Pearl
- George Pinney
- Chelsea Rood-Emmich
- Laura Scheiber
- Rex Sprouse
- Brad Stepp

GLBT Advisory Board Members (Students)

- David Bredenkamp
- Jeffrey Cisneros
- Cole Cooper
- Lauren Dula
- Ash Kulak
- Meredith Moon
- Skyler Powell
- Cody Vaughn
- Matt Worthington

Conclusion

Providing a safe haven for the students who walk into our office and all the other individuals who contact us via e-mail, Facebook, phone, or visiting is our primary mission. Our hope is that as we provide that atmosphere of safety and security, those who benefit from our services will pay it forward. We are grateful for the opportunity to do that with the support of the Division of Student Affairs for the last twenty years. And now, as we move from the DSA and join forces with our friends and colleagues in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs, we will continue to be that haven. We hope our reach will be extended to even more individuals in the days ahead.