

Indiana University Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Student Support Services

Annual Report



July 2014–June 2015

Introduction

Doug Bauder, Office Coordinator

A recent visit from an IU alumnus had me responding to the question, “What’s it like to work in this office each day?” My simple response: “There’s never a dull moment.” What an understatement!

In July of 2014, we transitioned from reporting to the Dean of Students for the past 18 years to reporting to the Vice President for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs. During the month of November, we celebrated 20 amazing years of service to the campus and the larger community with an open house for friends and neighbors, faculty and staff, IU’s chancellor emeritus, and Bloomington’s mayor. In March of 2015, we responded to questions from *TIME* magazine regarding the passing of a (so-called) Religious Freedom Restoration Act by our state legislature and signed into law by our governor. Those who advocated for the bill failed to consider how this law would impact many Hoosiers, including those who identify as LGBTQ, and the outcry from around the nation was deafening. Our little office was inundated with calls from colleagues in the Admissions office, concerned parents of high school seniors applying to IU, frustrated administrators, and outraged alumni. And, as this report is being written in July, we are still responding to scores of messages from former students and friends around the country regarding the decision by the United States Supreme Court to affirm marriage equality. I’ll say it again: working in this office ... well, there is never a dull moment.

In between those significant moments, the GLBT office helped to host transgender activist and star of *Orange Is the New Black* Laverne Cox in January, and 3,500 students listened and learned as she spoke about the intersection of race and gender and the value of being true to yourself. That same month, we collaborated with the city of Bloomington in welcoming film producer Bennet Singer to campus and to town. Bennet was the featured speaker at this year’s community Martin Luther King Day celebration—the first time a gay man spoke at Bloomington’s MLK Day event—presenting his groundbreaking film, *Brother Outsider*, about the life of black gay activist Bayard Rustin. The following weekend, we celebrated our second annual pride event at a women’s basketball game. The Department of Athletics has been outstanding in its support of LGBTQ student athletes and fans. The Spectrum project was launched in March by Residential Programs and Services—a floor dedicated to gender identity and sexual orientation that invites students of any identity to live together and learn from one another, starting in the fall of 2015. GLBT office staff will serve the students in an advisory capacity. After several years of hard work, preferred names on student IDs were approved by the Provost’s office in March, adding needed support to IU’s transgender students, among others. And the second year of a million-dollar GLBT Scholarship Campaign headed by the GLBT Alumni Association garnered the attention of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* with a feature article in its April online edition.

We invite you to consider some of the other large and small ways our office is making a difference as you read through this report.

Reflections on the Year

Jamie Bartzel, Office Supervisor

This has been a momentous year for me personally as well as professionally, with those two aspects of my life constantly intersecting. In August of 2014, I married my partner, and as we planned our wedding in the spring of 2014, we felt pangs of sadness that some of the friends we were inviting to celebrate with us could not yet access the same legal privileges we would enjoy—simply because his driver’s license stated *M* and mine *F*. Yet as an interracial couple, fifty years ago, we would have faced similar difficulties in marrying. I felt the weight of history when we went to the St. Louis City courthouse to apply for our marriage license. I felt that same weight again nearly a year later when I watched coverage of couples all over the United States celebrating the fact that after years or even decades of partnership, they could access marriage that would be legally recognized in every state in America.

Of course, marriage rights do not signal full equality. Just as interracial couples marrying did not magically erase racial profiling or guarantee black families homes in white neighborhoods, the ability of same-sex couples to marry does not instantly halt violence against transgender individuals, bisexual erasure, bullying of asexual people, homophobic and cissexist microaggressions, or housing and employment discrimination. There is great value in celebrating equal rights victories. Yet we must not rest on our laurels but instead be energized by the celebration and commit ourselves to vigilance in finding places where education and compassion can better the lives of queer individuals and families.

While progress can be slow, it does march on. The great joys in this job are watching young people join in the march, helping them find their voices, and equipping them with the tools and support they need to carry on in the fight for equal rights. And so we march into the next academic year. We spend the summer planning events, cataloging new library materials, welcoming incoming students, answering nervous parents’ questions, and reflecting on where improvements can be made in university processes and procedures. And we look ahead to August, when the flood of students will arrive, bringing boundless energy, creativity, insight, and thoughtful criticism with them.

What will this coming year hold? I can’t wait to find out.

Serving Students, Parents, Faculty, Staff, and Alumni

The following scenarios provide a sample of what goes on in the various corners of the GLBT Office from day to day.

July is the month during which we greet hundreds of new students and their parents through the First Year Experiences Resource Center and the Family Forums in which our office participates. In addition to that annual commitment, we also agreed to be involved in an event for international students later in the summer. As it turns out, this was the same month when we provided support on Facebook for a student from India who chose to travel across the country to visit various kinds of American families. We provided contacts for him in several states and followed his journey (from India to Indiana) online. Our Library Coordinator spent time cataloguing new acquisitions, including some outstanding new books and films, and a student whom the GLBT Alumni Association supported with an academic scholarship returned from a week at Camp PRIDE eager to continue his work in developing a guide for use by students transitioning during their time on campus. That guide will be available for students in the fall of 2015.

During **August**, the Director of Admissions requested participation from our staff in discussing trends among LGBTQ students with Admissions staff. We answered questions related to gender-inclusive bathrooms, scholarship opportunities, preferred name policies, and town/gown climate. At the request of a faculty member in the School of Education, we met to discuss changes in the National Survey of Student Engagement as it relates to LGBTQ students. We finalized plans with staff at the IU Cinema for a showing of the film *God Loves Uganda*—a documentary exposing how the religious right in America fueled antigay sentiments in Africa—in the fall. And we continued our tradition of serving scoops of rainbow sherbet to hundreds of students at Culture Fest in addition to welcoming scores of students to our block party during Welcome Week.

In **September**, we visited with the pastoral intern at a local church to discuss our work, referred an instructor at Ivy Tech to the Speaker's Bureau for a class presentation on issues of sexual orientation, and provided support to a mother in the community who called with a concern that her in-laws were not going to be supportive of her gay son. Indiana Student Affairs Association informed us that a workshop proposal entitled "Tooting Your Own Horn" encouraging student affairs professionals to share their stories was accepted for their annual conference. And a staff person in Communications and Culture informed us that a student-produced film that we had supported was selected to be screened at the Heartland Film Festival in Indianapolis.

Much of our time in **October** revolved around collaboration with colleagues and supporting current and former students. Two staff members from Residential Programs and Services met with our staff to discuss the Spectrum thematic unit in Teter Residence Hall devoted to safety and support for LGBTQ and ally students. A doctoral student from the School of Public Health requested our assistance in presenting a workshop on cultural competence in serving LGBTQ clients. Thirty-five professionals in the medical and counseling fields attended that workshop. Along with La Casa and the First Nations Education and Cultural Center, we hosted a joint celebration of the Day of the Dead, honoring deceased LGBTQ activists. Staff traveled to IU Southeast to present to students and staff "Insights into Serving LGBT Students." And we assisted a former Social Work Intern as he relocated to Wisconsin by providing him with contacts of colleagues and IU graduates in the city of Madison.

Activities during the month of **November** centered on a daylong anniversary open house in celebration of 20 years of service to the campus and community. Scores of people visited the office and listened to staff, former students, faculty, and members of the Bloomington community share stories of their memories of those years. In addition, staff supported an undergraduate student in Theatre by participating in a panel following a dramatic reading of a play on the court proceedings in California of Proposition 8. Several student staff members requested letters of recommendation as they prepared for graduate degrees in Social Work and Information and Library Science. And a graduate student from Informatics who had attempted suicide met late one evening with the Coordinator to discuss issues related to coming out and his family's strict religious background. This student was encouraged to meet with a psychiatrist, discuss his stress level with professors, and avail himself of additional resources in the office. The student made considerable progress thanks to a straight friend who had accompanied him to the office and who followed through in supporting this student.

During a month in which activities typically wind down, there were still students to support and activities to plan. And so in **December**, the Coordinator met with our Social Work Intern and her faculty advisor to discuss the learning plan that guided her office activities. Staff spoke on a panel with colleagues in various cultural centers to a Higher Ed and Student Affairs class on issues related to diversity and attended a program utilizing the film *The T Word* addressing the unique issues of students who identify as transgender. The Coordinator met with a group of students to plan the annual Unity Summit on Martin Luther King Day. And staff met with a student who had been sanctioned by the Office of Student Ethics to visit the office for harassing another student who is gay. The student was encouraged to view the film *Bullied*, imagine if the main character in the film had been the student he had harassed, and then write a reflection paper as part of his sanction.

As the new semester got underway in **January**, staff met with an international student whose cultural heritage was in conflict with his sexual orientation. A discussion on the intersectionality of identities ensued, and resources were offered. The office collaborated with Bloomington PRIDE in hosting this year's annual Pride Film Festival, a four-day event that began when two students came to the office years before to seek support for a class project in Film Studies. A letter of support was written on behalf of *Bloom* magazine as it applied for a statewide award for its outstanding issue on Bloomington's LGBTQ community earlier in the year. Two students were recommended for positions as Summer Orientation leaders. One applied and was accepted. In response to the concern of a transgender student, the GLBT Anti-Harassment Team provided a one-hour training session to the staff of Student Central on transgender issues.

In **February**, a faculty member in the School of Public Health requested a meeting to discuss a research project on the issue of cruising for sex on college campuses. A discussion followed with thoughts of circulating a survey in collaboration with the Kinsey Institute. A staff member at the Lilly Library met with two office staff members and an IU alum to view Lilly's exhibit on Lincoln and Walt Whitman. A staff member at the National Collegiate Athletic Association requested information on the relationship we have developed with our Athletics department. We arranged for a conference call with NCAA staff and IU colleagues. Staff in the Admissions office requested training for IU guides. Coordinator spoke with various groups during an all-day Saturday training session. The film *Codebreaker* on the life of gay mathematician Alan Turing was featured at a program at the School of Informatics. Approximately 35 students and faculty attended the event and joined in a lively conversation.

March madness took on a new meaning with the passage of a poorly worded law, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), by Indiana state legislators, initiated by Indiana's governor. Ostensibly about religious liberty, many saw it as an act of discrimination. Responding to the political maneuvering around that law kept us busy for weeks, including assisting IU staff and students in publicizing protest efforts in relationship to the law. But other issues weren't ignored. A graduate student on the staff at the Center for Evaluation and Educational Policy requested help in developing evaluation tools for a class project. His collaborative work with our staff led to some great assessment tools. An IU alumnus who was a personal friend of nationally known gay activist Leonard Matlovich called our attention to the fact that 2015 marks the 40th anniversary of Matlovich's appearance on campus, and so we are working with the Lilly Library to plan a program and display there in the fall of 2015. We also arranged a conference call with a staff member on the Kokomo campus to discuss the merits of our Positive Space project and provided resources to a graduate student at Penn State as they seek to establish an LGBTQA center on their campus.

As we planned another Rainbow Dinner for graduating LGBTQ and ally students in **April**, we also were present at several Red Carpet Day events sponsored by the Office of Admissions to welcome high school seniors to campus as they considered becoming part of the IU family. We hosted several area high school diversity clubs and talked about the work we do and the climate for LGBTQ students on our campus. (We also continued to answer questions about the RFRA!) Our Coordinator traveled to Wisconsin to discuss working with LGBTQ issues at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. A student group on a diplomatic visit from Burma visited the office, asking many questions about LGBTQ rights in Indiana and the United States and how the democratic process helps (and harms) queer communities. We participated in a panel on diversity issues for the Bloomington Professional Council. And we interviewed and hired an undergraduate student who will serve as our Social Work intern in the fall.

While graduation brings an official end to the spring semester every **May**, new opportunities for service unfold as summer begins. Sadly, we responded to the murder of an IU student who had been a volunteer at our office. Responding to the press, reaching out to her family and friends, and accepting generous gifts to the office in memory of this student set this month aside in a way we hope will never happen again. We also met with a faculty member in the School of Public Health to discuss cosponsoring a nationally known speaker on bisexuality during the upcoming academic year. We received an amazing collection of books and films from a retired gentleman from Nashville as a donation to our library. Staff presented at a workshop to guests from other campuses entitled "Creating a Welcoming Climate on Campus" at the request of the Director of the Carmichael Center. And we celebrated the good news that a former HESA intern had landed a job as Director of Residence Life at a college in the Chicago area.

And the year came to a close in **June** with our participation in the annual PRIDE event in Indy where dozens of IU graduates and friends were pleased to learn that IUB has a GLBT Alumni Association. Working alongside students at a booth representing IU Athletics, we signed on 52 new GLBTAA members and celebrated Hoosier hospitality with scores of IU fans. Office staff worked in conjunction with the GLBT Anti-Harassment Team in creating a dialogue with WIUX staff and a listener who was offended by a recent broadcast. Apologies were offered, and a pledge to address the issue with student staff was promised. Our staff met with a faculty member in SPEA who requested some help in addressing a sad situation of homophobia in his hometown, a small city in Indiana. A brainstorming session over coffee ensued. And our Coordinator, as a founding member of Bloomington United, met with a WISH-TV reporter at the request of the Senior News and Media Specialist at IUB in response to the mass murder in Charleston, South Carolina. Bloomington's response to a hate crime in 2000 continues to draw attention after all these years.

Mining the Minutes

Membership in the GLBT Advisory Board includes 8 students (undergraduate and graduate, including a representative of IUSA), 8 IU staff members, and 8 members of the faculty. The group meets twice each semester to share information and occasionally discuss larger campus concerns and office policies. Cosponsored programs with the office and LGBTQ-themed events are always highlighted. Here are a few notes from those meetings:

- Campus Pride ranked IUB in the top 50 schools in the United States for LGBTQ resources. It was interesting to observe that many new schools on that list have consulted with our office over the years.
- A gift of close to \$50,000 was received from the estate of Frank Banta. A portion of the funds will be used to publish a book by Gary Poole entitled *There All Along*, a look at LGBTQ history at IUB and in Bloomington.
- The first Bloomington PRIDE Summerfest was held downtown, and over 300 students attended a Welcome Back Drag Show on campus, which featured information about campus and local LGBTQ resources.
- Education professor Barbara Dennis received a grant to enhance Project Homecoming efforts to send LGBTQ and ally students back to their high schools to address schools' climates and issues of bullying.
- An LGBTQ and ally thematic housing unit was discussed and will be housed in Teter Residence Hall. The unit was approved by Residential Housing Advisory Committee. GLBT office staff will serve as advisors to students on the floor.
- More than 40 students from IUPUI and IUB attended the Midwest BLGTA College Conference in Kansas City, Missouri with a HESA student organizing travel through the office. The GLBTAA once again assisted with finances.
- Reports were presented from various student groups: Connections, Men Like Us, BiComm, Gender Warriors, GSA, and an emerging group for international students, GLoBal Talks.
- Discussions on greater board engagement ensued, with board members encouraged to consider where they see existing gaps in their units related to LGBTQ issues. The question was asked: what can the GLBT Office do to respond?
- A new format was suggested for Doug's monthly overviews, identifying various categories (student support, community outreach, Anti-Harassment Team work, GLBTAA matters, DEMA).
- We scheduled regular engagement moments at each meeting. Suggestions by board members include: reaching out to newly organized Campus Pride group at Ivy Tech, meeting with the new Director of the Kinsey Institute, and developing some low-impact, eye-catching posters about the office.
- New opportunities to reach out to families during Summer Orientation were discussed. Office staff will participate in the Resource Fair (daily), Family Forums (occasionally), and the Parent's Lounge (occasionally).
- A report from *Visit Bloomington* noted that more than 1,000 people have viewed information about the GLBT Office on its website in recent years.
- Positive Link continues to offer weekly HIV testing in our second-floor conference room. On average, 6 people come into the office for testing each week, with testers seeing up to a dozen visitors some weeks.

Insights from Student Staff

Despite juggling multiple other jobs (that are arguably more related to my career path in art librarianship), I have found my position as the GLBT Library Coordinator to be the most rewarding. Most library positions are eager to train you for single tasks (i.e., cataloging, reference, etc.), but Doug and Jamie are constantly encouraging me to tackle a variety of projects that extend beyond my initial expectations. I have had tremendous support in developing the collections by researching underrepresented subjects, familiarizing myself with the gender studies discourse (and its intersections), planning outreach projects (initiating a possible student organization, creating displays and advertisements, and developing a stronger online presence, among many others), administering an evaluation survey, and so much more. I am especially excited to begin developing a zine collection, which will hopefully be used in conjunction with student interactions.

It is fulfilling to know that what I do at the office supports students academically as well as personally. In my youth, I found myself in a position similar to that of some of our patrons, scrambling to find resources in my most desperate times. Working at the office gives me a great sense of pride because I know I am helping to provide a service that many members of our community need. And it goes without saying, but I feel at home at the GLBT office. I have learned, above all my expected duties as a library coordinator, that a well-cultivated space can provide an invaluable sense of comfort and safety.

Andrew Wang, Library Coordinator

As the Counseling Intern at IU GLBT Student Support Services, I have had the pleasure of working with many clients from a broad array of multicultural backgrounds, each with their own challenges. I have striven through the process of questioning, challenging, and motivational homework activities to help them organically come to their own answers. My theoretical orientation is client-centered, which in the truest sense means that I believe the client to be the best expert on him/herself. To this end, I use all of the tools at my disposal as a flashlight to hopefully illuminate the answers organically from within, as it is my true belief that the insight may need to be located but does exist within us all. I feel this has been (and continues to be) an honor and a privilege. Not only are the staff at GLBT office very helpful as well as welcoming, but the clients I see more often than not want to use their unique talents to better the lives of others and enhance the communities in which we live. I feel blessed to have found this internship and privileged beyond words to be working with such a great staff as well as such amazing clients.

Saurabh Bhatia, Counseling Intern

Those Who Served the Office in the 2014-2015 Academic Year

Full-Time Staff

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

Student Interns and Staff

- Krista Mullinnex, Library Coordinator, Summer 2014–Fall 2014
- Andrew Wang, Library Coordinator, Spring 2015–Summer 2015
- Patrick Nagel, Counseling Intern, Summer 2014
- Lucien Ryan, Counseling Intern, Fall 2014
- Saurabh Bhatia, Counseling Intern, Spring 2015–Summer 2015
- Deshea Meely, Social Work Intern, Fall 2014–Spring 2015
- Xander Harty, Office Assistant, Summer 2014–Spring 2015
- Bryant Hayes, Office Assistant, Fall 2014–Summer 2015
- Alex Buchanan, Office Assistant, Summer 2014–Spring 2015
- Ethan Jackson, Consultant on Transgender Matters, Spring 2015
- Nick Clarkson, Consultant on Transgender Matters, Spring 2015

GLBT Advisory Board Members: Staff and Faculty

- Nicholae Cline
- Angela Courtney
- Craig Dethloff
- Kim Davis
- Paul Hafner
- Trish Kerle
- Barry Magee
- Thomas Nelson-Laird
- Aviva Orenstein
- Melanie Payne
- Jennifer Pearl
- George Pinney
- Laura Scheiber
- Ryne Shadday
- Rex Sprouse
- Brad Stepp
- Liana Hong Zhou

GLBT Advisory Board Members: Students

- David Bredenkamp
- Steve Briles
- Jeffrey Cisneros
- Lauren Dula
- Ash Kulak
- Kiersten Thaxton
- Anne Tinder
- Marco Vasquez

Wisdom from the Washroom

Since our building was renovated a few years ago and with the installation of a wheelchair-accessible and gender-inclusive bathroom on the first floor, we posted a bulletin board with blank slips of paper for people to share their washroom wit with a larger audience during their visit. Here are a few gems from the past year:

At the beginning of the semester before anything was posted: "Its funny how, if this were a wall, it would be INKED UP ... but, since it's allowed no one's inspired."

"We're here, we're queer, and we're NEVER GOING AWAY" Added in response: "And we owe explanations and apologies to exactly NO ONE."

"Glad this place (the office) is here. Graduated in '76 and participated in a student-sponsored demonstration against Anita Bryant in Indianapolis!"

"Gender neutral bathrooms are awesome. I'm just not used to the seat being left up. 😊"
Added in response: "Agreed! It's weird to think that I used to have to plan my entire day around which restroom I was comfortable in!"

"I'm peeing! How am I supposed to think of inspirational quotes at a time like this" (message fading as ink ran out)

"I closed my eyes and realized/I was never old or young or smart/I was everyone I'd ever met/Who I never loved enough." Robert DeLong

"Coffee = Life" In response: "There's no such thing as too much coffee."

"Be with someone who makes you happy" (Someone else crossed out the word "with.")

"Act my age? What the hell does 'act my age' mean? The ocean is old as fuck, but it will still drown your ass with vigor."

"This board always makes my day! Thank you for your inspiration."

"Very little is needed to make a happy life. It's all within yourself ... in your way of thinking. M. Aurelius"

"Self love is the best love" Added on: "Or, as Quentin Crisp puts it, 'Intercourse is a poor substitution for masturbation.'"

"It's great to be alive! There was a time when I didn't think I'd make it this long. I'm so glad I did!"

Added to that: "Thanks for making it!"

"Trees. They are us!"

"Sometimes I hate being black because of how people always pull their kids away from me or try to block them from me when I walk past. Do my clothes really make me who I am?" Added in response: "Ouch! Classism? Racism? Both wrong!"

Conclusion

As we move into our third decade of service to Indiana University, it seems worth reflecting on the question posed by our supervisors earlier this spring: *what lessons have you learned over the past year?* In truth, these learned lessons happen all the time, and as staff, we discover that there are new things to think about every semester. That's part of the joy of working in a student-centered university support service center. Several lessons stand out for us this year, however. They are listed them below in no particular order:

- Collaboration is key to the work that we do.
- Listening to students and the concerns they express is essential.
- Change takes time, persistence matters, and knowing who the real change agents are is crucial.
- Allies are everywhere—even in places you wouldn't expect.
- An awareness of the intersectionality of identities (race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) is more important today than ever before.
- Language is limiting. People are more than a word or a category. And there simply aren't enough letters in the alphabet to define the wonderful variety of people who make up our community.
- Living/learning centers make a significant contribution to a student's education.
- Working with dedicated faculty pays great dividends.
- Paying attention to alumni makes good sense (and cents).
- Remembering and celebrating are good for the soul (individually and corporately).
- Governors aren't always the best people to define Hoosier hospitality.

We are proud of our accomplishments and grateful for the support and encouragement we receive throughout the year from students and parents, faculty and staff, administrators, alumni, and friends.

