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Out and About, Fall 2013

Colgate University. Office of LGBTQ Initiatives

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Changes for LGBTQ Initiatives

After three years of dedication to reducing homophobia and heterosexism on our campus, Jamie Bergeron-Beamon, Assistant Dean and Director of LGBTQ Initiatives, has left Colgate University. Jamie has chosen to take a new position at Salem State University to be closer to her partner. It is with heavy hearts that the Colgate Community—especially the LGBTQ community—says goodbye to Jamie. We wish her the best of luck in this exciting new chapter of her life.

That being said, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Thad Mantaro and Drea Finley for all of the support they provided during this period of transition. We would also like to welcome Heather Dockstader ’04 into the LGBTQ Initiatives family. Heather, a former Women’s Studies Program Assistant will serve as the interim LGBTQ Initiatives director for the Spring semester. We are delighted to have her join our team and excited to continue working to make Colgate a more accepting place for the Queer community.

--The LGBTQ Initiatives Intern Team
YouTube Educator Laci Green Visits Colgate
By Colin Ren ’17

Laci Green, a 23-year-old positive sexuality educator and video blogger from California, came to Colgate on September 25th. Her informative and entertaining presentation on “Best Sex Ever” was delivered to a crowd of 170 students in the Center for Women’s Studies. The event was very well received and was a rewarding experience for all who attended.

Laci started with an overview of the anatomy of the genitals, which helped the audience understand the scientific perspective behind “good sex.” In doing so she dispelled many common myths and preconceptions about the human body and sexual intercourse. Throughout her presentation, Laci emphasized the importance of safe sex and regular STD testing. She gave examples of common STDs, their symptoms, methods of transmission, and most importantly, prevention.

At the end of the presentation, the audience had a chance to participate in a few activities that allowed members of the Colgate community to demonstrate what they had learned. When asked about the presentation Anna Heil ’16 said, “I really enjoyed it and I’m impressed with Laci.” The successful response to “Best Sex Ever” clearly demonstrates the interest on campus for positive sexuality. “Colgate students are engaged,” Laci commented, “the vibe is positive and people’s knowledge really promoted the quality of this conversation.”

An Insider’s Perspective on SafeZone Trainings
By Wesley Gross ’15

On September 24, 2013, I walked through the doors of the Center for Women’s Studies not knowing what to expect. I had heard snippets of what Safe Zone Training entailed from several people, but never really had a concrete idea of what being “Safe Zone Trained” actually meant. Still, I felt it was something I should do as a member of the LGBTQ community at Colgate. I can easily say that I am very happy I walked through those doors that night.

The main purpose of Safe Zone Training is to educate the attendees on methods to reduce heterosexism and homophobia in our communities through interactive exercises. The initial exercise was the most helpful in my opinion, as it addressed terminology in the LGBTQ community. Without fully understanding what certain terms truly mean, we may be unintentionally offending someone or incorrectly educating others. Other exercises included situational examples of how we can react when faced with heterosexism or homophobia in our daily lives, and discussing our personal beliefs about the LGBTQ community.

Overall, I believe that Safe Zone Training sessions are a valuable asset to the LGBTQ Initiatives programming here at Colgate University. The training allows students to educate their fellow peers about how to make Colgate a friendlier place for those who do not identify as heterosexual. It helps students create an atmosphere where not everyone is assumed to be heterosexual and where homophobic slurs are not deemed as “just messing around.” However, I think that the Safe Zone training does more than just that. It provided me the rare opportunity to have an honest discussion about LGBTQ issues with people I have never spoken to before. Far too often, real societal issues are left unaddressed while students shuffle from class to activity to homework to socializing, which I believe is truly unfortunate. In the Safe Zone I was able to have meaningful discussions on these important topics with my peers and that’s something I won’t soon forget. Now when I walk around campus and see my fellow attendees I’ll see them not as strangers, but as fellow allies and companions in the fight against hetero-normativity, homophobia and heterosexism.
Alumni Points of Interest

Help us build our Alumni Database!

The best way to stay connected upon graduation is to join the Queer Alumni listserv via Alumni Relations. We send out notices for local LGBTQ Colgate events, invitations and newsletters!

Simply email your full name and class year to LGTBQ@colgate.edu with the subject "Alumni database."

Interested in giving back to LGBTQ life at Colgate?

Alumni donations sponsor the student internship program, scholarship funds for local & national conferences. Giving back helps us keep moving forward! Make your gift by contacting Sara Groh of Colgate Annual Fund at sgroh@colgate.edu.

Interested in being featured in our Alumni Spotlight?

Share what you’ve been up to since graduation or reminisce about your time at Colgate by contacting us at LGTBQ@colgate.edu.

Colgate Wears Blue for Q

On October 1st, to celebrate the start of Coming Out Month, many members of the Colgate Community wore blue to visibly show their support of the Queer community. Dubbed “Blue for Q,” the event was originally started last fall in response to the hateful language—written in blue—found on the Coming Out doors. The idea behind the event was that by symbolically reclaiming the color blue, the Colgate community could openly show that a few hateful responses do not represent our entire community.

In an overwhelming response this year, 30 groups from across campus sent in pictures of themselves wearing blue in support of the LGBTQ Community. To thank everyone for their support, we’ve included the names of the groups below as well as their pictures on the next pages. Again, thank you!

- Advocates
- Brothers
- Colgate Ballet Company
- Colgate Bookstore
- Colgate Dance Initiative
- Colgate Dance Team
- Colgate Newman Community
- Colgate Vietnam Society
- COVE
- Delta Delta Delta
- DoRAK
- FSEM 112
- FSEM 126
- FUSE Dance Company
- Global Health Initiative
- GROOVE
- Kappa Kappa Gamma
- Konosioni Senior Honors Society
- Kuumba Dance Troupe
- Link Staff
- Peer Health Educators
- Pep Band
- Secular Association of Skeptical Students
- Sigma Chi
- Student Government Association
- The Colgate Dischords
- Theta Chi
- University Choir
- Women’s Volleyball
- WRCU
Blue for Q
Meet Our Newest Intern!

Colin Ren ’17 is a first-year student who applied to be an intern during Orientation. Originally from northeastern China, where LGBTQ and gender issues are not yet widely discussed, he hasn’t had the opportunity to participate in LGBTQ related events until now. LGBTQ Initiatives was one of the reasons he chose Colgate and he is very excited about his new internship and the knowledge he is going to learn by working here. Colin is also a prospective staff member of Colgate Outdoor Education. Starting off his internship by writing articles for Out & About and facilitating Safe Zone training, Colin wants to help create a supporting atmosphere for LGBTQ community, and help everyone within the community live a better life during their time in Colgate.

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Transgender Day of Remembrance

By Mitchell Tucci ’14

November 20th is Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDoR)—a time to remember those in the Trans* community that have been killed due to senseless and hateful violence. Each year at Colgate, LGBTQ Initiatives hosts a service and dinner to raise awareness and to remember the people that have been killed. In my four years as an LGBTQ Initiatives intern I’ve seen countless Queer-related events and performances, but TDoR has always been one of the most memorable and meaningful. This year was no exception.

This year our office held TDoR in collaboration with the Interfaith Community and seeing new faces as well as a huge increase in attendance at the event was truly refreshing. With performances and readings by the Colgate Dischords and our own interns Chi-Chi and Melissa, the service was moving and well received.

In the spring, we will continue to emphasize the importance of Trans* inclusiveness on our campus and in our society with QueerFest. For the first time, our QueerFest events are focused on the Trans* community. It’s a huge step on the way to inclusiveness for the all-too-often marginalized minorities within the Queer community, and I look forward to seeing what the speakers and performances have in store!
Could you tell us what the course is about?
Queer Outlaws in Latin American & Iberian Narrative, this semester’s topic of SPAN 479, will explore the intersection of sexuality and legality in Latin American and Spanish literature and film. We will study how sexuality has been policed--by legal policy, social pressure, and the medical industry--before moving on to study writings and films by and about queer subjects whose protagonists choose not to seek societal acceptance. Through bank robbery, border crossing, terrorism, etc., these figures destabilize not only the sexual order but also class, race, and national identity.

What was the inspiration behind creating this new course?
In recent years in Latin America and Spain same-sex marriage has been seen as the central political issue within gay and queer politics. Rather than focus on an LGBTQ movement that has been criticized by some activists who see marriage equality as an attempt to assimilate queer difference into a white, middle-class, patriarchal framework, I wanted to explore the more radical stances taken by a number of artists and intellectuals in these regions who reject any labels, borders or policies that would try to regulate their sexual practices and bodies.

How is the class structured?
The class discussions and the readings are organized by themes, such as "Masculinity and Violence", "Tensions between Feminism and Lesbianism", and "Gender, Race, and Public Space." The regular class meetings will be accompanied by a series of film screenings.

The class is now going to be taught in Spanish even though originally it was planned to be taught in English. How will this affect the student body actually taking the class?
The department chair of Romance Languages, Prof. Lourdes Rojas, and I thought it would be a good idea to offer the course in English. We thought the course would be a way to contribute to the new LGBTQ minor and offer a perspective on gender and sexuality from Latin America and Spain. People often associate the Spanish language and Hispanic culture with machismo and the course would also have helped expose non-Spanish speaking students to some of the groundbreaking work being done in Spanish and other languages spoken in these regions. During registration we decided to offer the class in Spanish to help meet the need for seminars in Romance Languages. I’m happy to see that demand for a queer studies course in Spanish--judging by enrollment numbers--was significantly greater than it was in English.

What do you hope your students will gain after taking this course?
The terms in which sexuality is expressed in Latin America and Spain are quite different than those used in the English-speaking world. In addition to being able to discuss these issues in Spanish, I hope that students will come away with new and less restrictive ways to think about sexual identity. I also hope it becomes clearer that sexual freedom is not just about the right to choose a partner but one that is bound closely to issues of nation, class, race, gender, and language.

Danny Barreto is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Spanish. He received his PhD in Hispanic Languages & Literature and a graduate certificate in Women’s Studies from Stony Brook University in 2010. His research centers on Galician and Spanish narrative and draws heavily from his background in Latin American and Caribbean studies and gender theory.
LGBTQ Initiatives is now located in Shaw Wellness Institute, Cutten Complex

Last semester, the LGBTQ Initiatives Office moved to the Shaw Wellness Institute. We now share a number of resources with the Institute. With the newly renovated space featuring a reception counter, a spacious working space, a meeting room, gender-inclusive bathrooms, a lounge and a resource library, we can provide a multi-functioning, comfortable space for our LGBTQ community on campus.

Spring 2014 QueerFest Events

3/5—Every Tool is a Weapon: Queer Pedagogies & Public Arts Education, 4:30 PM, Golden Auditorium

3/31—QueerFest Keynote Speaker: Kye Allums, 7:00 PM, Hall of Presidents

4/1—WMST Brown Bag: “Bucking the System”, 11:30 AM, Center for WMST

4/3—Ignacio Rivera Workshop on Identity Intersectionality

4/4—Amateur: The Work of Nao Bustamante, 5:00 PM, Golden Auditorium

4/5—Annual Drag Ball!

4/9—Transgender Hirstory in the Making, 7:00 PM, Center for WMST

4/10—Sister Spit Traveling Roadshow, 8:00 PM, Brehmer Theater

4/15—Barbara Hammer: A Retrospective Screening, 7:00 PM, Golden Auditorium

4/16—HAMMER! A Queer Life in Art and Film, 7:00 PM, Center for WMST

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LGBTQ Initiatives is dedicated to supporting our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning students by enhancing diversity and visibility throughout the greater campus community.