

Spring 2017

Out and About Spring 2017

Colgate University. Office of LGBTQ Initiatives

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OUT & ABOUT

Spring 2017

A Joint Newsletter of LGBTQ Studies & LGBTQ Initiatives

From LGBTQ Initiatives Director,
khristian kemp-delisser

What We Learn From Awards:



Who gets and gives accolades is a deeply political topic. Still, every year LGBTQ Initiatives awards student leaders, departments, and staff with recognition for their contributions to the climate for inclusion and diversity on campus. Everything from who is nominated and who does the nominating to the number and categories for which awards are created, offers insight into our community's values.

A few years ago, after being nominated by a student for "Outstanding Faculty/Staff," the faculty member called me to their office, pleading for more information. They were adamant that they in fact do not do anything "outstanding" for the LGBTQ community. It wasn't that they were openly homophobic or not inclusive, they simply felt surely there's someone out there who does *more* than them! The faculty person and I ultimately decided that the nomination was a demonstration of just how brightly small gestures can shine through banal heteronormativity and heterosexism. Another example of that was a nomination this year from a first year student who asked to make an announcement in class about an LGBTQ-awareness and their professor simply replied "of course." When people have come to expect to be ignored, marginalized or silenced, then simple acceptance, however nonchalant, leaves a profound mark.

Consider also the three year streak from 2014-2016 when the 1819 Award, Colgate's overall outstanding student leadership was granted to a senior who had been a member of the campus LGBTQ community and a strong advocate for LGBTQ inclusion. I do not think it is coincidence that the involvements, accomplishments and goals of people committed to human rights and social justice on our campus unabashedly include LGBTQ people and causes in their agenda. And when we recognize those people's efforts and celebrate them, we celebrate us all and the consistent, small ways we can all push our community forward toward greater and greater inclusion.

From LGBTQ Studies Director H el ene Julien

The end of the academic year is an opportunity to rejoice in the accomplishments of the past few months. As an academic program, LGBTQ Studies has seen wonderful growth. The curriculum has expanded, thanks to Prof. Barreto's invaluable contribution as the program's first full-time faculty, but thanks also to the interest of new colleagues as well as the continued contribution of long-standing members of the program. More students than ever are signing up for our courses, and a record number of juniors (three!) have already declared a minor in LGBTQ Studies.

In light of the challenging political climate we are facing as a country, this intellectual engagement is more vital than ever. However, it would be meaningless without the profound sense of community, the mutual support, and the indefatigable work of the LGBTQIA community and its allies, both inside and outside the classroom. And for that I am profoundly grateful.



Student Voices: LGBTQ Identities in Campus Life



Holly Geranen '18
“My experience in the LGBTQ community as an athlete has been very diverse.”

My freshman year I feel like I didn't even think about it because there were a lot of other people on my team who identified as LGBTQ and the team was extremely accepting. I don't know if things really have changed but I now (as a junior) think of that part of my identity a whole lot more and actually seem to feel less comfortable with it to an extent. I think it comes down to how accepting your individual team is because there isn't a lot of representation across the athletic department as a whole and the people you spend the most time with have the biggest impact on how you feel as an LGBTQ athlete.



Hayley Lazzari '18
“At the beginning of sophomore year, most people were focused on sorority recruitment. All of my friends were concerned with getting bids.”

I was more worried about how to come out of the metaphorical closet that I was trapped inside. I struggled with the fear that being gay would affect my chances of getting a bid or prohibit me from being accepted. After a major internal struggle, I decided to rush alongside my friends. When I finally met my Tri Delta family, I was saved from the sense of loss and shame that accompanied the realization that I'm gay. For me, being a sorority has consisted of strangers turned sisters that accepted me for everything that I am and everything that I am not. And honestly, I could not be more proud of my organization and the people that I'm lucky enough to call family.”

Fall '17 Course Offerings

Sex and the Global City
 Professor Rajasingham
 TR 1:20 – 2:35

Contemporary Fiction
 Professor Page
 TR 9:55 – 11:10

Exploration in LGBTQ Studies
 Professor Sprock
 MW 2:45 – 4:00

Machismo and the Latin Lover
 Professor Barreto
 MW 1:20 – 2:35

Immigrant & Sexual Cultures
 Professor Loe
 MW 1:20 – 2:35

Intro to Women's Studies
 Professor Wider
 TR 9:55 – 11:10
 OR
 TR 1:20 – 2:35

Student Highlight: SafeZones - Taylor Huffer '18

As the Diversity Education and Safe Zone Intern for the LGBTQ Initiatives Office, I updated the SafeZone training because a lot of anger and love was being directed at the training without much change. I was bored with the curriculum and with facilitating the same session over and over again. After some time, people just weren't requesting trainings anymore. I desperately wanted SafeZones to be great and to solve all the issues that queer folks face on this campus but alas trainings don't fix everything. If the issue is visibility, then SafeZone isn't the solution, the solution is to be so loud we can't be ignored. With this being said, the easy answer could have just been to rid Colgate of the SafeZone program all together but I felt that for the best outcome at Colgate we ought to keep the program and change it to be a low priority of the office. As an office we can better influence the campus climate through multiple avenues, we shouldn't put all of our eggs effort into the SafeZone program, which is why I wanted to put all my time into revamping the curriculum this summer so that by the time the school year comes around it's in tiptop shape and can run like a well oil machine without much effort. I know that this training isn't going to change the world but it will help some people to become ignited about LGBTQ issues and that in itself is changing the world.

As for the concerns of the interns, this sort of SafeZone isn't going to be about overexposing the stories and identities of LGBTQ folks for the sake of harvesting a few cis-het “allies”. The terminology is going to change constantly and so are the people, which is why I feel that there is no point in having vocabulary be the focal need point of SafeZone. This new SafeZone program is going to focus primarily on heterosexism and cissexism. By doing so, I believe that this program can show “allies” how to be better people regardless with or without a queer person in their presence or having to fully understand every nuance of hardship that an LGBTQ+ person may go through. It's more so about empathy, dignity, and humanity. Yeah, sure we can resolve some confusions but the terms are going to change every two years. It's about being open-minded and accepting of the people who wear those terms on their sleeves, about the people who don't want the terms, the folks who are just trying to be themselves (radically).

Although the act of naming can be empowering, I don't believe that it is worth our time as facilitators to go over an A to Z guide of queer terminology. I think a better use of our time would be to learn how to humanize ourselves and teach the same to everyone around us. This is about igniting curiosity about differences, to get out of the comfort zone that has allowed such oppressions to continue unchecked, and do something about it.

From talking with previous directors of LGBTQ Initiatives, alumni, and current students I have learned that SafeZone was originally brought to Colgate for the purpose of creating a more tolerant campus for LGBTQ folk. You might be thinking “tolerant, ew no.” Yeah, same here but back then that was the goal. The goal now is more along the lines of acceptance, radical acceptance which means not having to prove that queer and gender nonconforming folks are human and deserving of respect but taking a magnifying glass to how the dominant identity has dehumanized these folks AND doing something about it! We urge you, whether you have been trained before or not, contact us to sign up for a SafeZone workshop!

