



ALUMINATE

Volume 5, Issue 1, Fall 2017

Mx. Mariel Eaves, Editor

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Aluminate is a publication of the UNC-CH LGBTQ Center.

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UNC-CH LGBTQ Center
SASB South, Suite 3308
385 Manning Drive, CB #5215
Chapel Hill, NC 27599

lgbtq.unc.edu

Cover Image:

LGBTQ Center staff pose with LGBTQ Leadership Lunch speaker. From left to right: Dr. Terri Phoenix (Director), Mx. Mariel Eaves (Administrative Support Specialist), Anole Halper (2016-2017 Leadership Lunch Graduate Intern), Dr. Alexis Pauline Gumbs (Speaker), and Dr. April Callis (Assistant Director).

WHAT WE DO

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Center works to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for UNC-Chapel Hill community members of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions.

We address this mission by allocating our resources across three broad areas:

1. Educational Programs
2. Direct Support and Advocacy
3. Social and Cultural Events

Programs, services, and advocacy efforts are guided by an intersectional social justice framework. This framework recognizes that people experience the world in very different ways depending on the constellation of identities they hold and the ways that those identities are privileged and/or marginalized by the existing institutional structures and societal norms.



Image Description: Dr. Phoenix at the 2017 Triangle Resource Fair,, in front of rainbow-colored balloon towers topped with silver letters that read "TRF."

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Terri L. Phoenix

Greetings,

The LGBTQ Center staff are excited to embark upon another year of educating for equality, advocating for equity, supporting student growth and success, and working to create community on campus for and with LGBTIQ+ people. There remains much to do to ensure that all LGBTIQ+ people feel safe, seen and valued.

Last year was another busy and successful year for the LGBTQ Center. We provided 70 presentations to over 2,000 people. Our Safe Zone trainings consistently receive high ratings and comments such as “This training was beyond excellent! I learned so much and have a lot to reflect on. Thank you.” and “One of the most comprehensive safe zone trainings I’ve attended. Thank you!” We also provided 43 social and community building programs attended by over 500 people. In this issue you’ll read more about some of the year’s programs and events.

In addition to The LGBTQ Center’s ongoing alum* initiatives, we have been working with the university development office on the creation of an institutionally supported LGBTQ Alumni Network. I had the pleasure of attending the Network’s initial launch in New York City in March 2017 and the launch of the Triangle chapter in November 2017.

** “Alum” is the singular, gender-neutral term for someone who has graduated from an educational institution.*

This spring will mark fifteen years since the Center’s founding. Be on the lookout for information on upcoming events to celebrate the Center’s impact on campus life at UNC-Chapel Hill!

Thank you for your continued support,



Terri

You can join our Alumni Listserv, sign up to be a featured Alum, or register to be a resource to students at lgbtq.unc.edu/alum.



Image Description: Dr. Callis gives a “thumbs up” while posing with Rameses at Last Day of Class (LDOC) 2017.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Dr. April S. Callis

Hi all,

My name is April Callis, and I am the new Assistant Director of the LGBTQ Center. Having grown up in Raleigh, I was thrilled to start working at UNC-CH, and to move back to the Triangle. While I've lived in multiple states over the past fifteen years, North Carolina has always been home to me. Being able to not just come home, but to come home to a position like this, has been a phenomenal experience. I've been working at the Center since February 2017, and I can honestly say that I love the work that I get to do every day.

My path to Carolina was not a straight one (pun intended). Both of my parents, along with a substantial number of my extended family, graduated from NC State. So I grew up as a State fan, and often told people that I was an ABC (anyone but Carolina) fan. However, one summer I took a few history classes at UNC-CH and fell in love with the campus and the local community. After that, trips home to see my family often involved driving to Chapel Hill to research in Davis, or just to window shop on Franklin Street. Carolina was slowly growing on me (much to the dismay of my family)!

At the same time I was falling in love with Carolina, I was also beginning my academic love affair with sexuality studies. Much of this love came from my desire to understand my own sexuality. I came out as bisexual at the age of sixteen, and faced constant pushback from my family, friends, and romantic partners. I was told that bisexuals didn't exist, and that I must be either a lesbian and in denial, or straight and just confused. It was difficult to hold on to my identity when I was constantly questioned, stereotyped, misidentified, and erased. Researching sexuality gave me a chance to learn about the experiences of other bisexual individuals, as well as to learn more broadly about the LGBTIQ+ community.

This research interest led to me completing a PhD dissertation on bisexuality and other non-monosexual sexual identities (such as pansexual, queer, and omnisexual). I then began teaching at Northern Kentucky University. It was there that I realized that I really enjoyed working with college students. While teaching courses on topics such as sexuality, gender, consent, and privilege, I was also able to mentor LGBTIQ+ undergraduate college students and organizations. During this time, I also continued my research, publishing several articles on bisexuality while also expanding my research focus to the intersections of sexuality and religion, as well as homophobia within fandom.

It was through a course I taught at NKU that I started working with GLSEN, a national organization that is dedicated to creating safe and affirming K-12 school for all, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. I volunteered with them as a community educator, going into K-12 schools to facilitate trainings with teachers and administrators on how to best support LGBTIQ+ students. I also began working with GLSEN Cincinnati's Youth Group, creating weekly programming for queer middle and high school students. It was through GLSEN that I realized my desire work in LGBTQ education and programming full-time. Because of my years of experience working in higher education, I decided that a LGBTQ center job at a university would be an ideal fit for me. While I was open to working anywhere in the



In her free time, April trains horses and competes in local and regional events.

Image Description:

April competing at novice level with Vida Pura at the Carolina Horse Park in Raeford, North Carolina, in September 2017. Her partner Steve can be seen in the background photographing the event.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Dr. April S. Callis

country, I had my fingers crossed that something would open up in North Carolina. And indeed it did!

Since starting my job here, I've learned so much about the thriving LGBTIQ+ community on campus, as well as the multitude of resources available for LGBTIQ+ individuals in the local community. I've come from participating in my first safe zone in February to having led over a dozen trainings in the last few months. I was able to spearhead Lavender Graduation as my first big event, and was thrilled with the large turnout and amazing speaker. But my favorite part of the job so far has been getting to work with Carolina students. The students here are driven and passionate, and bring that drive and passion to everything they do, from planning events and educating allies to advocating for equality across intersecting identities. Nothing is more rewarding than interacting with these students, be it helping individuals students work through their own identities, or forging connections with LGBTIQ+ student leaders across campus.

As I move forward as the Assistant Director of the LGBTQ Center, I want to continue my focus on creating community and connections among students. I am also excited about all of the work I will continue to do with Safe Zone and other educational programs. The tagline for our center is "educating for equality," which is a slogan I firmly believe in. By supporting LGBTIQ+ students while also educating individuals of all genders and sexualities on how to be active allies, I believe that I, as well as the Center as a whole, can really impact the Carolina culture.

I look forward to meeting many of you at our upcoming events,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "April S. Callis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "April" being more prominent than the last name "Callis".

Dr. April S. Callis



BRING SAFE ZONE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION

We have been providing Safe Zone training on campus since 1998. In that time we have trained thousands of “Safe Zone Allies,” of which there currently are over 2200 on campus and hundreds of local community members trained over the years.

Safe Zone is a program designed to create a network of visible allies to people who identify as part of the diverse LGBTQ+ community.

Over four hours, attendees gain: a deeper awareness of stereotypes, and assumptions related to LGBTIQ+ people; an increased comfort level in addressing concepts and language regarding LGBTIQ+ communities; and an increased awareness of local organizations that support LGBTIQ+ and allied individuals.

As awareness and notoriety of the program has grown, businesses and organizations outside of the UNC system have increasingly requested access to training.

In the 2016-2017 academic year, we asked 621 attendees to evaluate the training at the end of each session. Here’s what they had to say:



UNC-Chapel Hill safe zone

98% Agreed or strongly agreed that they “now have a greater knowledge about terminology related to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.”

98% Agreed or strongly agreed that the “training increased their cultural competency with people who identify as LGBTIQ.”

99% Agreed or strongly agreed that that “facilitators created an atmosphere that encouraged questions and comments.”

100% Agreed or strongly agreed that the training “will enable them to better treat others with fairness and respect.”

“Thank you so much! Wonderful experience: challenging, informative, great facilitators!”

“Honestly I thought there would be more I already knew but this training proved me wrong.”

“Terri facilitated a great, honest dialogue. Very glad for sincere, honest participation with varied experiences.”

“I appreciated the balance between interactive activities and informational parts of the training.”

Learn more about how to bring Safe Zone training to your organization at <http://go.unc.edu/safezone>.

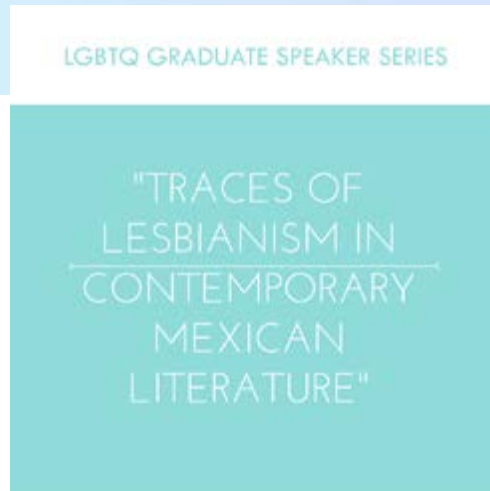
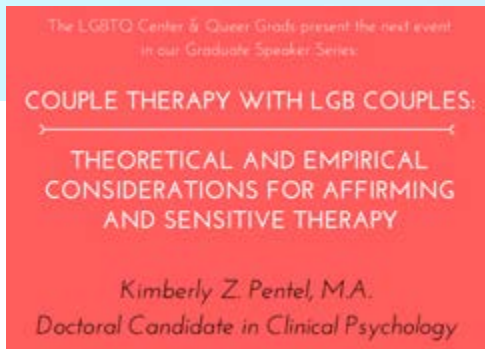


Image Descriptions: First column: Flyer for Graduate Speaker Series "Couple Therapy with LGB Couples;" logo for Graduate Social Hour and a Half; Flyer for Coffee and Coloring for Queer Grads. Second column: Flyer for Graduate Speaker Series "Traces of Lesbianism in Contemporary Mexican Literature;" Flyer for Queer Solstice Summer; website graphic for Graduate Speaker Series "Who's Looking: Surveillance in Gay Dating Apps."

PARTNERING TO EXPAND SERVICES FOR GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

Leah Taraskiewicz

We had a wonderful year for Queer Grads, our program for LGBTQ-identified graduate and professional students and allies from across campus. Our premier programs – the Graduate Speaker Series and Graduate and Professional Social Hour and a Half (GP-SHAH) were great successes with more than 265 participants reached this academic year. This was the first full year that Queer Grads was officially co-sponsored by The Graduate School's Program for Diversity & Student Success and it has proven to be an excellent partnership.

Graduate Speaker Series

For the Graduate Speaker Series, we hosted six events with 107 participants in the academic year. The presenters represented a wide variety of departments, including: Religious Studies, Spanish, English and Comparative Literature, Health Behavior, Communications, and Clinical Psychology. Five presenters were doctoral students and one was a faculty member. Below is a list of the titles and presenters from the 2016-2017 series:

Traces of Lesbianism in Contemporary Mexican Literature

by Alejandra Márquez

Couple Therapy with LGB Couples: Theoretical and Empirical Considerations for Affirming and Sensitive Therapy

by Kimberly Z. Pentel

Who's Looking? Surveillance in Gay Dating Apps

by Zachary Parker

Overcoming Fear and Isolation: Experiences of recently diagnosed HIV-Positive Men Who Have Sex with Men in a Health Navigation Program in Guatemala

by Dirk Davis

A Plea for an Inclusive Society: Allen Ginsberg's Poetry and Mission

by Dr. Yaakov Ariel

Gender Flux in Contemporary Fiction

by Laura Broom

Graduate and Professional Social Hour and a Half (GP-SHAH)

Twice a month, graduate students gathered for community and camaraderie informally around Chapel Hill and Carrboro. GP-SHAH is a long-standing, well-loved informal space for graduate and professional students and their friends and family to gather to share space and build community. Overall, 158 people participated in twelve gatherings throughout the 2016-2017 academic year. Two of these events had co-sponsors – the UNC Graduate and Professional Student Federation and DukeOUT, the LGBTQ graduate student group from our friendly rivals down the road.

Welcome Lunch & Queer Solstice Supper

To kick-off the year for Queer Grads we hosted a welcome lunch as an opportunity for students to get acquainted, see old friends, and share a meal. We also hosted an event to celebrate the end of the first semester that we titled the Queer Solstice Supper. This event included a catered meal with winter-themed music and a photo booth!

WHAT DO GRADUATE STUDENTS ATTEND MOST?

Of 315 Total Attendees:

60% *Showed up for social events like GP-SHAH, Coffee + Coloring, lunches and suppers.*

40% *Took time to learn at educational events, such as Graduate Speaker Series and sought program information at graduate student-specific resource fairs.*

PARTNERING TO EXPAND SERVICES FOR GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

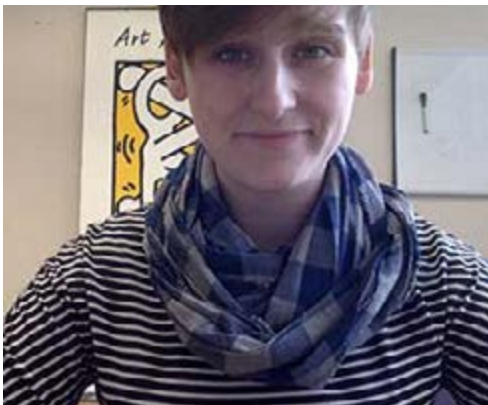
Leah Taraskiewicz

QTPOC (Queer and Trans People of Color) Grads Lunch and Discussion

In the spring semester, we hosted a lunch and informal focus group for LGBTIQ+ graduate and professional students of color. The purpose of this event was to create a space to gather feedback on the experiences, needs, and wants of LGBTIQ+ graduate students of color to inform future programming. We are so grateful to have had students come and share their thoughts and insights with us.

Coffee + Coloring

To create an additional space for self-care and community-building on campus, we hosted four Coffee + Coloring events. We provided coffee and coloring supplies for grads to come and relax between classes and other commitments on campus. We even had coloring pages of the R&B group TLC and the all-woman cast of Ghostbusters!



Leah Taraskiewicz is a second year Masters of Public Health (MPH) candidate in the Department of Health Behavior at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health.

Leah's professional experience also includes doing violence prevention work at domestic and sexual violence agencies in Metro Detroit and Washington DC.

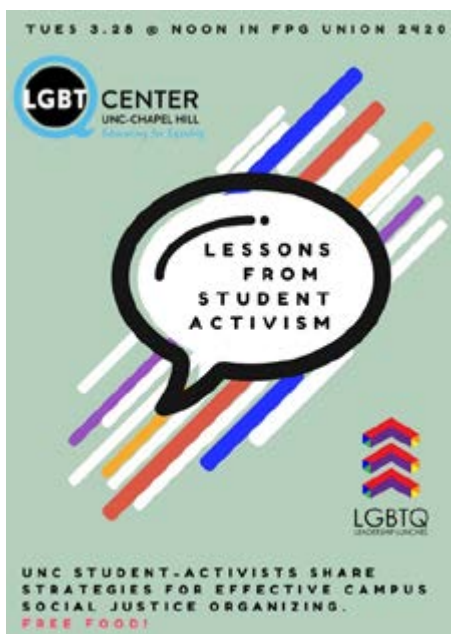


Image Descriptions: Flyers for the four last LGBTQ Leadership Lunch sessions of the year. First column: “The Queer Art of Resistance” and “Lessons from Student Activism.” Second column: “Envisioning a Just Future” and “Fighting for the Intersections.”

LESSONS FROM WITHIN AND WITHOUT: LEADERSHIP LUNCH AND LEARN 2016-2017

Anole Halper and Benjamin Jones

In 2015, the LGBTQ Center developed the LGBTQ Leadership Lunch series (LLL). LLL was designed to be a series of events in which Carolina community members explore how their identities as LGBTIQ+ people and allies influence who they are as leaders. The series works to cultivate valuable leadership skills among students with a unique focus on the intersection of leadership, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

A central goal of LLL is to affirm that our intersectional identities are an important part of our leadership. The program continued in 2016 with two interns assisting and learning in the process. Together, Anole and Ben not only planned the series' monthly Leadership Lunch events, but also worked with the LGBTQ Center's professional staff to develop their own skills as LGBTQ leaders, including experience with programming, administrative work, publicity, and more.

LLL consisted of seven monthly presentations/workshops and drew on expertise and experiences of both campus and community members. The following is a summary of the seven sessions:

Introduction to the Leadership Lunch and Learn Series — This session served as an introduction to the series. Dr. Terri Phoenix presented the UNC-Chapel Hill Student Affairs definition of leadership and stimulated a discussion of the meaning of leadership among participants. Participants were asked to reflect and discuss on the ways their identities influenced their approach to leadership in its various forms.

Learning from the Past: LGBTQ History — Young queer and trans leaders are part of a rich history of LGBTQ activism, but they are not necessarily aware of the generations of queer leaders before them. We sought to recognize our place in LGBTQ history with a multimedia presentation on 20th

century American LGBTQ movements, facilitated by Anole and Dr. Katherine Turk, a UNC history professor who teaches a class on LGBTQ history. The presentation and accompanying handouts focused on leaders who brought an intersectional lens to their work, like Marcia P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, and local civil rights hero, Pauli Murray. The presentation also contextualized this work within movements associated with a spectrum of goals, from assimilation to liberation, so that emerging LGBTQ leaders can see themselves in history and build on those who came before.

Self-care as a Political Act — The idea for this leadership lunch was inspired by the Audre Lorde quote, “Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.” Local social worker, activist, and teacher of the class, *Yoga for Queers and Misfits*, Patty Adams led us in a centering exercise and interactive discussion on the role of self-care in LGBTQ activist work. In a rich, interactive discussion, Patty guided us in exploring questions including “How do we focus on our needs while recognizing our place in community?,” “How do we value all of our contributions to movements even though we do not all have equal capacity?,” and “How do we know when we need to step back?”

The Queer Art of Resistance — How do LGBTQ artists lead important conversations in society? How do they see themselves as part of larger movements for queer and trans rights? These were the questions we sought to answer in a discussion with four LGBTQ artists working in range of mediums, whose work is decidedly political. Monet Marshall, a playwright and performance artist who focuses on social justice themes, led us in a meditation on our visions for social change. Ade Oni, a multimedia artist, discussed how her identities guide her feminist work. Rachel Garringer, a UNC oral history student and documentarian, shared audio and visual excerpts from her oral history project *Country Queers*. This project documents

LESSONS FROM WITHIN AND WITHOUT: LEADERSHIP LUNCH AND LEARN 2016-2017

Anole Halper and Benjamin Jones

the diverse experiences of rural and small town LGBTIQ+ folks in the US. Molly Russell shared the complexities and rewards of participating in bands guided by LGBTIQ+ people and punk principles.

Envisioning a Just Future – It’s easy to get muddled down in the hard work of being an LGBTIQ+ leader, but by keeping connected to our roots and the future we strive for in mind, we can keep ourselves moving forward. In this February Leadership Lunch, self-described “Queer Black Troublemaker and Author” Alexis Pauline Gumbs led us all time traveling to access 14 generations of queer brilliance, helping us to approach this historical moment with accountability and love. The workshop was interactive and reflective, as Alexis asked us to reflect on what we have inherited from those who came before us, and what we hope to give to those who will come after.

Lessons from Student Activism – Carolina’s campus community is rich with student activists, and this March event highlighted two campus leaders who have worked to further LGBTIQ+ and racial justice at UNC. First, undergraduate Ariana Rivens discussed her time as a member of the UNC QTPOC group, where she has worked to create a space for queer and trans people of color at UNC. Then, Charity Watkins, a graduate student in Social Work and racial justice activist shared her experiences working both in- and outside the system over more than ten years on Carolina’s campus. This event was inspiring and informative, and we had a rich Q&A with two knowledgeable and passionate student leaders.

Fighting for the Intersections – An integral part of leadership in LGBTQ activism, advocacy, and organizing is the ability to center racial justice in our work. Our Leadership Lunch event for April addressed this need for intersectionality head-on, as China Medel and Jade Brooks from local queer liberation organization Southerners on New Ground (SONG) led us in a

workshop on incorporating racial justice into LGBTQ activism and LGBTQ issues into racial justice work.

Response to the program was positive with participants agreeing or strongly agreeing that attending LLL sessions improved their knowledge of LGBTQ leadership and that they felt better equipped to make a difference in their community. We are pleased to be able to continue the program this year and look forward to exploring leadership in the LGBTIQ+ community through an intersectional lens.

WHAT DO PARTICIPANTS GAIN FROM AN LGBTQ-CENTERED LEADERSHIP PROGRAM?

Of 98 participants:

88% *Considered themselves “better equipped to act ethically and with integrity,” “better equipped to make a difference in [their] community,” and that the session “improved [their] knowledge of LGBTQ leadership.”*

88% *Felt “better equipped to make a difference in [their] community.”*

Funding for LGBTQ Leadership Lunch ends in Spring 2018. Learn more about how you can help us continue to offer this and other popular programs on page 42

LESSONS FROM WITHIN AND WITHOUT: LEADERSHIP LUNCH AND LEARN 2016-2017

Anole Halper and Benjamin Jones



Anole Halper is a recent graduate of the dual master's degree program in Social Work and Public Health, with a background in community organizing. Anole is passionate about health equity, violence prevention, and developing youth leadership rooted in social justice values.


The experience of developing the LLL program was valuable to their professional development because they hope to work in youth development or student affairs.

Anole is now the Support Group Coordinator at the Orange County Rape Crisis Center.



Ben Jones is a graduate of the Global Studies program, with minors in Biology and Chemistry. He transferred to UNC from the University of Southern California in 2014, and spent a great deal of his time studying LGBTQ issues via research at the UNC Sheps Center for Health Services Research, as well as in the classroom.

Ben joined the Center as an LLL intern because he was passionate about the need for enthusiastic LGBTQ and ally leadership that addresses the intersectional needs of our communities. Long-term, he hopes to attend medical school and to incorporate LGBTQ issues and knowledge of the social determinants of health into his practice.



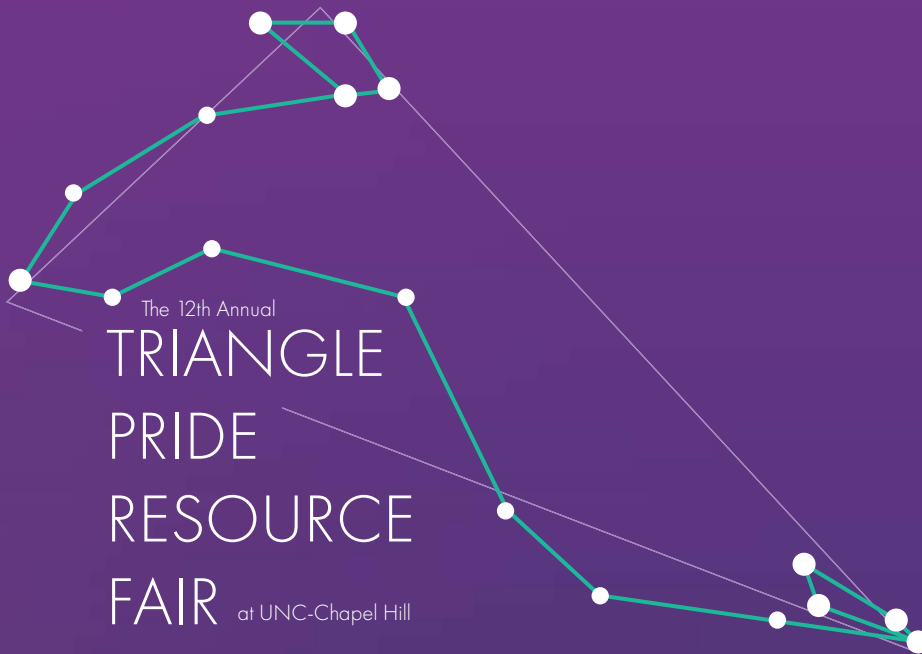
*When are the local Pride events?
Who is in my community?
How do I find affirming healthcare?
Where can I get tested?
What legal protections do I have?
How can I get involved?*

*Get answers to these questions
and more at Triangle Pride Resource Fair!*

Triangle Pride Resource Fair is the main event of Ally Appreciation Week, a celebration of LGBTIQ+ and allied solidarity in the communities surrounding UNC-CHapel Hill. Local businesses become sponsors by offering discounts and freebies to anyone wearing a rainbow pin with the word “ally” or a smiley face printed on it. Business owners also donate door prizes to be given away in a raffle to Fair attendees.

Each year, TPRF brings together vendors from over fifty Triangle-area organizations, businesses, and resources that specifically serve LGBTIQ+ and allied individuals.

To learn more about the benefits of sponsoring Ally Appreciation Week and vending at Triangle Pride Resource Fair, visit lgbtq.unc.edu/resourcefair



2018 ALLY APPRECIATION WEEK

Monday, January 29 - Friday, February 2, 2018

THE 12TH ANNUAL TRIANGLE PRIDE RESOURCE FAIR

Thursday, February 1, 2018 from 4:00pm-6:00pm
in Frank Porter Graham Student Union Great Hall
Free and Open to the Public

Vendors represent organizations and services such as:

- Academic Courses and Programs
- Community Events and Involvement
- HIV and STI testing
- Housing
- Legal Protection and Equal Rights
- Medical and Mental Health Care
- Professional Associations
- Social Clubs
- Social, Legal, and Medical Transition
- Support Groups
- Sports and Activity Groups

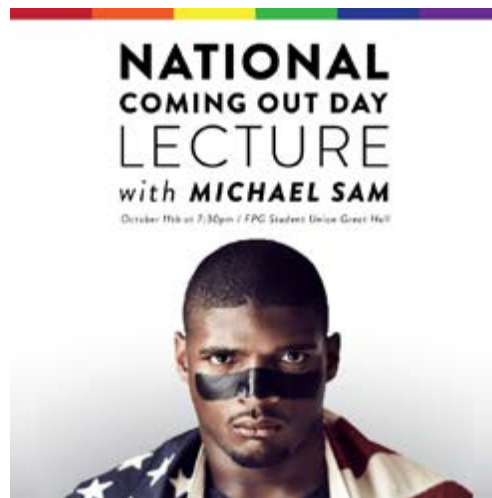


Image Descriptions: (Clockwise from top) Students celebrate National Coming Out Day by taking a photo with the rainbow arch; Flyer from NCOD lecture with Michael Sam; The Center's traditional NCOD cake, which is served in The Pit; Mariel Eaves and Leah Taraskiewicz with a Bisexual Pride Flag that was hung in the Student Union to celebrate Bisexual Visibility Day; Meredith Barnes at the 2016 Transgender Day of Remembrance and Resilience vigil in the Pit.

REMAINING VISIBLE: A YEAR OF AWARENESS

Meredith J. Burns

Throughout the year, the LGBTQ Center is involved in raising awareness and celebrating identities across the gender and sexuality spectrum. During the 2016-2017 school year, students and Center staff organized a variety of fabulous events!

The first day of visibility the Center celebrated was **Bisexuality Visibility Day** (September 23rd). Staff and student volunteers raised awareness by sitting in the Pit, greeting folks and talking about what bisexuality means to LGBTIQ+ communities. Students learned about resources, picked up bisexuality pins, and shared stories about their personal experiences and their identities.



On October 11th, the LGBTQ Center had a bustling table in the Pit for **National Coming Out Day**. Students had their picture taken under a massive rainbow balloon arch and were able to contribute to and read reflections of individuals' coming out experiences. After some fun and colorful photos, folks were invited to indulge in some rainbow cake. Michael Sam, the first openly gay NFL football player, also visited the Great Hall to speak about his experiences coming out and the challenges he has overcome.



Students involved in Volunteer Committee hoped to open up discussion about asexuality during **Asexual Awareness Week** (October 23-30th), because they felt that asexuality is one of the less visible identities within the LGBTIQ+ community. Students wanted to prompt others to learn about and reflect upon the differences between romantic orientation and sexual orientation. This was accomplished through two interactive spectrums for people to map their individual sexual and romantic identities. A jar of True/False statements was also available for students to correct common misconceptions about being Ace.





Intersex Awareness Day (October 26th) was another opportunity for education and information. Since Intersex is not often discussed or talked about openly, we provided educational information about being intersex, the correct terminology, and some narratives about the specific struggles the Intersex community faces. We also had information about the two different flags currently being used by Intersex communities.



For **Trans Day of Remembrance and Resilience** (November 20th), we strove to honor those we have lost to violence, celebrate the lives of all trans-identified individuals, and raise awareness for the crimes perpetrated against trans and gender-nonconforming individuals. We displayed placards for every recorded trans person who was killed due to transphobic violence in North America, so that people could learn about the vibrant lives these individuals led before they were cut short. Forward Together was generous enough to allow the Center to make mini prints from their art and activism campaign. These images were made by eight trans artists in the Strong Families movement, which matched artists with different social justice organizations. The prints depict images of trans leadership, community, resilience, and strength despite the prejudice and violence they face.

The LGBT Center also hosted a Trans Day of Remembrance and Resilience Social, which offered a space for mourning, reflection, and celebration. Students were able to share their thoughts and feelings on being trans, being allies, and reflect on the struggles and victories of authentically being one's self. After sharing in the reflection circle, students were invited to *literally* smash the gender binary in the form of traditional "girls" and "boys" piñatas—a red fire truck and a pink "princess" castle. After the sharing circle, smashing the binary, and indulging in plenty of snacks, each participant received a rose, emphasizing a message of resilience and strength in community in the face of adversity.

REMAINING VISIBLE: A YEAR OF AWARENESS

Meredith J. Barnes

The LGBTQ Center helped collaborate with Student Wellness for their annual HIV Testing event in the Great Hall for **World AIDS Day** (December 1st). Volunteers sat in the Pit and distributed condoms, red ribbons, and student-made quarter sheets that discussed AIDS in a global context.

Finally, the Center celebrated **Trans Day of Visibility** on March 31st. We proudly displayed a table full of placards depicting folks from the Trans 100, a list that recognizes and celebrates the accomplishments of trans-identified individuals who are actively working toward improving trans lives and advancing trans rights. The day was anchored by a diverse, multi-generational panel of transgender-identified individuals who discussed their process of medical, legal, and social transition.

Overall, students and LGBTQ Center Staff were successful in increasing awareness of identities and experiences while also building community for LGBTIQ+ students.



Meredith Burns earned her Masters of Public Health (MPH) in Maternal and Child Health from UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health in 2017.

She is interested in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for marginalized populations, gender equity, and young women's empowerment.



Image Descriptions: Top: Keynote speaker Nebula Li during their speech. Center: Dr. April Callis and Giulia Curcelli. Bottom left: LGBTIQA Advocacy Awards Committee Chair Sherah Faulkner presents Cesar Rodriguez with their award. Bottom right: Close up of the rainbow tassels given to each graduate.

MORE OUT THAN EVER: LAVENDER GRADUATION

Dr. April S. Callis

Wrapping up the 2016-2017 school year was one of the LGBTQ Center's most popular events: Lavender Graduation. At this event, the Center recognizes graduating undergraduate, graduate, and professional students who identify as LGBTIQ+ or as allies. We also recognize students graduating with minors in Sexuality Studies, and give out the LGBTIQ Advocacy Award. From the record number of graduates to the masterful keynote address, Lavender Graduation 2017 was one to remember!

To begin the ceremony, graduates marched into Upendo to the sounds of Casey Toll on bass (2008 alum), Gabriel Pelli on the violin (1998 alum), and Dave Smith on guitar (1986 alum). The graduates were then welcomed by Dr. Phoenix. Chancellor Carol Folt, who Dr. Phoenix described as "an internationally recognized scholar, award winning teacher, and a talented leader" then provided a few words of congratulations and encouragement.

The keynote address was given by Nebula Li, who graduated from UNC-CH in 2007 with a BA in Political Science. They currently work at Domestic Violence Legal Clinic as a Staff Attorney, on behalf of domestic violence survivors. Before starting at DVLC, Nebula worked at Community Activism Law Alliance, where they practiced immigration and family law in partnership with various activist community organizations, and supervised a legal clinic in Little Village, a Chicago neighborhood with over 20,000 undocumented residents. Nebula graduated from the University of Chicago Law School in 2011. During law school, they participated in the Mandel Legal Aid Clinic's Criminal & Juvenile Justice Project where they defended children in criminal court.

In Nebula's address, they urged students to take three steps as they left UNC: to know themselves, to know their history, and to know their power. When discussing knowing themselves, Nebula talked about their own history of identity development, and their realization that while they might not be the "good Chinese girl" their mom wanted, they are a "badass second generation

gender nonconforming Chinese American immigrant activist.” Nebula went on to talk about how knowing yourself requires knowing your history. They stated that “one of the reasons why I struggled to find people like me in curricula and textbooks was due to the erasure of LGBTQ people throughout history... [However], without understanding what our community has been up against, we can’t learn how they fought back.” Finally, when talking about the third step of “knowing your power,” Nebula urged graduating students to build coalitions, and to be good, intersectional allies. They stated that “being a good ally - to any community - means more than just having friends from that community. It means listening more than speaking. It means offering your support but also respecting their space. It means centering their experiences rather than making it about your feelings. I mention these tips because queer and trans folks cannot exist in a vacuum, only working on “our” issues. We have to build community and creatively fight back using a multitude of tactics.” Nebula ended by having the graduates and audience members follow them in a chant by Assata Shakur. “It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love each other and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains.”

After Nebula’s powerful address, Mariel Eaves recognized the alums in the audience, and Dr. Karen Booth recognized the Sexuality Studies Award Recipients. Then Sherah Faulkner, the chair of the LGBTIQ Advocacy Awards Committee, recognized both the undergraduate and graduate award recipients. The Undergraduate LGBTIQ Advocacy Award went to César Rodriguez, a psychology major hoping to one day earn a PhD in Clinical Psychology. César was the 2016-2017 Resident Advisor for Pride Place, the newly formed LGBTIQA+ affirming residential learning program. César also worked with Re-Think, a student group focused on mental wellness and stigmas. The Graduate LGBTIQ Advocacy Award went to Stephen Krueger, a graduating Master’s student in the School of Information and Library Science. During his time at Carolina, Stephen revitalized the Diversity Advocacy

MORE OUT THAN EVER: LAVENDER GRADUATION

Dr. April S. Callis

Certificate at SILS, and also worked to help develop a course on information services in a diverse society. He was described by his nominators as a “bridge builder between communities,” as well as a “model of an engaged life lived fearlessly, deeply and with a strong consideration of others.”

Prior to recognizing the graduating students, a slide show, set to music, showed photos of each graduate, along with their inspirational quote of choice. Dr. Phoenix then called each student forward to receive a rainbow tassel, a lavender rose, and a copy of “Goodnight Carolina” from Dr. April Callis. In total, twenty-five undergraduate and five graduate/professional students were recognized. After the ceremony, graduates and their friends and family enjoyed hors d’oeuvres at the reception. Many students posed for pictures under the rainbow balloon arch, as well as with the lavender 2017 balloons.

Lavender Graduation is always special because it gives us a chance to honor people who further spaces for equality. For some, graduating means going back into the closet or being less true to themselves as they return to less supportive families, hometowns, and workplaces. But over the years, more and more people are inviting their families to Lavender Graduation as well as their main ceremonies. This increase in familial support for LGBTIQ+ students reminds us that the work we do here and in our communities goes beyond policy, changing hearts, minds, and lives.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2016-2017 ALUMS!*

2016-2017 was a record year for Lavender Graduation at UNC-Chapel Hill with the highest number of attendees in the program's history.

In past years, many graduating participants have wanted to avoid the risk of being "outed" to unaffirming friends, family, or potential employers. This year, each of the 38 students who registered for the ceremony was willing to be photographed and to have those photos posted to the LGBTQ Center's social media accounts. This speaks to increasing societal and family acceptance for LGBTIQ+ individuals, as well as a reduction in internalized homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia within the community.

TO OUR GRADUATES:

We are proud of your success and welcome you to life as a UNC-Chapel Hill Alum!* We want to continue celebrating and supporting you as you move on to other academic programs, start businesses, build families, get your first jobs, get promoted, and more. So please keep in touch and keep us informed of career and life events that are meaningful to you!

**"Alum" is the singular, gender-neutral term for someone who has graduated from an educational institution. "Alums" is the plural form.*



Undergraduates

John "Jack" Agres	Austin Michael Mueller
Elizabeth Brown	Sally Moore
Rich Burris	Sophia Oliverio
Megan Cooke	Wyatt Packer
Giulia Curcelli	Sarah Savannah Peters
Cristian Gabriel Hernandez	Chase Warren ReBarker
Rebecca Hoffman	Katherine Reiter-Lavery
Elizabeth Anne Kent	Kendell Silveira
Monique LaBorde	Alicia Taylor
Benjamin Michael Lineberger	Grace Thorpe
Aaron Lovett	Avalon Warner-Gonzales
Andrew Pyles McGee	Cason Elizabeth Whitcomb
Morgan McLaughlin	Alice Wilder
Cherise McManus	Matthew Austin Wotus

Graduates

Stephen Krueger	Allison "Alli" Schad
Dana Neely	Megan Wolff
Lisa Neubert	



Image Descriptions (clockwise from the top): Dr. Litwin in uniform after Air Force basic training in 1996; LGBTQ military pride pins; Dr. Litwin at her 2008 graduation from Eschelman School of Pharmacy; UNC, cycling, and LGBTQ Pride pins that Dr. Litwin wears with her work uniform at the V.A. Medical Center; Shirts from Army 10-mile races that protest Don't Ask Don't Tell.

ALUM SPOTLIGHT ON DR. ANISSA LITWIN

Mx. Mariel Eaves

*In each edition of Aluminate, we feature an article highlighting the adventures and accomplishments of a graduate randomly chosen from past participants in Lavender Graduation or individuals who have completed our Alumni Information Form. Interview questions are denoted by **bold and italicized text**.*

Dr. Litwin, originally from Campbell, Ohio, earned her Doctorate of Pharmacy from Eschelman School of Pharmacy in 2008, and is as honest and direct as they come. She was honest enough to share that she initially wasn't planning on accepting our interview request. As she put it:

I guess I just didn't see why anybody would want to read about anything that I've done, but then [the 2016 shooting at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida] happened and I was in a bit of a depressed feeling over that. I thought, "yeah, let me do this." I think it's a good idea to be visible ... to be out.

How did you end up in North Carolina, and what role did nightclubs play in finding community here?

I was the only one left at home of three siblings – my two younger brothers had moved out of the state – when my cousin recruited me into the Air Force. I had a Bachelor's Degree in English Literature and Psychology, so I thought that I would end up going to graduate school for counseling or social work, or to become a psychologist, but I didn't really know how to do that and that's why I went to the military. I'd visited Raleigh before but finally moved to North Carolina after I was stationed at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base down in Goldsboro NC. Being stationed in Goldsboro was perfect because it's a small town but it's still close to Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill, Fayetteville and Wilmington, so whenever I wanted to go out and socialize it was easy for me to find someplace to go.

We didn't have the internet back then, so hearing about clubs was kind of random. I'm not a very outgoing person, so it was fascinating to be exposed to that scene when I hadn't gone out clubbing or anything before coming out. It was hard and lonely going back to Goldsboro because there wasn't really any place to hang out, plus it was still pretty close to the base so I didn't want to hang out there [and out myself]. Along the way, I met someone in Greenville at one of the clubs and I eventually met somebody there randomly who also lived back in Goldsboro. A lot of women on the base played softball so that's how I met some people without having to go out to the clubs. Even then, the clubs were still a major destination on the weekends – I would meet people who would let me stay at their place through the weekend so that I wouldn't have to go all the way back to Goldsboro each night.

Once I became a student, I remember finding a website specifically for LGBT people looking for roommates. That's how I found my place in Chapel Hill with a two women who were going to UNC too. One of them became an ambassador at the State Department. She sent out a picture one time of her with Barack Obama and said "He's going to be the next President of the United States." And this was before he had even started campaigning and I was just like "Wow that's awesome!"

What was it like to be a lesbian in the military and here at Carolina?

I've had good experiences here between the military and UNC. When I was in the military, I did not come out because it was still during the time of Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT). If it weren't for DADT I would probably still be in the military. I still would have gone to school because they had a program for people to do that and then come back as an officer, but I couldn't stay there under DADT because it was too unpredictable. If anything ever came out, there could be a lot of repercussions. I remember when I was here at UNC, I think there were a few women in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)

ALUM SPOTLIGHT ON DR. ANISSA LITWIN

Mx. Mariel Eaves

on campus – they came out under DADT and they were kicked out of the ROTC and I believe they had to pay back the scholarship money they had been receiving, as far as I know.

I don't know if any of that has changed but [it made me] glad that I was out of the military and able to do what I want and live a more open life. Many people were accepting and tolerant, but if someone wanted to make a case for [discharging you] then they could and you didn't really have a lot of defense against it. The Service Members Legal Defense Network (SMLDN) helped me once when I was in the military because I was having some issues with a girlfriend who was threatening to expose me and not long after that I had an issue with a friend of mine – we had a falling out and he was threatening to go to my supervisor. It was always used as a threat. SMLDN was a great organization to be able to go to during that time and they are still around. In Ohio I wasn't even out to myself. It wasn't until the military when I started dating and coming out and exploring things and it wasn't until after the military when I felt like I really had freedom to do what I wanted to do.

After serving at Seymour Johnson, how did you end up at UNC?

In the military, they have you take a test and, depending on the score on your test, you can choose the job you get. I looked for a job as a military counselor but there weren't any available, so I looked for anything hospital related. When I was chosen to be a pharmacy tech, I learned that pharmacy was a good, stable that paid well and offered a good working environment. Once I get settled into something, I'm not really adventurous I really don't change, so when my supervisors in the military recommended I go to pharmacy school to be a pharmacist, I went with it. I didn't really know about pharmacy before the military – I only knew about retail pharmacy like CVS and Walgreens, but pharmacists also work in hospitals and that kind of thing seemed more interesting to me. UNC was known for its pharmacy program at that time and

recently it was voted one the number one pharmacy school in the nation. When applying for pharmacy schools I thought, “As long as I’m accepted at UNC I’m going to stay because this is where I want to be.”

What was student life like for you? Were you involved in any campus organizing?

At the time they were just trying to establish the Health Sciences LGBT Alliance. I didn’t have a huge role, but I was part of coming up with the original constitution and mission statement. Joseph Lee, an alumni who’s big into research on the effects of smoking, was a leader in getting the Alliance started. I was also involved in a silent protest one Veterans Day over the LGBTQ students who were kicked out of ROTC.

As someone who has experienced and witnessed the way discriminatory policies like Don’t Ask Don’t Tell threatened and ruined peoples’ careers, what do you think of where the LGBTQ rights movement is, right now?

I’m amazed that I’ve been able to see the changes that I’ve seen. The vote to overturn DADT was the one time when I actually watched C-SPAN to witness everybody voting, and I was surprised at some of the votes. I think [Senator Richard Burr] voted to change it and I was just like, “This is amazing!” I had been in the military under DADT and I know what it felt like. People didn’t understand how important this was, how historic this was. I was telling everybody and trying to put it out on Facebook because I couldn’t believe it was happening. It was the same with marriage equality - I was like “Oh my gosh this is crazy! This is history!”

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So I've been amazed, but of course we still have to keep fighting. Transgender issues are especially important to bring attention to now, and I've read things about them feeling like they haven't been included – that they were thought of last – but now it's their turn. Whether it's their turn or not, I'm fully supportive of them because I know that I was grateful for the allies that I had so I'm definitely an ally to transgender folks. I can't even imagine how hard of a life it is for them and any support that they can get from me, they can have. I think we still have to fight for workplace issues: even after what that happened in Orlando, coming back to work and being pretty much the only gay person there in the pharmacy, people were just like "How was your weekend?" It just made me stop for a moment and think, because something really crazy happened and no one really said anything; and yet, when the thing at Disney happened where the little boy was killed in an alligator attack, there were a lot of people talking about that! A few individual friends said something about Pulse, but there wasn't that automatic shock where people would talk about it.



Image description: Dr. Litwin standing in front of her workplace, the Veterans Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina.

I remember wondering if they were afraid to talk about it because they know about me, or because they were afraid that they would offend me, or whether they just didn't know what to say about it. It's hard to process. I think that most people are supportive and sympathetic [to LGBTQ issues] but we just have to be open so that they know who we are. The more of us are out, the more they will see us as individuals – as human beings: neighbors, friends, family, coworkers ... but if they don't know, they don't know.

Do you have any advice for current LGBTQ students?

Is there anything you wish you'd known as a student at Carolina?

When I was here, maybe because of my personality or because I was older, I focused on school and my grades and I feel like maybe I should have relaxed a little and been more involved in things outside of school and not be too uptight about getting the right grade. I feel like if you relax a little bit, you might learn even more. The things you learn in school are important, but when you get a job there's still going to be so much more to learn in on-the-job training. It's not like you need to stay within the lines and that's how it's going to be when you're practicing in your career field. It's good to be well-rounded. [Your time in school] goes by so fast – it feels like it's going to be forever but it goes by fast, so enjoy it. Get out, socialize, and make friends. Get your assignments in – but that's just one part of the experience of being in school. College education is expensive so, if you can, find ways to offset that with grants, scholarships, community college classes. Keep an eye on your finances and don't let that get out of control because it's so easy to get loans and forget about them only to have to deal with them when you're out. Work a little bit, if you can, to offset that.

Network with your professors. Take advantage of those relationships. I wrote a paper on hormone therapy for transgender issues and my professor came to me and asked me if I wanted to try and publish it. I didn't know what to do with that because I was thinking, "I'm not an expert in this – I'm just a student" but now that I think about it, it was just data that I collected and wrote about and with my professor's experience she could have helped me, but I shied away from it. I would say if your professors give you opportunities, try and take advantage of those. Don't be as single-minded as I was.

ALUM SPOTLIGHT ON DR. ANISSA LITWIN

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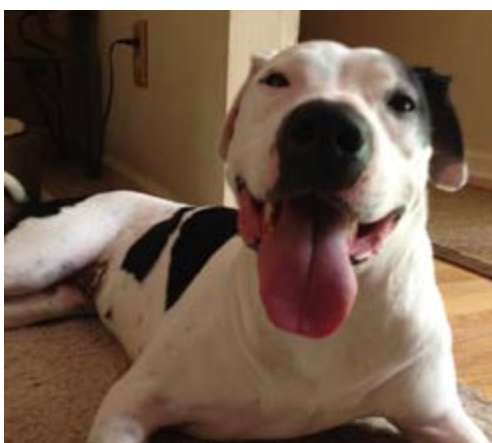


Image descriptions: Dr. Litwin and her wife, Beth, holding their marriage certificate; The couple's two dogs Marley and Annabelle.

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Sign up on our website and you'll be entered into the Aluminate Alum drawing! In addition, we encourage you to consent to being featured on the website. Our web-based Alum page gives current and prospective UNC-CH students real-life examples of LGBTIQ+ predecessors with whom they share lived experiences. Visit <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/alum> to sign up.



SUPPORTING THE LGBTQ CENTER

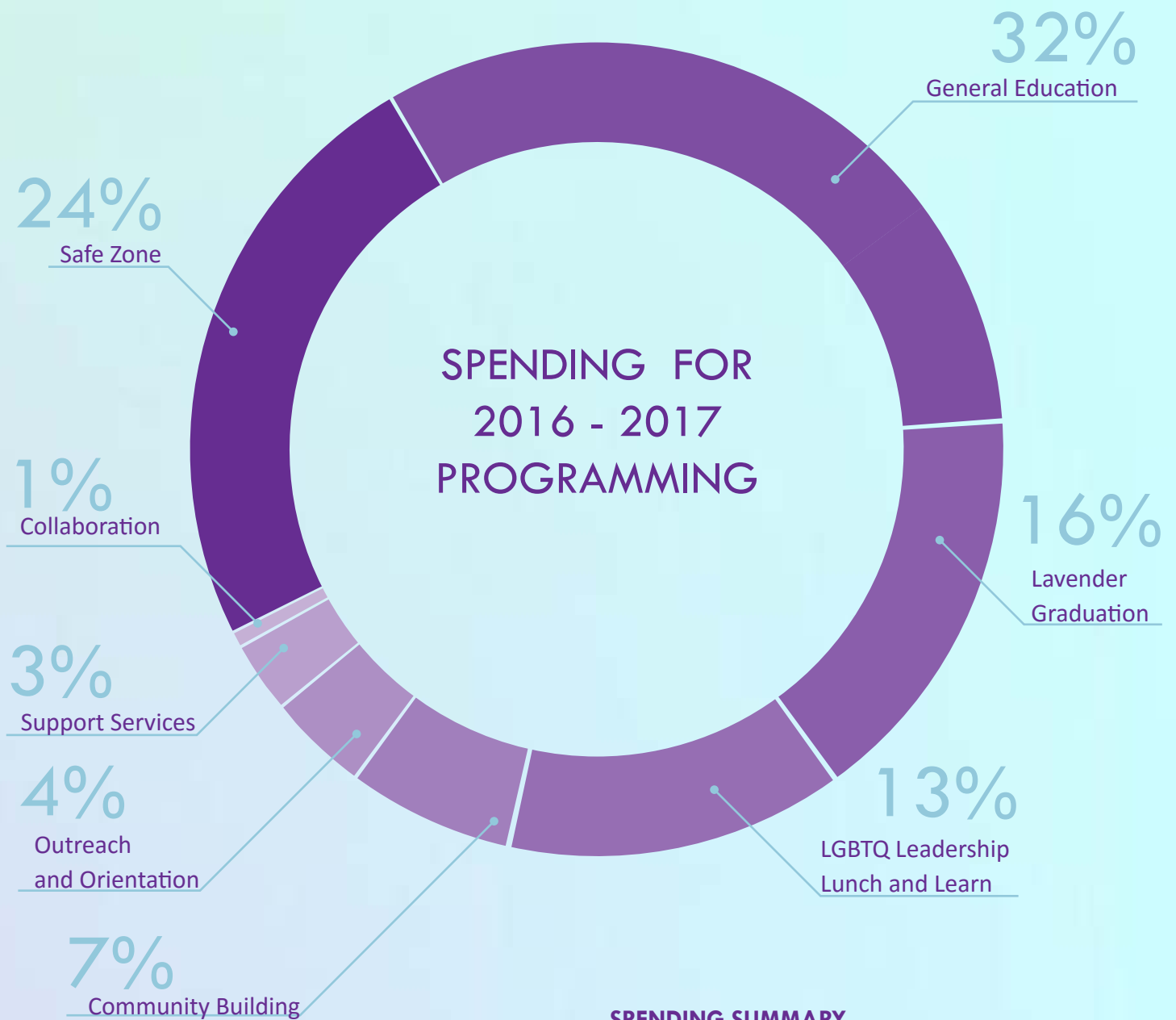
Did you know that the Center is not funded by North Carolina state taxes?

The work of the LGBTQ Center to create a safe and inclusive campus environment would not be possible without our donors. Your generosity and support is greatly appreciated. The chart to the right represents the allocation of program funds by category. Your contributions of time, knowledge, money, and resources allow us to continue our efforts to ensure that all people at UNC-CH are treated equitably.

Please consider supporting the ongoing work of the LGBTQ Center through a gift of any size. Donation envelopes are available in the Center and by mail within the continental United States.

You may also make a gift online at www.giving.unc.edu/gift/lgbtq. When using the online form, be sure to make the following selections:

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SPENDING SUMMARY

General Education	\$7,240.23
Safe Zone	\$5,411.05
Lavender Graduation	\$3,583.11
Leadership Lunch	\$2,964.62
Community Building	\$1,492.19
Outreach & Orientation	\$902.97
Support Services	\$635.89
Collaboration	\$152.76
Total	\$22,382.82

UNC-CH LGBTQ Center
SASB South, Suite 3308
385 Manning Drive, CB #5215
Chapel Hill, NC 27599

lgbtq.unc.edu