



CENTER
UNC-CHAPEL HILL
Educating for Equality



UNC
STUDENT AFFAIRS

Aluminate

LGBTQ Center Publication

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Adrienne Gibilisco, Editor

UPCOMING EVENTS

"GOD LOVES UGANDA"
SCREENING
TBD

ALLY WEEK
January 26th-30th

TRIANGLE RESOURCE FAIR
January 30th, 4-6 pm
GREAT HALL

LAVENDER GRADUATION
May 3rd, 4-6 pm
SASB NORTH, UPENDO

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10th Anniversary Reunion

By Adrienne Gibilisco



PHOTO: PHOEBE CASTELBLANCA

Honorees hold plaques acknowledging their contributions to the creation of the LGBTQ Center after the Recognition Banquet at the Carolina Inn. (L-R: Dan Leonard, Terri Phoenix, Zachary Howell, Dean Blackburn, Marcie Fisher-Borne)

It's hard to believe that an entire decade of visibility, advocacy and education has elapsed since the LGBTQ Center was established at Carolina, but when we realized that this year would be our 10th Anniversary, we decided that a celebration was in order. Planning began more than a year prior, with an eye toward creating a vibrant, entertaining and informative series of events geared around the accomplishments of the LGBTQ Center.

HISTORY PANEL

Kick-off began on Friday, May 2nd, with a History Panel that brought together pivotal agents in the creation and continued operation of the Center. Held at Carroll Hall's Freedom Forum, a wood-paneled room with huge windows that bathed the speakers in bright sunshine, the event was the perfect

way to ease into our weekend plans. The five panelists – CGA co-founder **Dan Leonard**, Director of Student Wellness **Dean Blackburn**, first hire at UNC-CH with formal LGBT responsibility and Safe Zone initiator **Marcie Fisher-Borne**, initial LGBTQ Office Director **Stephanie Chang**, and LGBTQ Center Director **Terri Phoenix** – were guided by moderator **Danny DePuy's** insightful prompts to discuss roadblocks they navigated, alliances forged and accomplishments lauded.

The panelists shared their memories about the events that led to the founding of the Center and its growth over the years, as well as the challenges faced in terms of resources relative to demand. Leonard recalled a time of relative peace for the gay population on campus back in the '70s, while Phoenix pointed out that it may have seemed peaceful due to the lack of

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Letter from the Director



PHOTO BY DAN SEARS

The news that has had everyone's attention of late is that same-sex marriage is now legally recognized in North Carolina. On October 10th, Judge Max Cogburn, Jr. ruled that the state statutes preventing recognition of same sex marriage were unconstitutional. Late Monday evening on October 13th, Chancellor Folt and Vice Chancellor Washington announced that, as a result of that ruling, UNC-Chapel Hill would begin offering equal benefits to employees with same sex spouses. Full details about this change are available at: <http://hr.unc.edu/benefits/benefit-plans/benefits-eligibility-for-same-sex-spouses/>

This is a tremendous development for individuals directly affected as well as for the university and its students as a whole. The provision of equal benefits makes UNC-Chapel Hill much more competitive in recruiting and retaining faculty and staff. That, in turn, benefits the students' experience and the university's overall rankings among its peers.

When I was hired as the director of the Center, benefits equity was one of five top priorities I defined. As of this writing, four out of five of those priorities have become a reality (gender non-specific housing has not yet been implemented). This fact and the recent celebration of the 10th anniversary of the LGBTQ Center are prompting the creation of the next strategic plan. We know that provision of educational programming (e.g., Safe Zone), provision of direct services (e.g., peer support and discussion groups, social events), and continued advocacy to improve campus climate will be among the priorities set. The increased visibility of the LGBTQ Center over the past five years has positioned me to be at the table for some of

UNC-Chapel Hill's biggest conversations. As an example, I served on the task force that revamped the sexual assault, harassment, and discrimination policy. Issues of harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression as well as specific concerns of responding to sexual assault within the LGBTQ communities were kept in the foreground throughout the entire crafting of that policy.

The university is making progress and the LGBTQ Center has been a significant factor in that progress and in the lives of many graduate, professional, and undergraduate students. It is a pleasure and a privilege to be engaged in this important work. Thank you to those of you who joined us for the 10th Anniversary celebration weekend. As we plan for the next 10 years, I am already looking forward to the 20th Anniversary celebration. Join us for the journey.

Terri Phoenix

Meet Our New Assistant Director

By Adrianne Gibilisco

// I've always wanted to be a bridge-builder. //



PHOTO BY DAN SEARS

// Where do we attend to our purpose in life? What impacts I'm having on my neighbor? //

When the LGBTQ Center began its search for our new Assistant Director, we spread our net across the country, eliciting applications from 69 individuals. Many were considered, but after rigorous interviews with candidates and presentations on the topic of Universal Design, Angel Celeste Collie was chosen. Angel is a leader with extensive international experience dealing with LGBTQ issues, student programming and advising.

For Collie, it was a full-circle experience, bringing him home to the place where much of his journey as an advocate for LGBTQ matters began. A UNC-Chapel Hill and, later, Yale School of Divinity graduate, Collie brings with him a unique spiritual perspective that aligns with our mission and vision. "I always wanted to be a bridge-builder and err on the side of, 'Is there a place to find reconciliation or build a bridge or to find commonality,'" he says, of his method of balancing tensions and educating folks. But this purpose comes with a personal challenge. "I've had to learn how to check my religious identity at the Queer door and check my Queer identity at the religious door."

As a result, the programming and activities Collie designs for students are often imbued with a clear sense of purpose. "All people have physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health," he points out, "but where do we attend to our purpose in life? [Where do we ask], 'What is the meaning I make? What do I do with this education that I've received? What does it mean to be a good person in the world and be a mindful citizen? What are the impacts I'm having on Earth? What are the impacts I'm having on my neighbor?' Those are the universal questions that move towards the sense of spiritual well-being and emotional well-being and physical well-being."

“ I was [at the Center] ALL the time! It was nothing for me to be still working here at 8:00 at night or just doing homework here, hanging out...”

Accordingly, he incorporates messages of positivity and hope in much of the activities on campus. From Safe Zone training to organizing for NC Pride, Collie leads with a gentle energy. A recent PostSecret project allowed students to create artistic, personalized messages about their fears and hopes, and then post them on a board for anonymous viewing. Another endeavor had volunteers completing information about their dreams and concerns. This particular activity resulted in a “laundry line” of their thoughts, which hangs over Collie’s desk in his new office – a place where students, faculty, staff and community members are welcome to discuss their concerns at any time. There, they are greeted by his warm smile and an eagerness to help provide resources...as well as a treat from a giant bowl of mixed chocolates.

It’s ironic that the very same office that he now occupies is just a few feet away from the Center space where he spent countless hours as an undergraduate. A transfer from Nash Community College (where he’d founded the Nash Community Lambda Alliance of Students and Supporters, took a group to Pride, earned an award recognizing his dedicated service and perseverance, and was recommended by the school for “Who’s Who Among American Junior College Students,” in which he is included), Collie was already well on his path toward organizing and advocating when he arrived at UNC.

A Religious Studies major with a double minor in Women’s Studies and Sexuality Studies, he first got to know the Center’s Director, Terri Phoenix, when he was doing an internship with UNITAS and participated in its Safe Zone training. “That’s when I formally got involved as a work study student here at the Center,” he recalls. “I prepared quarter sheets, processed Safe Zones, converted Safe Zone pledges to scans...once I started working here, I basically lived at the Center. I was here ALL the time! It was nothing for me to be still working here at 8:00 at night or just doing homework here, hanging out...especially when I had a weird roommate situation with all the Trans stuff, so I would just kinda stay here a lot.”



Collie put in long hours as an intern at the LGBTQ Center during his undergraduate years.

This deep personal connection to the issues that affect students, particularly those for whom traditional rooming and bathroom arrangements are inappropriate (and, often, dangerous), led to Collie’s involvement with a comprehensive study of Gender Non-Specific Restrooms on campus with Accessibility Services. “There was a group of us work study students and we’d just split up and go to every single bathroom on campus. We had a whole checklist, because while we were doing the study on Gender Non-Specific restrooms, we also wanted to make sure they were ADA compliant. So we checked details like, ‘Is there actually a rail? How many inches wide is the entryway? How many inches wide on the stall? Does it lock on the inside? Does the door open outward or inward? Is there a sink that’s accessible for someone who uses a wheelchair?’ It was very detailed.”

This sort of cross-collaboration with other departments at UNC to ensure that ALL students have access to an uninterrupted educational experience was great exposure for Collie. However, probably the source of his greatest learning during his undergraduate involvement with the Center was his current supervisor, Dr. Phoenix.

“ One of the most rewarding parts of my job is the ability to interact and watch as students grow, learn and achieve. ”

Collie (left), celebrating National Coming Out Day with student volunteer, Daniel Bridges.



PHOTO BY GINNY LEWIS

“I learned so much from the way that T builds relationships and strategizes around creating conversations around diversity and equality on campus. T really adapts it to the interests of the group that T is addressing, but then does that all over campus so that in some way, it creates this kind of critical mass of people talking about having similar conversations but through their own lens and the constituents that they serve,” says Collie, adding, “It’s continued to inform my activism, continued to inform my work through school, through grad school, where I also continued doing this work.”

There is a lot for Collie to be proud of, but he shares his most important achievements as “the relationships I build, and the people I’ve met.” Most recently, he spent the summer



PHOTO BY GINNY LEWIS

Collie and intern Matt Bailey celebrating at NC Pride 2014

working in Uganda with the LGBTQ Kuchu community there. “I worked with both an LBT Women’s organization as well as with a non-profit organization that looked at emotional, physical, spiritual health and economic empowerment. I learned so much there, especially about remembering to be humble and step back to empower the Ugandans because the Ugandan activists are the experts of their experience and they are the leaders and SHOULD be the leaders of their movement. Seeing an impact from that work, working to create something concrete that came out of that, which was a report on the way that the Anti-Homosexuality Bill adversely affected people’s access to sexual and reproductive health, was a cool experience.”

“In terms of concrete things,” he continues, “I’m proud to be here. I’m proud to be able to come back to UNC, the school that gave me so much and set me up to be successful. It has given me opportunities that I would have never gotten otherwise.”

So what does Collie have up his (tattooed) sleeve



Angel, with (L-R) Graduate Assistant Kristina Wharton (middle) and Social Work Assistant Ginny Lewis, after participating in the ALS bucket dump awareness campaign.

for the folks at UNC? “One of the programs I’m really excited about is something we did at Yale. It was a collaboration between the Chaplain’s office and the office of LGBTQ Resources that seems to be getting a lot of energy and momentum here. It’s called “W{holy} Queer,” he says, while displaying a coffee mug with its logo.

“It’s from an interfaith, multi-faith, no faith background perspective of folks who are seeking spiritual wholeness, whether that’s going outside and being in nature, whether that’s yoga, whether that’s a form of faith tradition, and reconciling and finding places to integrate a Queer – however you identify that – experience. So it’s really integrating sexuality broadly so all sexual orientations, all gender identities, all gender expressions with one spiritual self and finding wholeness in that way would be the purpose or goal within the group. So it becomes a conversation around, ‘What does it mean being in a diverse campus, dealing with the winter holidays and the issues that come up around that?’ Or, ‘What does it mean, as a Queer person and a person of faith, trying to find a place to fit and worship or find wholeness?’ It will be really fruitful because the atmosphere here is one in which there is this kind of pervasive tension in reconciling sexuality and spirituality. So I’m really excited to see who comes to the table and what comes from it.”

As he plans this and other outreach endeavors, Collie’s focus on his goals with the Center has always been very clear: “Learning how to empower and support people and



things that they’re excited about are what I hope are part of this position. I’m really looking forward to all the opportunities.”

10th Anniversary Reunion (Cont'd.)



History Panelists (L-R) Dean Blackburn, Marcie Fisher-Borne, Stephanie Chang, Terri Phoenix (Dan Leonard not pictured) shared their memories of the challenges that led to the creation of the LGBTQ Center.

HISTORY PANEL (Cont'd.)

Phoenix spoke specifically about the need to grow the capacity of the Center, which is an ongoing concern. Fisher-Borne noted that it sometimes seemed like the creation of the Center might never happen when, as a member of the Provost Committee, she experienced the dissonant opinions of other committee members who argued for an academic center rather than a student affairs center.



At Top of the Hill's Back Room, partiers racked up for some friendly games of pool.

ALUMNI MIXER

Immediately following the History Panel, folks headed over to Top of the Hill's Back Bar for the Alumni Mixer. Uptempo Motown music set the mood as people – some who traveled from as far as New York -- caught up with old friends and made new ones over games of darts, foosball, and pool. DePuy quieted the vibrant chatter of the happy crowd so that we could all take a moment to recognize Phoenix for T's leadership over the past nine years. It was touching to see so many past and present supporters of Phoenix and the Center reveling over their success.



PHOTO: PHOEBE CASTELBLANCA

At the banquet, held at the Carolina Inn, CGA co-founder Dan Leonard reconnected with Dean Bolton, who permitted CGA's existence on campus 40 years ago., beginning the journey towards the establishment of the Center.

RECOGNITION BANQUET

The next afternoon was the much-anticipated Recognition Banquet at the Carolina Inn. Held in the Chancellor's West Ballroom, attendees gathered beneath the giant crystal chandelier for a sumptuous banquet of grilled Atlantic salmon with Chardonnay dill cream, creamy vegetable lasagna, whipped sweet potatoes with pecans and honey, braised green beans with sweet onions and tomatoes and other delectable treats.

As guests settled in to enjoy their meals, a short film, "Highlights of a Decade," played on a giant screen. The entertaining and educational film, produced by **Adam Jefferson**, documents the history of the Center with intriguing interviews from key figures from staff, faculty and students who have been involved in and benefited from its existence. After enthusiastic applause, the film's credits faded and Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs **Dr. Bettina Shuford** honored us with her remarks about the growth of the LGBTQ Center and the important role it fills in times of advocating space for community.

Phoenix followed up with brief remarks – notably, that celebrating 10 years of the LGBTQ Center is no small feat for a Center whose mission has caused some to challenge its very existence on numerous occasions. "We are fortunate to have had people who have been willing to stand strong in the face of such challenges," said Phoenix, before introducing each of our recognized honorees and sharing pertinent details of their contribution to the LGBTQ Center:



DAN LEONARD

Dan Leonard graduated in 1974 with an MA in Pathology. In the fall of 1974, he formally co-founded the Carolina Gay Association (CGA) the first ever documented LGBTQ organization at UNC-Chapel Hill. In the face of campus, local, and state opposition, the group endeavored to foster personal growth, socialization and political action. He remains very engaged in service to his community. Among many other things, he serves as a member of the Orange County LGBT seniors group and is planning a 40-year reunion to be held this fall.



DAN BOULTON

In September of 1974, Dean of Student Affairs **Donald Boulton** received a flurry of letters from concerned alumni and North Carolina citizens for recognizing the Carolina Gay Association as an official student organization. Of his actions he stated, "I believe in the right and freedom of this group and any other group to organize in our society and to stand for those things in which they believe." Throughout his time at UNC he remained a stalwart advocate and ally. Dean Boulton retired from UNC-Chapel Hill as Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs in 1997 and lives in Chapel Hill.

PAMELA CONOVER

Dr. Pamela Conover is a Distinguished Professor of Political Science at UNC-CH. Dr. Conover served as chair of the 2001 Provost's Committee on LGBTQ Climate. This group's research and findings were the foundation for the creation of both the Sexuality Studies minor and the LGBTQ Center. Dr. Conover's research, teaching, and advocacy have improved the campus climate and academic attention to LGBTQ topics, and have positively influenced the lives of many UNC-Chapel Hill's students.



GLEN GROSSMAN

Glen Grossman was instrumental in forming a coalition of people to advocate for a Resource Center and served on the 2001 Provost's Committee on LGBTQ Climate. Of his service on that committee, Dr. Conover wrote: "Glenn Grossman merits special thanks. Had Glenn not been so persistent in his efforts to get the University to consider the needs of its LGBTQ members, there might not have been a Planning Committee. And certainly the Committee's work would have been much harder without Glenn's unflagging devotion to it, his perseverance, and his inspiring optimism." Glenn is currently a Statistician (Epidemiology) with Bristol-Myers Squibb and resides in the Greater New York City Area.



DEAN BLACKBURN

Dean Blackburn instituted LGBT101 education courses, a precursor to Safe Zone training, for Student Affairs staff in the late 1990s. Dean served as the Interim Director of the LGBTQ Center in 2006-2007, and currently serves on the Provost's Committee on LGBTQ Life. He is the Associate Dean and Director of Student Wellness where he continues to educate, advocate, and build coalition for equitable access and services on campus.

MARCIE FISHER-BORNE

Marcie Fisher-Borne was the first person documented at UNC to have formal responsibility for services to gay and lesbian students. In 2000, Fisher-Borne started Rap Group (which continues today as Q Group), to provide group support for LGBTQ students, and created Safe Zone Training. Marcie served on the 2001 Provost's Committee on LGBTQ Climate and was integral to the formation of the Resource Center Coalition. Both of these bodies formed the foundation for the creation of the LGBTQ Center in 2003. Today, Marcie is a partner at the Center for Family and Community Engagement and Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work at NC State, where she continues to work with LGBT youth and focus on cultural humility and social justice.



DR. MELISSA EXUM

Dr. Melissa Exum served in various capacities for 12 years. As Dean of Students she was a staunch supporter of the creation of the Safe Zone Allies program. In 2003 her advocacy and sustained support bolstered the formation of the LGBTQ Center. With her disarming personal style, she was an ardent and politically savvy advocate, educator, and administrator. Currently Dr. Melissa Exum resides in Indiana and serves as the Vice President for the Division of Student Affairs at Purdue University.

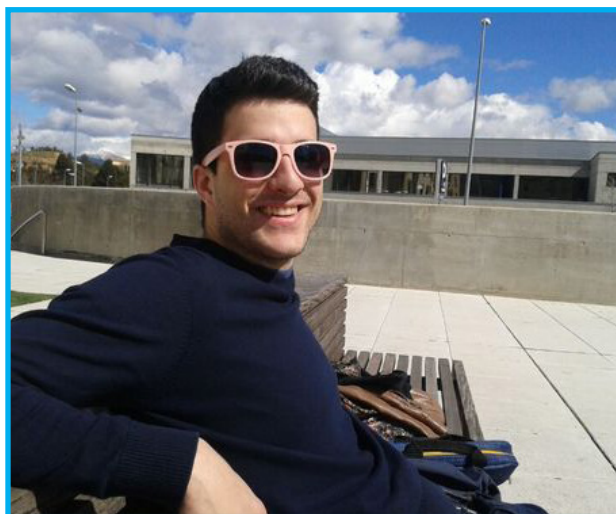


STEPHANIE CHANG

Stephanie Chang graduated in 2002 with a BA in African & African-American Studies. She went on to serve as the first Coordinator of the UNC LGBTQ Office from 2003-2005. Stephanie led numerous programs and initiatives during her time as Coordinator, including overseeing the Safe Zone program, Rap Group, social hours, and the preliminary organization of the Office's extensive lending library. Under her direction, the Office became a space that welcomed students of all backgrounds and provided them with valuable counseling, social programming, and resource referrals. Currently, Stephanie lives in College Park, Maryland and works at the University of Maryland as the Graduate Coordinator for Leadership Curriculum in the Minor in Leadership Studies.

ALEX FERRANDO

Alex Ferrando graduated in 2006 with a BA in International Studies. During his time working with the LGBTQ Center, he volunteered on the Safe Zone Speaker's Bureau and organized numerous on-campus events (one of which was the largest ever Drag Show held in Memorial Hall). In spring 2006, Alex orchestrated the first-ever Lavender Graduation celebration in order to recognize LGBTQ graduates, their allies, and Sexuality Studies minors. Alex was one of the first-ever recipients of the UNC LGBTQ Advocacy Award. Currently, Alex lives in Los Angeles and works as a Contract Attorney for Vubiquity.



ZACHARY HOWELL

Zachary Howell graduated in 2006 with a BA in Public Policy Analysis and a minor in Sexuality Studies. During his time at UNC he proved invaluable in working with the LGBTQ Center to develop the necessary infrastructure to allow private fundraising to take place. Through his relationships with the Office of University Development as well as with on-campus LGBTQ leaders, Zach spearheaded the creation of specific University accounts and designation codes which enabled the cultivation of private donations to the LGBTQ Center. Currently, Zach lives in New York City with his husband, Garrett Hall, and works as a Leadership Gift Officer at Columbia University.



KIMBERLY FISHER

Kimberly Fisher graduated from UNC CH in 2010 with a BA in Women's Studies, and a minor in Sexuality Studies. Kim was instrumental in launching the Interpersonal Violence Curriculum as an APPLES Service Learning volunteer and served as Co-Chair for the undergraduate student organization GLBTSA. Kim was instrumental in developing and implementing the 2010 Campus Climate Survey. Currently Kimberly is the Project Coordinator for the Young Men's Affiliation Project and Project Ready at The Chicago Center for HIV Elimination.

DAVID PETERSON

David Peterson graduated from UNC CH in 2010 with a BA double majoring in Sociology and Classical Humanities, and minoring in Sexuality Studies. David served as Co-Chair for the undergraduate student organization GLBTSA and a member of the Provost's Committee on LGBTQ Life. He was instrumental in developing and implementing the 2010 Campus Climate Survey. Currently David lives in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia as the Fulbright ETA Program Coordinator.



LAVENDER GRADUATION

Closing out our 10th Anniversary Reunion weekend was Lavender Graduation, held again at Upendo, on a sunny and windy springtime Sunday afternoon. While the strong breezes outside knocked over the rainbow balloon arch that marked the entrance to the building, the activity inside was far calmer and celebratory.

Twelve undergraduates and seven graduate students participated in the annual ceremony, entering the room to processional music provided by UNC alumni **Jeff Crawford, Mark Simonsen** and **James Wallace**. Kicking off the event, Phoenix's welcoming words noted the significance of its occurrence and reminded the soon-to-be graduates that, "It is a time to celebrate the successes, triumphs, and perseverance during the years you've worked toward your degrees."

Following Phoenix, **Chancellor Carol Folt** honored us with special remarks and keynote speaker (and UNC alumnus) **Vice Chancellor Winston Crisp** regaled us with poignant stories of his childhood. Crisp touched upon the profoundly felt issue of marginalization when he spoke of growing up as a military brat in Belgium and Germany and being confronted with his unique "otherness" when a teacher assigned a story about ancestry. He



PHOTO: PHOEBE CASTELBLANCA

L-R: Vice Chancellor Winston Crisp, LGBTQ Center Director Terri Phoenix, and Chancellor Carol Folt each spoke at Lavender Graduation, sharing inspiration and laughter with our newest alumni/ae.

urged the students to focus on “defining who you will be” and “making things better for those who come behind you.” And, after quoting from “The Impossible Dream,” noted wryly that, as in *Man of La Mancha*, “No matter what you will do, someone will always think you are an old man on a donkey, when in fact you are a knight in shining armor.” His warm and witty delivery of a sincere message stressing individuality, pride and determination received much laughter and applause from the packed room.

Chris Putney, Interim Director of the Program in Sexuality Studies, then presented the 2014 Prize for Best Undergraduate Work to **Ethan Cicero** for his paper, “A Transgendered Individual’s Lived Experience,” and the 2014 Graduate Research Fellowship to Evan Litwack to support his project on sexuality, pleasure, and pragmatism in the work of William James and W.E.B. DuBois.



PHOTO: PHOEBE CASTELBLANCA

Terri and Kevin Claybren, Undergraduate Advocacy Award winner.

Adrianne Gibilisco then presented LGBTQ Advocacy Awards for contributions to or advocacy on behalf of the LGBTIQ communities at UNC-Chapel Hill. Undergraduate recipient **Kevin Claybren** was recognized for his ability to bring together broad-based coalitions for the betterment of all students, and most notably for his two-year campaign to bring Gender Non-Specific Housing to UNC-Chapel Hill. Graduate recipient **Rebekah Scherr** was recognized for her legal advocacy for Queer and Trans* victims of domestic violence, and LGBTIQ North Carolinians with unmet legal needs during her two terms as President of UNC’s Lambda Law Student Association.

A slide show with footage of the graduates and their personal messages, set to an upbeat soundtrack, followed. The slideshow was especially touching and meaningful, with amusing and intriguing images and quotations individualizing each of our graduating students. Laughter and tears mingled as the footage reminded us of the bittersweet emotion of the day.



PHOTO: PHOEBE CASTELBLANCA

Terri presents Danny with a plaque honoring her years of devoted service to the LGBTQ Center.

spread of sundried tomato & goat cheese tartlets, baked asparagus phyllo wraps, hummus dip and other delicacies while relaxing on the couches and the window seats and reveling in the excitement of the occasion. As the celebration drew to a close, Phoenix, DePuy and Gibilisco, breathless from the efforts of the Reunion events – 13 months in the planning – looked at each other and said, “Now what?”

Why, plan for the 20th Reunion, of course! Mark your calendars NOW!

Finally, recognition of the graduating students commenced, with Phoenix introducing them individually and sharing their autobiographical blurbs as DePuy presented them each with a copy of *Goodnight Carolina*, and the traditional rainbow tassels and lavender rose. Pride in our students reduced many to tears of joy.

As the ceremony came to an end on that beautiful May afternoon, Phoenix expressed heartfelt wishes for all the people who have contributed over the years, with a special nod to DePuy, who would be leaving us after seven years of dedicated service to pursue her MSW. Presenting DePuy with a special plaque and a personalized copy of *Goodnight Carolina*, Phoenix noted that she will be very much missed by us all.

Urging everyone to pick up a print copy of *Aluminate* – and noting Gibilisco’s hard work on the LGBTQ Center’s alumni/ae publication – Phoenix then directed our new graduates to join T for the annual “pose by the balloons” before joining their families for the post-graduation *par-tay*.

The party continued in the Upendo lounge for food, drinks and music, as folks partook of the sumptuous



PHOTO: PHOEBE CASTELBLANCA

The 2014 Lavender Graduation group, preparing to conquer the world.

Staff Transitions

By Adrianne Gibilisco



LGBTQ Staff 2013-2014 (L-R): Terri Phoenix, Whitney Sewell, Kevin Claybren, Ping Nguyen, Danny DePuy, Mary Tongel, Adrianne Gibilisco, Sarah Chi, Kim Brummell

There have been some major changes impacting the LGBTQ Center this semester: Work Study students **Kevin Claybren, Ping Nguyen, Mary Tongel** and **Kayla Harrelson** left to pursue graduate degrees and other work; Graduate Intern **Sarah Chi** moved on to a career in education; and, Social Work Intern **Whitney Sewell** embarked on her doctorate degree.

Probably the biggest disruption to the Center “family” has been the departure of Assistant Director **Danny DePuy**, who left to pursue a Master’s in Social Work at UNC. Danny coordinated our Safe Zone program and much of the educational programming that took place at the Center. She was a calm, steadfast presence for students, staff and faculty. We wish Danny all the best in her new ventures and look forward to her further involvement with the Center, as her academic schedule allows.

Over the summer, Library Coordinator **Kai Ewing** came on board to link our library with the UNC system, and **Angel Collie** took over as our new Assistant Director. We also welcomed **Kristina Wharton** and **Matt Bailey** as our new Graduate interns, **Ginny Lewis** as our new Social Work intern and were excited to have Work Study student **Kim Brummell** return this year. New Work Study students **Charlotte Eure, Matthew Fenner, Morgan McLaughlin, Daniel Nett**, and **Christina Perkins** joined her in early Fall. Rounding up our new hires this year are **Taimur “TK” Khan** and **Amea Wurzburg**, our new Q group co-facilitators; and, **Davis Hodge**, who facilitates our Trans Talk Tuesday groups.

With our new crew in place, the LGBTQ Center has been more productive than ever as we continue to create innovative and educational programming.

Featured Alumna Spotlight

By Adrienne Gibilisco



Catherine Adamson, avid adventurer and nerd.

In each edition of *Aluminate*, we feature an article highlighting the adventures and accomplishments of a randomly chosen graduate. This edition's featured alumna is Catherine Adamson (2008).

With her boisterous laugh, **Catherine Adamson** greets us loud and clear via cell phone as she does laps around her office complex's parking lot. Such multi-tasking suits this go-getting, self-described nerd who has eagerly embraced new experiences seemingly from the moment she left her home in Rockingham County, North Carolina to enroll in UNC-CH as a double major in Anthropology and Asian Studies.

While at UNC, she was involved with GBLTSA, finding ways to subvert the patriarchal hegemony by forming WLW (Women Loving Women). She also threw herself into work with Unity Conference, which she found incredibly rewarding. After she graduated from UNC, Adamson held several jobs – stuffing envelopes for a radiologist, office managing a game engine software company and, later, at Duke's Women's Center...even beekeeping! Ultimately, she wound up as a Netsuite administrator at Netsertive, a marketing software company where she's found her niche (and happily tapped into her inner nerd).

Even while engrossed in her work, she found time to continue advocating for women's issues, joining the board of NC Women United, and advising folks on how to be "out" at work. All this, and she still finds time to tend to the menagerie of six ducks, three cats, a couple of fish and two boa constrictors that share a charming Carrboro fixer-upper with Adamson and Amy, her girlfriend of five years.

Certainly, there is never a dull moment with this dynamo. She sets the bar high for balancing one's passions, work, advocacy and home life:

In what ways were you involved with the LGBTQ Center?

I worked as the office of GBLTSA and WLW with **Stephanie [Chang]**, the first Director of the LGBTQ Center] and then with Terri [Phoenix, our current Director] when Terri first started working at the LGBTQ Center. This

was when the LGBTQ Center was still down in the basement with Fraternity and Sorority Life, in the Steele building. I don't think it got fully moved to where it is today until right after I graduated. I have great memories of spending time with Terri – even a year or two after I graduated, I would still come up there from time to time.

Were you involved with student groups or any other form of advocacy?

I started going to GBLTSA in my frosh [sic] year. GBLTSA goes through cycles [where it's] sort of being very activist and then turning into the "Gay White Men's Hangout Club." (laughs) It happened to be going through one of those cycles when I was there, where the leadership of the club would get together at a bar and hold their business meetings. And I decided that I didn't really appreciate that and organized a takeover! (laughs)

Really? And how did that go?

Pretty well! The trick was, I started a subgroup called "Women Loving Women." The reason that the guys are running the show is because they all know each other. So when the time comes around to vote for GBLTSA leadership, they're the ones who show up and vote. And a lot of these student organizations are really run on a semi-consensus basis anyway. So people would just agree to stop going. We figured if a bar works for them as a gathering place, then we gotta create one for us! (laughs) So I figured we needed to get everyone to get to know each other. So we started with a very simple premise, which was, "We're going to occupy a room each week and we're going to watch 'The L Word' and there will be pizza." It was really the most transparent possible hook – just show up, talk to people around your pizza and get to know each other. And we ended up having several candidates out of that group then go forth for GBLTSA leadership.

What other sort of activism did you get involved with when you were at UNC?

I worked with Unity Conference for a while. Those were some of my favorite memories of being at UNC. It was just really awesome. You know, we'd really just work our butts off for months to get the thing planned and then we'd see all these students and other people coming in from other schools, from all over the state – we even started getting people in from out of state. It was a really great experience to see people enjoying the programming that we put together for them.

Were there any other stand-out memories for you?

I have great memories of working with **Danny [Depuy, Assistant Director until July 2014]** before she was even working at the Center. I was in a Communication course in my freshman year, just for fun. It was a freshman seminar on



Adamson, second from top, left, at meeting of Women Loving Women, 2007.

the Politics of Performance, which is a great crossover with the anthropology [major]. UNC gave me APPLES credit to volunteer with the Cuntry Kings [an entertainment troupe that performs feminist, anti-racist shows rooted in pop culture and the Southern queer experience, of which Danny was a member]. I did some light and sound, I ran the film camera and recorded a couple of performances. I was just the "girl about the show." (laughs).

There's one other Queer-related thing about college that was really formative for me, which when I went and did a solo study abroad in Tokyo and wrote my senior Anthropology thesis on space and place and community among the expatriate Lesbian, Bi and Queer women's community in Tokyo. Translation? UNC gave me a stipend to go and hop bars for a winter break! (laughs) It's not to say that I didn't learn a lot, but I met a lot of people as well, and had a lot of fun doing it. [Actually,] Terri was responsible for helping me find the stipend that let me get there!

What a great experience! What was the highlight?

On New Year's Eve, the gas heat in the place I was staying in ran out...and the whole country shuts down for three days on New Year's. So when the temperature in the house dropped to around 40 degrees, I ended up doing an epic amount of bar-hopping, finding places that were open that had warmth. [I wound up in] a little Japanese lesbian karaoke bar in Shinjuku Ni-Chome, the best known "gayborhood" of Tokyo. It was this awesome international crowd – there were women there from Russia and China and Korea and Japan and the U.S., all just cheerfully drunk and singing karaoke in four different languages and nobody really spoke



Adamson, carousing happily at a Japanese bar, Christmas 2008

more than one of them at a time, so everybody would read the subtitles and take a shot at it. It was really, really terrible karaoke!

Did that help your thesis?

I didn't include it because it wasn't associated with the particular community that I was studying. I was looking at the way that women who were identified as different kinds of queer and different nationalities negotiated their space in this area that all of them shared. But I did pretty well on the thesis. I got highest honors and some good memories. That was what I was looking for.

Sounds like a great way to combine Anthropology and Asian Studies, your two majors. But after graduation, you wound up doing work that had nothing to do with either. Why is that?

It turns out that 2008 was a really terrible year to graduate. I sat on my couch in my really cheap rental in Chapel Hill, watching Bear Stearns collapse and thinking, "Oh, crap! What am I gonna do now?" (laughs) I had incentive to go to grad school, so I spent the better part of the year getting my applications in and ended up not going – in part, because that was the year that the academic job market fell apart, but also because I got some good advice from my thesis advisor, which was basically, "If you can imagine doing anything else, do that!" It was just a terrible time to be going in. The final nail in the coffin was when the chair of the Anthropology Department at U Chicago, where I interviewed, said to all of us students who were

interviewing, "Did any of you know that the origins of academe are in a monastery? Well, being anthropologists, we did a kinship study and discovered that if you don't come to Chicago with a significant other, you have an 80% chance of marrying to someone in your cohort." I took a look around the room and I closed my notebook! (laughs) His job was to make that point because there are a lot of starry-eyed seniors who love studying and love academics and thought they could do that forever, and he did a very good job of making the point that you could do terrible things for the rest of your life.

That must have been hard for people to hear.

I think so, but I'm happy that I got the message. So I came home from that and I started temping and [eventually] wound up at a game engine software company. [There were] about 50 engineers and me, and it turned out to be a perfect fit. I did complete office management, top to top. And then that company went under.

Is that when you went from bookkeeping to beekeeping?

I was working at Duke in November 2012, as the office coordinator for the Womens' Center in Student Affairs, and I did the beekeeping at the same time – it was just a micro-business, and it was a lot of fun. Mostly, what I was doing was actually educational services. I would produce the bees and bring them and install them, but the main idea was to teach people how to beekeep.

Were you fascinated by the bees or terrified...or both?

Both. Fascinated, absolutely! I've always been a sort of general purpose science nerd and the biology of bees is just fascinating. I still do it as a hobby. I'm actually allergic to bee stings, but I still keep them. I keep an EpiPen® on me when I'm working with them, but I've never had any kind of anaphylactic reaction. I just get a lot more swollen than the average person, so it really sucks to get stung.



Honey, anyone? Adamson with her bees.

While you were doing the beekeeping and working at Duke, you also became involved with North Carolina Women United in 2012.

Yeah, they're a non-profit umbrella advocacy group for a wide variety of women's issues. So it included NC Moms Rising, the Midwives Group, NARAL, NOW, anti-domestic violence organizations and social workers' clubs. NC Women United helps connect those groups to each other and also puts out an annual report card of how our legislature is doing and hosts lobby days to get women from those groups out together to make common cause. So it was fun getting back into advocacy with that.

Tell me about your current work at Netser-tive.

I'm a Netsuite administrator here. This is a really fast growing start-up. Two years ago, I was employee number 40-something and now there's 150 of us. So if there are any computer science folks reading this interview, they should check us out! (laughs)

How have you integrated your UNC experience as an activist with your current work?

Start-ups are sort of the bright line for employment non-discrimination because when they start, they're small enough that they're not subject to any of the labor laws or non-discrimination rules at all. And start-up founders tend to be very like each other. They tend to be friends and they tend to have worked together before. So while the founders are friendly, they have blinders on and I've been able to help nudge them gently in the right direction. But it's not a major issue at work. It really is just focusing on getting them to hire more people that don't look like them in whatever sense that is. And, actually, because some of the new employees are quite a bit younger than me and this is their first or second job out of college, I sometimes find myself giving advice to the interns about how to be out at work. It's not explicit advocacy, but it's [how] I think about how I live my life in the context of being LGBTQ.

So what do you do for fun – hiking, biking, swimming, darts...?

I like to go kayaking, around the Outer Banks near Ocracoke Island, especially. Lakes are good practice, but waves...surfing in a kayak is a huge amount of fun. I also do a fair bit of gardening and I work on my house. [Amy] and I like to embody the stereotype of dykes in the hardware store, drooling over the power tools. That's us! (laughs). The other pastime that Amy and I have is getting together with friends



Adamson and Amy at the beach, 2009.

to play very complicated tabletop games like Arkham Horror, which is a cooperative horror survival tabletop board game in the universe of Lovecraft and fiction. You're all playing together to prevent the elder god, Cthulu from awakening. And about 60 percent of the time, he does and you all lose. (laughs).

You talk a lot about your inner nerd. Is there anything you do on your off-time that taps into it?

Yes! The other group that I was part of at UNC in a big way was COUt. It's the all-purpose nerd club - Carolina Otaku Uprising - it's the Japanese culture fan club. Sort of the intersection of nerdery and my second major. Most COUt folks who are still in the area get together every summer for beach trips.

You also have a wide variety of pets, including two boa constrictors. How do you keep them from eating your other pets?

The trick is to have pets with such drastically different needs that they never interact. The boas have the guest room. So when people come over, I say, "Now, you can have the couch, or you can have the guest room. But I gotta tell you about the guest room. There are a couple of boas in there." (laughs) It was Amy who had the boa habit and when I met her snakes, they just kind of warmed me over. They're really charming animals.

It sounds like boredom is an alien concept to you. How did you and Amy meet?

She's also a UNC alum. We were connected by someone who was in Women Loving Women. Our mutual friend was stage-managing a production of "Alice in Wonderland" at the Arts Center and she needed grips and people to move things around. We both signed up, not knowing each other, and we met backstage.



Kayaking on the Outer Banks under Carolina blue skies.

What's the one thing you wish you would have known as a student that you know now?

That I actually had a head for numbers. And the corollary was using it to realize a little bit sooner, maybe, that graduate school is not necessarily the natural end of an undergraduate career. I focused on anthropology, assuming that I wasn't quite up to the higher math or science – the hard stuff. I didn't know that I could intuit it or that I would enjoy doing it on a daily basis. I guess that's more of a general life lesson, that in almost every field of life, most people are faking it until they make it. It's important when you first get out of school to realize that all the earnestness and self-deprecation in the world will not get you to where a little bit of targeted bragging will!

Update: Triangle Resource Fair

By Adrienne Gibilisco





ally week





Mon. Jan. 27th– Fri. Jan. 31st

2014

**In support of people
of all sexual
orientations, gender
identities and gender
expressions.**



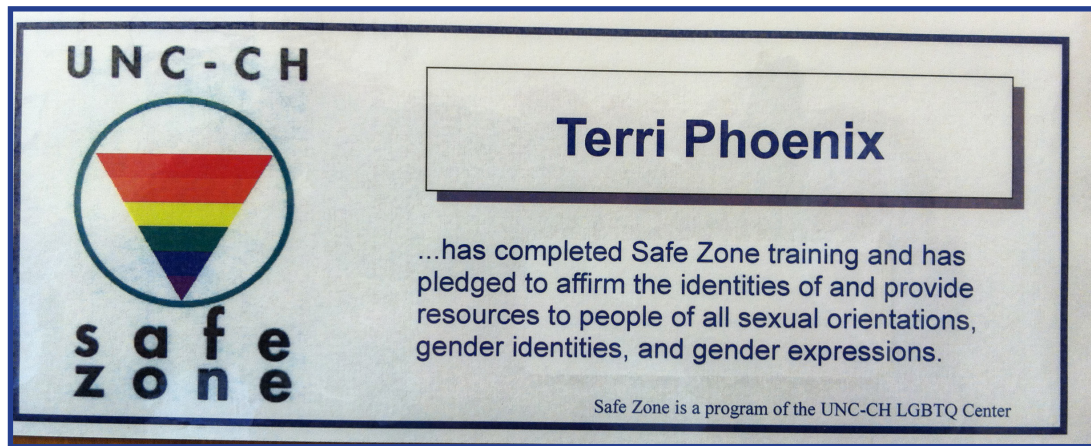
Triangle Resource Fair, which historically rounds out Ally Week, was a great success earlier this year. Forty-five attendees were presented with information from 19 organizations under the high, beamed ceiling and stained-glass windows of the Graduate Student Center. Participants, including Associate Vice Chancellor **Bettina Shuford**, enjoyed a sumptuous (and healthy!) buffet from Carolina Catering while mingling and learning about the many resources available to our community.

SAVE THE DATE!

The 2015 Triangle Resource Fair will be held on **Friday, January 30th, 4-6pm** at the Student Union's Great Hall.

The Importance of Safe Zone

By Adrianne Gibilisco



Safe Zone signs can literally be life-savers. LGBTQ Center Director Terri Phoenix's placard (above) can be found on T's office door.

You've seen them throughout campus, posted on the doors of faculty, academic advisors, and staff, or on the wall of Campus Health. These ubiquitous plaques with the inverted rainbow triangle, bearing the name of a trained individual, are both a symbol of safety and an example of LGBTQ visibility on campus. These are the Safe Zone signs, earned by people who complete an in-depth and informative four-hour session designed to train them as Allies. Upon completion of the training, each of these Allies pledges to affirm the identities of and provide resources to people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.

Currently, there are 2,124 Safe Zone allies on campus. Of these, most are affiliated with the university: faculty comprises 6%; staff, 23%; graduate students, 26% and undergraduate students 29%. The remaining 16% is made up of various university or non-university affiliations (see figure 1, p. 22).

When these confirmed Allies post their laminated signs on their doors, it is far more than a mere certificate to signify completion of training: it is a significant message of recognition and visibility to LGBTQ folks who are seeking help, a supportive source, and a welcoming environment.

Take a recent example: A troubled student was visiting his academic advisor at Steele building and happened to pass an office with the Safe Zone sign. Cautiously, he knocked on the door and, pointing to the sign, asked whether he could come in for some advice. The Safe Zone-trained advisor ushered him in and listened

attentively as he unburdened himself of his worries. She had access to resource material for him to peruse and, due to the intensity of his situation, guided him to the LGBTQ Center, where a meeting was immediately arranged with Assistant Director **Danny DePuy** to provide resolution to his concerns.

Had it not been for this small but colorful symbol outside an unfamiliar door, the student might never have found the support he so desperately needed. But because one concerned staff member opted to undergo Safe Zone training, the student was provided with vital support that allowed him to continue his studies. "People tell me they'll determine which academic advisor to go to based on who has a sign or if their faculty member has the sign or something in their syllabus that's specifically inclusive," shares DePuy.

Citing a recent example of the benefits of choosing a Safe Zone-trained advisor, she recalls, "I got a call from a grad student who taught, who said, 'My co-grad student and I both just got Safe Zone trained and this student came in and told us about all this discrimination and harassment that just happened.' So all three of them drove over here and talked to me about what was happening. Eventually, the two Grad students left and the student stayed and we talked."

That expression of concern and support, followed by the one-on-one discussion with DePuy had a lasting, positive impact on the student and averted what could have been a disastrous situation. "That student wound up staying involved in various ways for a number of years while

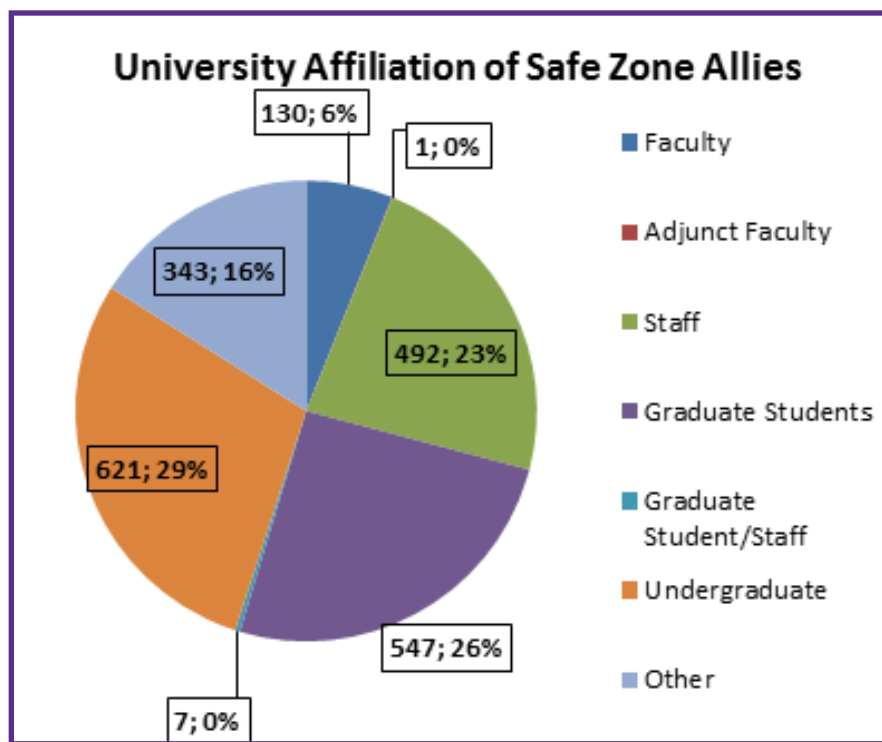


Figure 1: University Affiliation of Safe Zone Allies

they were continuing here. The visibility makes it easier for people to share something that they might not feel comfortable discussing otherwise.”

Other students were so impressed by the appearance of the Safe Zone signs that it helped them opt for UNC as their school of choice. Graduate student **Chris Bowen** was still undecided between UNC and another graduate school when he was visiting the Chapel Hill grounds for his graduate interview. “I was walking around the halls and saw these little placards – the upside down triangles,” he recalls. “I didn’t know what that meant, but it was clear that there was some sort of queer representation that was in place. That actually pretty heavily swayed my decision to come here because it was such a visible evidence of support.”

Bowen, who taught for the last three years while completing his graduate work, has also participated in Safe Zone trainings as a panelist and has been an influential presenter as part of the LGBTQ Center’s Graduate Speaker Series. Without the visibility of the Safe Zone sign when he first visited UNC, the campus may never have benefited from his expertise.

THE TRAININGS

The need for this type of Ally training on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus was first addressed nearly

20 years ago in response to a clear absence of education and awareness of LGBTQ issues. Initiated as an outgrowth of the LGBT 101 education courses that were geared for Student Affairs staff in 1996, the first Safe Zone courses came about after **Marcie Fisher** (now **Fisher-Borne**) came on board in 2000 as the High Risk Program Specialist – the first hire with any formal LGBT responsibility. After assessing the curriculum and presentations that worked best at neighboring universities, she and MSW graduate intern **Traci Wike** trained facilitators and launched the program.

The sessions have evolved over the years, with Director **Terri Phoenix** making modifications to best accommodate the need to deliver the most essential information within the time limitation. Additional offshoot trainings developed as a result. Safe Zone remains an overview of concepts, terminology, scenarios and resources; **Safe Zone: Gender Identity & Gender Expression** focuses specifically on transgender and intersex identities and policies and legal, healthcare and education aspects to those identities; **Safe Zone: Refresher** is a 1.5 hour course to ensure that Safe Zone Allies are current on any changes in policies, language use and resources that have occurred since their training; and, **Safe Zone: Graduate/Professional Students, Instructors & Faculty** is geared specifically to those categories; and, University departments may request their own trainings for groups of 20 or more.

Group Agreements

Assume Best Intentions

Respect Self and Others

Move Up / Move Back

Ask Questions

**Speak from Your Own
Experience**

Confidentiality

Safe Zone, Write-Ups
jebtu@unc.edu

Revised on May 29, 2008

Each training kicks off with the Group Agreements in order to ensure a positive outcome.

Each Safe Zone session is led by a knowledgeable facilitator who guides the group of 20-40 people through various exercises designed to keep the educational experience interactive. The training is preceded by “Group Agreements,” during which participants acknowledge that respectful behavior in which one speaks from their own experience, without assumptions, and with complete confidentiality, will be displayed throughout the session. Once everyone concurs with these agreements, the training kicks off with the “Four Corners” activity, which examines foundational concepts and personal beliefs and how we come to understand those concepts to better appreciate other perspectives. “This section always elicits interesting ‘a-ha’ moments as people realize that it may look like we disagree, but we may actually believe the same thing. It just looks different because of your own past experience,” says Danny DePuy, who has been facilitating Safe Zone Training since 2008.

DePuy describes the “Heterosexism Discussion” that follows this eye-opening exercise as a way to “explore better interpersonal, institutional, internal and intentional ways that the assumption of heterosexuality permeates EVERYTHING!” Indeed, a big takeaway for many attendees is the realization that heterosexism has a broad impact on our society and that recognizing it is the first step towards undermining it.

The group education continues as they discuss “Language”. In this section, the mere definition of “Lesbian,” “Transgender,” “Queer” and other terminology only skims the surface. Like a jazz musician, DePuy and other facilitators deftly go beneath the surface of encyclopedic definitions and allow participants to view these words through a deeper lens. “As Allies, people want the ‘right answer,’” says DePuy, “but this [approach] shifts away from that as an exploration of meaning and context rather than just a simple way to define terms. Conversation is necessary to fully comprehend these words.”

The conversation continues with one of the most impactful components of the training: The “Student Panel.” In this segment, a small group of student volunteers convenes to share their very personal stories about coming out, navigating a sometimes unfriendly campus climate, relationships and so on. “I almost cry sometimes during the panel discussion, hearing people say that unless somehow it’s communicated that the space is safe, it’s just assumed that it’s not and that people are afraid to be who they are,” says DePuy. “There’s a narrative that ‘It’s so much better now!’ but then you go and hear a panel and students saying, ‘I was bullied all through high school,’ ‘My parents kicked me out’ or ‘My church kicked me out.’ So it’s a nice grounding in reality and it helps folks remember why it’s important that we be visible.”

The meaningful authenticity of this segment resonates strongly with the audience, who often cite it as the highlight of their Safe Zone experience. “I found the student panel discussion most useful because it allowed us to hear from actual people who had experienced the things we discussed and thus made abstract concepts tangible,” said one attendee, adding, “It was helpful to be able to ask questions of them and find out how to be more effective allies.”

This very human element brings the dialogue to a more connected level of perception about the day-to-day struggles facing LGBTQ students. By the time they reach the final segment, “Ally Development,” attendees have broadened their understanding and are ready to learn some tips to apply towards becoming an effective Ally.

When people hear “ally,” the perception is that we are talking about heterosexual, cisgender people being an ally to people who identify as LGBTQ; but we mean something much broader than that. Anyone can be an ally to someone whose identity they do not share. Thus, a gay man can be an ally to a transwoman if he has the awareness, knowledge, skills, and willingness to

do so.

“‘Ally Development’ is about leaning into discomfort, getting comfortable with making mistake, and being willing to put your foot in your mouth and using it as your own lesson,” says DePuy. “You develop a relationship with your edges and [say to yourself,] ‘This is where I am. What can I do to be more inclusive next time?’ It’s about being aware and willing to participate in the feelings that come up and are not always comfortable.”

By training’s end, group members tend to revel in the unique experience. “I’ve learned that it’s okay to not know – it’s the effort that is important,” said one attendee. This is the core approach of the training – everyone is teachable and, therefore, everyone can be an Ally...if they want to.

The trainings are not mandatory – having people enroll of their own volition is the pathway to a more successful outcome. As a result, the dynamics of the session can change from group to group. Discussions progress organically within the framework of the training and everyone is educated in the process. Trainees tend to respond with exuberance to their trainings, with such comments as, “This was awesome! I will recommend to everyone,” “It was excellent! I felt very comfortable sharing in a non-judgmental environment” and “It was all interesting and important to my job as a member of the Carolina community.” When they take these impressions with them to their jobs in staff or faculty, or as fellow students, the message expands in its reach.

For this reason, Safe Zone training is vital to not only the well-being of the LGBTQ population at UNC-CH, but also to recruitment. “The training allows at least the beginnings of creating a better space. Having it available at UNC-CH helps to counteract the kind of stereotype of the southern institutions – somewhere where people will one day be able to make a choice on where to go to school on the merits of the programs and not on the cultural baggage that we’ve come to expect from different regions of the country,” says Bowen.

DePuy concurs, saying, “That communication of inclusion and communicating that people are safe makes a physiological, emotional, spiritual impact on people’s ability to move through their day and be able to excel and perform equitably with their peers. The assumption that people are not safe unless it’s stated otherwise really gets internalized because of people’s bad experience, so it makes a huge impact.”

In her time on campus, DePuy has seen tangible results of that impact. “I have seen changes and more acceptance,

inclusion, and invitations from other areas from campus for us to participate in things. People come to us and say, ‘Oh, I have an internship at Chapel Hill Carrboro Schools’ and then that leads to us going over there to do the presentations. That sort of networking element and getting more opportunities to do the education is huge. Some of them start their own Safe Zone program – like Durham Tech. Sometimes, people from the outside community see the sign and realize this is a resource and if they need some education in their non-profit area, they contact us to come and share some of the program. That spreads the education even farther. So there’s a relationship between the Safe Zone visibility and the campus [and community] culture.”

3,346 Allies trained
as of 11/14/2014
(not including outside trainings)

SPRING 2015 TRAININGS

Safe Zone

Thursday, January 22nd, 9am-1pm
Wednesday, February 11th, 10am-2pm
Tuesday, March 3rd, 3-7pm
Friday, April 10th, 10am-2pm
Thursday, May 21st, 12-4pm
Friday, June 12th, 12-4pm

Safe Zone: Gender Identity & Gender Expression

Tuesday, February 24th, 3-5pm

Safe Zone: Faculty & Staff

Tuesday, March 17th, 2-6pm

Safe Zone: Graduate Students, Faculty & Instructors

Friday, January 16th, 1-5pm

For additional information, or to register, please visit our website (lgbtq.unc.edu) or contact Adrienne Gibilisco at 919-843-5376 or adrigibi@email.unc.edu

Our Award Winning Staff

By Adrienne Gibilisco

The 2013/2014 academic year was one of great accomplishments for the people who work at the LGBTQ Center. Permanent and adjunct staff alike earned recognition in a variety of areas, and it seemed the congratulatory back-slapping was everlasting.

LGBTQ Center staff received many accolades for their achievements; the most widely shared being the **University Diversity Award**, which recognizes significant contribution to the enhancement, support and/or furtherance of diversity on the campus and in the community. Three of our staff were presented with this award for their areas of contribution: **Kevin Claybren** earned the award for his tireless campaign for Gender Non-Specific Housing at Carolina; **Ping Nguyen** earned the Student Organization Award for his work with *The Siren*, a publication that promotes feminist empowerment, celebrates diversity and advocates for social justice; and, **Whitney Sewell** won in the Graduate Student category.



Kevin Claybren, Ping Nguyen, Whitney Sewell: **University Diversity Award**

Two of our staff were inducted into **The Order of the Golden Fleece Society**. Founded in 1904 to unite student leaders at UNC-CH, the Order of the Golden Fleece is considered the highest honorary society at the University. The Golden Fleece selects its members based upon service to the University as reflected in scholarship, motivation, creativity, loyalty, and leadership in academic and extracurricular pursuits. **Terri Phoenix** and **Whitney Sewell** were inducted into the Golden Fleece this spring, joining last year's inductee, **Kevin Claybren**, in the honorary society.

Claybren won numerous other awards: [The LGBTQIA Advocacy Award](#), which is presented to one graduating senior who has displayed exemplary commitment to advocating for LGBTQIA communities at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill throughout his or her undergraduate tenure; [UNC-CH Chancellor's Frank Porter Graham Award](#), presented to the graduating senior who has made the most outstanding contribution to a realization of the human ideals of equality, dignity, and community; and, [The Black Male Appreciation Award](#), which celebrates the contributions of African-American men on the campus of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in leadership and justice.

Sewell celebrated numerous other acknowledgements, including the induction into the [Franklin Porter Graham Graduate and Professional Student Honor Society](#), which recognizes outstanding service provided to the University; and the [Chancellor's Fellowship for Doctoral](#)



PHOTO: PHOEBE CASTELBLANCA

Claybren receives his [Sexuality Studies Certificate](#) at Lavender Graduation



Phoenix (center), with T's wife Kendra (right) and Stuart Schleien (Chair, Community and Therapeutic Recreation at UNC-G) after having received the [Pacesetter Award](#).

[Studies](#) from Washington University, for her doctoral program, to begin this fall at St. Louis' George Warren Brown School of Social Work.

Phoenix was delighted to be presented with the UNC-Greensboro Health and Human Sciences [Pacesetter Award](#). This award honors outstanding alumni in the school who have attained local, state or regional recognition through their achievements in scholarship, leadership or service, during their career or through civic involvement. Every department and program may select a Pacesetter awardee to honor each year.

Ending her tenure with the LGBTQ Center before she left to pursue her Masters in Social Work, **Danny DePuy** was honored for her service to students when she was presented with a [Student Undergraduate Staff Award](#) at the Chancellor's Award ceremony.

Rounding out the department's wins, **Adrianne Gibilisco** was presented with the [Award of Distinction](#), which recognizes outstanding contributions by Student Affairs staff members who demonstrate commitment to the betterment of



DePuy, with fellow **Chancellor Award** winners (L-R: Dr. Jim Ketch, Dr. Karl Umble and Dr. Terry Sullivan), prior to the ceremony.

the University and/or their department, sustain outstanding performance in their job responsibilities that is frequently above and beyond the normal scope of expectations, demonstrate impact on creating an environment which enhances the student experience at Carolina, and proven leadership and innovation within the context of the individual's role and position responsibilities.



Gibilisco, with Phoenix (left), at the Student Affairs End of Year Celebration, after receiving the **Award of Distinction** from Vice Chancellor Crisp.

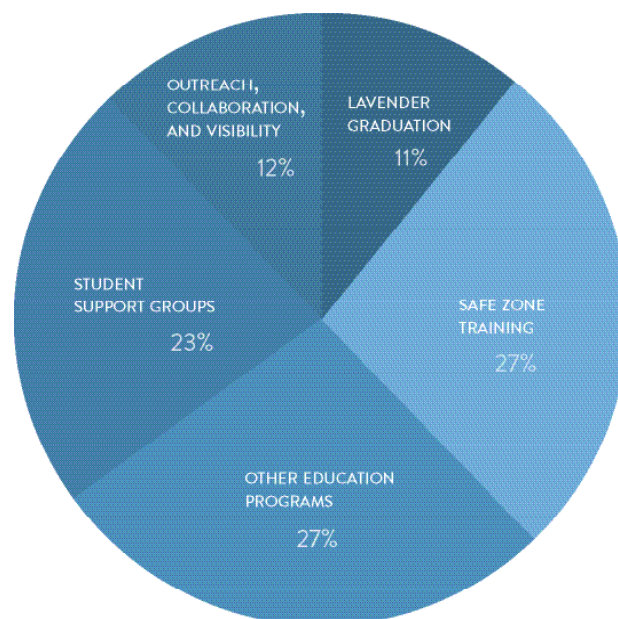
SUPPORT THE LGBTQ CENTER

Make a Donation

Our programming budget comes from private donations. 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.

To make a donation to the LGBTQ Center,
go to:
www.lgbtq.unc.edu and select donate.

School/Unit/Program: Division of Student Affairs
Fund: LGBTQ Program Office (6250)



The LGBTQ Center at UNC works tirelessly to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for UNC-Chapel Hill community members of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. We do this by allocating our resources across three broad areas: educational programs, direct services and resources, and advocacy. Throughout the years, the demand for our popular Safe Zone trainings has grown, as has the number of students, faculty, and staff seeking to access our services...yet our budget hasn't. We are seeking support in able to expand our capacity to better serve the future leaders on our campus and in the community.

A donation of...

...\$5 provides the material resources for one individual going through our Safe Zone training.

...\$10 buys 20 promotional brochures for the Center.

...\$15 covers the cost of a book to add to our resource library.

...\$25 secures the space for our support groups to meet for one night.

...\$50 covers the publicity, planning, and implementation of an educational program on campus.

...\$75 supports the cost of a month of services from trained, skilled facilitators for support groups.

...\$100 enables 35 students, faculty, and staff members to get Safe Zone trained and be provided with visible Ally placards to display in their office or on their dorm room doors.