By Vickie Tsombanos

Bucknell began celebrating “jeans Day” in conjunction with National Coming Out Day about 15 years ago. In the mid-1990s the event was moved to the spring and has been very successful. In 2004, Bucknell began to take part in the gay? fine by me t-shirt campaign which to date has given away almost 3,000 shirts to students, faculty and alumni.

Given that jeans are a collegiate staple, anyone supportive of LGBT issues is encouraged to complete their “Jeans Day” outfits with a gay? fine by me t-shirt.

The event will take place on Thursday, April 19th. Pictures will be taken on the steps of the Rooke Chemistry building at 12:00 pm.

T-shirts are available in the Office of LGBT Awareness. The first one is free and the second one is $6.00.
Former NBA Star Comes Out

Gay Health, February 8, 2007


And now, basketball is the latest major sport to have a former male pro athlete publicly come out of the closet as a gay man.

In a groundbreaking revelation that’s sure to reverberate throughout the NBA and pro sports in general, former player John Amaechi has become the first professional basketball player to openly identify himself as gay.

Amaechi, who played at Penn State and spent five seasons in the NBA with Orlando, Utah and Cleveland, talks about his sexuality in an upcoming book entitled “Man in the Middle” and becomes the sixth professional male athlete from one of the four major American sports (NBA, MLB, NFL, NHL) to publicly discuss his homosexuality.

ESPN reports that Martina Navratilova, perhaps the most famous openly gay athlete in the world, has praised Amaechi’s decision and said it’s imperative for athletes to come out because of what she called an epidemic of suicides among young lesbians and gays.

"It’s hugely important for the kids so they don't feel alone in the world. We’re role models. We’re adults, and we know we're not alone but kids don’t know that," she said. "He will definitely help a lot of kids growing up to feel better about themselves."

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For more information go to:
HRC, www.hrc.org/

Coming Out
Being brave doesn’t mean that you’re not scared. It means that if you are scared, you do the thing you’re afraid of anyway.

Coming out and living openly as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or as a straight-supportive person is an act of bravery and authenticity.

Whether it’s for the first time ever, or for the first time today — coming out may be most important thing you will do all day.

Talk about it.

Deciding to Tell Others:
Most people come out because, sooner or later, they can’t stand hiding who they are anymore. They want their relationships to be stronger, richer, more fulfilling and authentic.

Once we do come out, most of us find that it feels far better to be open and honest than to conceal such an integral part of ourselves.

We also come to recognize that our personal decision to live openly helps break down barriers and stereotypes that have kept others in the closet. And in doing so, we make it easier for others to follow our example.

The benefits of coming out:
-Living an open and whole life.
-Developing closer, more genuine relationships.
-Building self-esteem from being known and loved for who we really are.
-Reducing the stress of hiding our identity.
-Connecting with others who are GLBT.
-Being part of a strong and vibrant community.

-Helping to dispel myths and stereotypes about who GLBT people are and what our lives are like.
-Becoming a role model for others.
-Making it easier for younger GLBT people who will follow in our footsteps.

The risks of coming out:
-Not everyone will be understanding or accepting.
-Family, friends or co-workers may be shocked, confused or even hostile.
-Some relationships may permanently change.
-We may experience harassment or discrimination.
-Some young people, especially those under age 18, may be thrown out of their homes or lose financial support from parents.

You’re In Charge:
When you weigh the benefits and risks of being open about who you are, it’s important to remember that the person in charge of your coming out journey is you. You decide who to confide in, when to do it and how. You also decide when coming out just may not be right, necessary or advisable.

Keep in mind that:
There is no one right or wrong way to come out or live openly. Choosing to come out or to be open does not mean you have to be out at all times or in all places — you decide how, where and when based on what’s right for you.

Your sexual orientation and gender identity are important pieces of you, but they do not have to define you. Living openly doesn’t change all the many unique things that make you, you.
College Jocks: Tell Your Story... 
Athletes to Start Online Journal to Share Experiences

By Jordan Goldwarg and Ryan Quinn 
Special to Outsports.com

Over the last few years, the Internet has allowed gay athletes a freedom of expression that could previously have only been dreamed of. At websites like Outsports.com, many people have contributed their own thoughts on what it means to be a gay athlete. Now, we want to create a slightly more formal, centralized place for a genre of writing, a place that can be a resource for college athletes.

We are spearheading a unique project to start an online journal that will be a forum and outlet for the opinions, ideas, theories, debates, and experiences of all college athletes.

The idea for the journal came as we prepare for the second annual International Gay and Lesbian Athletics Conference (March 26-28 in Boston). We thought back to last year’s conference with the intention of building on what was accomplished then. Focusing on our particular area of experience, college athletics, we realized that last year’s conference raised as many questions as it answered, and a year later, we’re still looking for those answers.

Both the college athlete panel and the college athlete roundtable discussion were valuable in that they represented one of the first times that gay college athletes were together in the same place to discuss issues that were pertinent to their experiences. By the end of these sessions, however, two areas of frustration had emerged.

First, we were disappointed with the number of attendees; we knew that there were many, many more gay college athletes out there, and while we certainly did not expect all of them to make the trek to Boston, we had hoped that there would be more, thus providing more experiences to share.

Second, we were frustrated by not having enough time to discuss all the issues that we wanted to, which left us unable to resolve many of the problems that were raised. We recognize the time constraints that must naturally accompany a three-day, broad-based conference, but still, we want to get more out of it.

To try to remedy these frustrations, we’re embarking on the journal project, which will be closely associated with the IGLAC but that will not have the same limitations of time and travel imposed by an annual conference.

We believe that to solve the problems facing GLBT athletes, and to create real acceptance for those athletes in college, it is necessary to have an ongoing and in-depth dialogue, maintained by the athletes themselves. We want to include accounts from athletes of all sports, both recreational and competitive, as well as coaches, trainers, and scholars.

The goal of the journal, then, is three-fold:

• To identify the issues facing GLBT college athletes
• To examine these issues in depth
• To begin to resolve them

In achieving these aims, we hope that this will become a long-term, sustainable journal of writing that provides commentary on current issues as well as traces the history of changing attitudes within the GLBT athletic community. We also hope that by documenting these experiences, we can begin to discover the patterns that will allow all GLBT athletes to achieve complete acceptance.

The structure of the journal will be entirely flexible, in terms of both format and content. We’re looking for essays, stories, open letters, poems, editorials, or any other format a contributor thinks is appropriate.

If you’d like more information about this project, or if you’d like to contribute your own writing, access:

http://www.outsports.com/campus/20040219collegejournal.htm

Jordan Goldwarg competed on the men’s Nordic ski team at Williams College in Massachusetts. Read his coming out tale at: http://www.outsports.com/campus/20030204jordan.htm

Ryan Quinn was a cross-country skier at the University of Utah. Read his coming out tale at: http://www.outsports.com/campus/20030414ryanquinn.htm

Some Useful Links:

-Gay and Lesbian Athletics Foundation: http://www.glaf.org/

-Out on Campus: http://www.outsports.com/campus/

-Out Athletes: http://www.outsports.com/outathletes/
The Office of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Awareness, is committed to making Bucknell a safe place for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. This is accomplished by supporting student groups and efforts to educating and increase awareness about LGBT issues and current public policy concerns. The office is guided by an Advisory Board comprised of students, faculty, staff, and administrators who are interested in and committed to the mission of the Office.

Given that Bucknell is dedicated to prepare its students to be morally responsible citizens, and given that societal attitudes are changing, the University attempts to promote attitudes and behaviors among its students which will create a climate of mutual respect and empower us all to appreciate diversity.

Upcoming Events:

The Kinsey Sicks

Dragapella

Saturday, April 21, 2007
8pm
Harvey Powers Theatre

http://www.bucknell.edu/LGBT.xml