Making Bucknell a “Safe Space”  
By Julia Bernhard

Each semester, peer educators from campus or The Office of LGBT Awareness offer The ALLIANCE at Bucknell: Creating Safe Space Peer Education program. The program involves a powerpoint and discussion covering various misconceptions about the LGBT community, issues that arise for LGBT individuals, and how to respond when a friend chooses to come out to you. This presentation has helped raise awareness on campus and promote a more inclusive environment. This year has become a landmark for the Safe Space presentations. Coaches and teams of various sports have become involved in the program. LGBT students are often subject to difficult social situations due to the cohesive group mentalities of teams, misconceptions about locker rooms, and the often close quarters shared while traveling. Through this presentation, fellow teammates have been able to show their unbiased support their teammates allowing LGBT athletes to feel comfortable on their team.

Currently, eight teams out of twenty-five have seen the presentation, or 32% of all teams on campus. These teams include men’s and women’s cross country, track and field, and lacrosse, women’s field hockey, and women’s rowing. Each of these teams voted to be a Safe Team. Combined, there are 681 athletes on campus – 291 have now seen the program and thus 42.73% of athletes are on Safe Teams. However, there are eight more team presentations pending; once they see the program, 64% of all teams on campus will have seen a Safe Space presentation or 445 athletes – 65.34% of all athletes. These numbers have brought much joy to our LGBT athletes knowing that their friends and teammates support them and are inclusive of their lifestyle.

Since 2005, Greek organizations on campus have been given the presentation as a P4P, or Plan 4 Prominence, event. These events are meant to bring awareness to Greek members for various issues in today’s world. By 2008, all sororities had seen and voted to be a Safe Space meaning 893 have voted for Safe Space. This trend continued to the present for sororities who continue to be a Safe Chapter and have Safe Suites. Last year, Shane Windmeyer gave a presentation to all Greek organizations about what it is like to be Greek and gay. Fraternities began to follow the lead of the sororities and began to show their brothers how inclusive they could be. Since then, ten out of eleven fraternities have seen the presentation, nine becoming Safe Chapters and seven of those nine Safe Houses. Over all, 86% of fraternity men have seen the presentation, 82% of chapters have voted to be Safe Chapters, and 70% are Safe Houses. These numbers are phenomenal in comparison to 4 years ago. Earlier, fewer fraternities considered looking at the presentation. However, due to great effort by peer educators, the program has reached more students. Within the Greek community, a total of 1497 students out of 1596, or 94% have seen the presentation, 1474, or 92%, are a Safe Chapter, and 1297, or 81% are Safe Houses or Suites.

Speaking for LGBT members of sports teams and Greek organizations, we are proud of our fellow students for taking these steps to create an inclusive environment. In addition, other organizations on campus have been part of The ALLIANCE at Bucknell: Creating Safe Space program. We will continue to present the Safe Space program, hoping one day to reach all organizations on campus and truly making Bucknell a safe place for the LGBT community.
Judy Shepard presents “The Meaning of Matthew”

On Tuesday, March 30, Judy Shepard — mother of Matthew Shepard — will be talking at the Weis Center for the Performing Arts. In October 1998, at 21 years old, Matthew was tortured and killed by two individuals who targeted him because he was gay. Judy and her husband Dennis, motivated by grief, established the Matthew Shepard Foundation which strives to bring light toward the causes that were once important in Matthew’s own life: social justice, diversity awareness & education, and equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. Judy, now board president for the foundation, travels across the country speaking about what individuals and communities can do to make this place more accepting regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, sex, gender identity and expression, or sexual orientation. Her current talk, “The Meaning of Matthew,” discusses her perspective of the horrifying events of 1998, including the prosecution of Matthew’s assailants, the ensuing media coverage, and her constant work to advance civil rights. The campus is excited for her appearance and to exchange thoughts on this important issue in today’s society. Many individuals do not know what to do if a bias incident occurs against them. The Office of LGBT Awareness and the Women’s Resource Center have now printed Bias Incident pocket cards with important phone numbers and facts to use as a resource. They will also be available at the Weis Center during Judy’s talk.

The Laramie Project

The Laramie Project, a film based on the play The Laramie Project written by Moisés Kaufman, will be shown at the Gallery Theatre at 9 pm on Thursday, March 25. Laramie is the town that Matthew Shepard was murdered outside of, and the same town that held candlelight vigils while he lay in a coma. The movie and the original play draws from hundreds of interviews conducted with the inhabitants of Laramie, company members’ own journal entries, and published news reports. The film is often used as a way to teach about prejudice and tolerance in personal, social, and health education and citizenship in schools. Both the play and the film have inspired people across the country to stand up for social justice. In fact, Dean Walton, after seeing the play, was so moved by its message that he personally donated more than 500 books and other media to the University of Wyoming’s Rainbow Resource Center. His donation made that particular library one of the largest LGBT libraries in the state. The Laramie Project, a moving film with lasting impressions, is an inspiration for us all.
Dr. Dean Hamer — “Sex, Science, and Society”

On Wednesday, March 31 at 7 pm, Dr. Dean Hamer, a geneticist, will present a lecture funded by the Arnold L. Putterman Memorial Lectureship, with co-sponsorship by the President’s Office, Biology Department, Cell Biology and Biochemistry Program, Psychology Department, Women and Gender Studies Program, FLAG& BT, and Office of LGBT Awareness, in Rooke Chemistry Building Room 116. For the past nine years, Hamer has studied the role of inheritance in human behavior, personality traits and cancer risk-related behaviors such as cigarette smoking. His previous work on the biology of thrill-seeking, anxiety, anger and addiction has influenced the understanding of human variability and what people can and cannot do to change themselves. Dr. Hamer has previously visited Lewisburg when Out in the Silence, a film co-directed with his partner Joe Wilson, was featured at the Campus Theatre during Fall 2008. In his talk, he will address some of the questions raised by his groundbreaking discovery of the link between sexual orientation and genetic makeup research.

Alyssa Schneebaum — “LGB Households & the Economic Crisis: Impacts and Responses”

Alyssa Schneebaum ’06 is being brought to campus on Wednesday, April 7, by the Department of Economics, Women and Gender Studies Program, Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity and Gender, Women’s Resource Center and Office of LGBT Awareness. Alyssa is currently a PhD (ABD) candidate in Economics at the University of Massachusetts – Amherst. She will also earn an Advanced Graduate Certificate in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Alyssa has been selected as a Research Fellow at the Center for Gender and Excellence at Orebro University in Sweden for next year. Her dissertation consists of three essays on the Economics of Sexual Orientation, and includes topics of discrimination; differences in earnings and occupational crowding; labor decisions of people in same-sex households; and an analysis of how the broader economic structure (e.g. capitalism) can affect same-sex couples differently that different-sex couples. In addition to Alyssa’s public presentation, “LGB Households and the Economic Crisis: Impacts and Responses” being held in the Williard Smith Library at 4:30 pm, she will be making class presentations in several Bucknell academic classes during her time back on the Bucknell University campus.

2010 International Women’s Day Luncheon Review

On March 8, many students, staff, and faculty members joined together to celebrate International Women’s Day. This year, the luncheon was titled “Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities: Progress for All Women in Haiti.” Due to the earthquake, many important women’s rights leaders lost their lives. It was in their honor, and for all struggling women in Haiti, that the day be dedicated to them. Passages from Walking on Fire sent inspirational words around the room about the hardships women face in Haitian society. Dr. Roseline Reed, Shophia Sainteus ‘10, and Professor Hilbourne Watson each gave their own unique view of what Haiti means to them. Donations were also accepted for the Haiti Relief fund, sending aid to the victims of the earthquake. Our hopes and prayers are with those struggling women, and we wish for them to one day stand as equals in their society.
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.

Current Safe Spaces:

“A safe space is a place where anyone can relax and be fully self-expressed, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, age, or physical or mental ability; a place where the rules guard each person’s self-respect and dignity and strongly encourage everyone to respect others.”

Excerpt from The ALLIANCE at Bucknell: Creating Safe Space Powerpoint

Fraternities:
- Chi Phi (chapter and house)
- Delta Upsilon (chapter and house)
- Kappa Sigma (chapter and house)
- Lambda Chi Alpha (chapter)
- Phi Kappa Psi (chapter)
- Sigma Alpha Epsilon (chapter and house)
- Sigma Phi Epsilon (chapter and house)
- Tau Kappa Epsilon (chapter and house)

Sororities:
- Alpha Chi Omega (chapter and suite)
- Alpha Delta Pi (chapter)
- Chi Omega (chapter and suite)
- Delta Gamma (chapter and suite)
- Kappa Alpha Theta (chapter and suite)
- Kappa Kappa Gamma (chapter and suite)

Pi Beta Phi (chapter and suite)

Sports Teams:
- Men’s Cross Country Team
- Men’s Lacrosse Team
- Men’s Track and Field Team
- Women’s Cross Country Team
- Women’s Field Hockey
- Women’s Lacrosse Team
- Women’s Rowing Team
- Women’s Track and Field Team

Others:
- Languages and Cultures Residential College
- Residential College Staff 2009-2010
- Social Justice Residential College

Call x7-1609 and schedule a Safe Space program for your hall, group, fraternity, sorority, athletic team or administrative/departmental office.

Do you have any LGBT topics that you would like to see covered in future issues?
Send in your ideas at lab036@bucknell.edu

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