



Winter Newsletter

Bridgewater State College

The Making of Campus Leaders

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Rob Matheson

The students said their recent increased involvement on campus was due in large part to the personal growth they experienced at the conference. During the various group activities, the students said they encountered conflicting viewpoints, which initially upset them, but ultimately taught them about the issues and about themselves.

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1 What is it that changes a young person into a student leader? For two BSC students who have assumed leadership roles on campus, it was the time they spent this summer at camp.

2 From July 19-24, Eric Sherlock and Shawn Fielder, both political science majors, joined students from across the nation at the second-annual Campus Pride Leadership Summer Camp, held at Towson University in Maryland. The entire trip was funded by BSC.

During the five-day camp, the two BSC students, along with approximately 60 of their peers from 50 higher education institutions, met with national gay activist leaders and sat in on panel discussions before visiting Washington D.C. These activities and others were meant to help students develop leadership skills, build coalitions and network with students and organization representatives.

Upon returning from the conference, Mr. Sherlock and Mr. Fielder, who had not previously been directly involved with BSC's Pride Center, took on roles as its ambassadors, meaning they provide leadership on a variety of issues, as well as advocate for equity on campus.

"We're completely different people now after coming back from the conference," said Mr. Fielder, a Bridgewater resident.



"Each day, not one person left with a dry eye," said Mr. Sherlock, a Whitman native, "but having your ideas challenged and defending what you believe makes you a stronger person, and makes your friendships stronger."

Coordinator of the BSC Pride Center, Lisa Forest, said she was appreciative toward BSC for funding the trip that got the students more involved on campus and interested in GLBTA issues.

In an article in The Washington Blade, Shane Windemeyer, executive director for Campus Pride, said the event aims to empower and

enlighten young leaders.

"The lessons learned and lifelong friendships developed at camp are the most valuable way to invest in the future of our movement," he said in the article.

Read The Washington Blade article at <http://www.washingtonblade.com/2008/7-25/news/localnews/12998.cfm>

The story is accompanied by a photo of Eric Sherlock and Shawn Fiedler. (Robert Matheson, Office of Institutional Communications)

Some things to think and talk about:

- What does Obama's victory mean for GLBTA people? Do you know what his policies are?
- How do you feel about Proposition 8 being passed in California?
- What are you doing to educate people about GLBT rights?

There's a Q in my alphabet soup! a.k.a. Who's queer, anyway?

Kate Hayes-Huer

It's easy to get lost in the amount and variance of letters in the GLBTA (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, ally) community's ever-changing acronym of identities. On one hand, our strength lies in our diversity. On the other hand, it can be a mouthful. Four, five, or six syllables are tougher to say

and remember than one— and there's always someone being left out of the mix.

Some people, then, choose to use "queer" as an umbrella term. Lisa Forest, Coordinator of the GLBTA Pride Center, says, "...the reason we unite under the umbrella of 'queer' is because of the common denominator of our shared

identity. Specifically, we do not necessarily identify with traditional gender and/or heterosexual norms, nor do we receive any of the privileges associated with allegiance to those norms. As a disenfranchised group, we unite to provide affirmation to each other."

Queer can also be a separate identity al-

together in addition to an umbrella term. The word 'queer' is recently used by individuals who describe their sexuality or gender separate from GLBT. Though many queer people may identify as one or all of the letters in GLBTA, some consider "queer" a synonym of pansexuality and/or genderqueer.

Genderqueer: Blurring the Lines

Kate Hayes-Huer

Genderqueer-chances are you've heard it before; you might even know someone who identifies this way- but what does it really mean? Wikipedia defines genderqueer as someone who:

"...may think of themselves as being both male and female, as being neither male nor fe-

male, or falling completely outside the gender binary... others see 'genderqueer' as a third gender to complement the traditional two... Some fit into the stereotypical gender roles expected of their sex, but still identify outside of that and reject a two-pole gendered system."

There are many more interpretations of genderqueer and

what it means to identify as a gender other than female or male- it's not always obvious!

If someone you know identifies as genderqueer, it's not rude to ask which set of pronouns they prefer to go by. Doing so demonstrates can support for and empowering of each other!



Illustration from CrimethInc.com's Gender Subversion Poster Kit

A timeline of events involving gay marriage in Massachusetts

Associated Press—June 14, 2007

Some important dates in the history of the gay marriage debate in Massachusetts:

- April 11, 2001** -- Seven same-sex couples, denied marriage licenses, sue in Suffolk Superior Court in Boston to challenge the state's gay marriage ban.
- Nov. 18, 2003** -- The SJC rules it is unconstitutional to bar gay couples from marriage, and gives the Legislature 180 days to come up with a solution to allow gays to wed. President Bush, in a visit to London, criticizes the decision and vows to work with Congress to "defend the sanctity of marriage."
- Feb. 4, 2004** -- Acting on a request from state lawmakers, the SJC clarifies its earlier ruling, saying only full, equal marriage rights for gay couples -- rather than civil unions -- are constitutional.
- Feb. 11, 2004** -- Massachusetts Legislature opens constitutional convention with debate on a proposed constitutional ban on gay marriage and adjourns a day later deadlocked, after failing to pass three separate proposed bans on same-sex marriage.
- March 29, 2004** -- State Legislature approves proposed constitutional amendment that would ban gay marriage but legalize Vermont-style civil unions.
- March 31, 2004** -- State Attorney General Thomas F. Reilly says gay marriage will apply only to Massachusetts residents because of a 1913 state law that prevents out-of-staters from getting married in Massachusetts if they are ineligible for marriage in the state where they live.
- May 4, 2004** -- Gov. Mitt Romney's top legal adviser warns city and town clerks that issuing marriage licenses to out-of-state gay couples will make the marriages void and could result in legal repercussions for the clerks.
- May 17, 2004** -- Marriages of gay couples begin in Massachusetts.
- May 18, 2004** -- Romney's administration demands copies of all marriage-license applications filled out by gay couples in Provincetown and three other cities that openly defy the residency requirement for same-sex marriages.
- May 19, 2004** -- The Democrat-controlled state Senate votes overwhelmingly to repeal the 1913 law that Romney used to bar out-of-state gay couples from marrying in Massachusetts. The repeal dies after leaving the Senate.
- May 24, 2004** -- Reilly issues cease and desist orders telling clerks to stop issuing marriage licenses to out-of-state gay couples.
- June 18, 2004** -- Eight couples and more than a dozen municipal clerks file lawsuits challenging the 1913 law used to block out-of-state gay couples from marrying in Massachusetts.
- July 13, 2004** -- A lawyer for the out-of-state couples asks a superior court judge for an injunction blocking the state from enforcing the 1913 law, saying it violates both the U.S. Constitution and Massachusetts law.
- Aug. 18, 2004** -- Superior Court Judge Carol Ball rejects the challenge to the 1913 law barring out-of-state gay couples from marrying.
- October 6, 2005** -- A lawyer for the out-of-state couples argues before the SJC that the 1913 law "sat on the shelf" unused for decades until it was "dusted off" by Romney.
- March 30, 2006** -- The Massachusetts high court rules that nonresident gays cannot marry in the state.
- Sept. 29, 2006** -- A Massachusetts state judge rules that same-sex couples from Rhode Island have the right to marry in Massachusetts.
- Nov. 9, 2006** -- Legislators recess a constitutional convention until Jan. 2, 2007, without voting on a citizen-proposed ballot measure to ban same-sex marriages. The move made it unlikely the measure would be acted on in time to get on the November 2008 ballot.
- Dec. 28, 2006** -- The Supreme Judicial Court, ruling in a lawsuit brought by supporters of the gay marriage ban, said lawmakers have defied their constitutional duties by failing to act on the proposed amendment. But justices said they had no legal authority to force a vote.
- Jan. 2, 2007** -- Lawmakers, without debate, voted to advance a proposed constitutional amendment seeking to ban same-sex marriage, meeting the needed threshold of 50 votes in favor. It must be approved again in the next legislative session for it to wind up on the 2008 ballot.
- May 9, 2007** -- Senate President Therese Murray postponed a vote on a proposed constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage during the constitutional convention.
- June 14, 2007** -- Lawmakers vote to block the proposed amendment from reaching voters in 2008.



JOIN THE IMPACT is Protesting the Defense of Marriage Act

Saturday, January 10th, 1:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Boston City Hall/Government Center T Stop (Green Line)

For up-to-date information, visit www.jointheimpactma.com

Massachusetts-Based GLBTA Blogs to Check Out:

<http://massmarri er. blogspot. com/> - **Marry i n Massachusetts**

<http://www.masstpc.org/tp/arti cl e/> - **Massachusetts Transgender Pol i t i c a l C o a l i t i o n**

<http://queertoday. bl ogspot. com/> - **QueerToday**

<http://www.gendental k. com/> - **Trans Bl og**



Meet the Ambassadors



The Ambassador program is a student leadership program designed to provide students with opportunities to learn and apply leadership skills, refine their understanding of and communication of GLBT issues, and advocate for greater GLBT inclusion and equity on campus.

Elvire (El) AGOSSOU-A El (She, Her, Hers)

Bonjour a tous. Starting with my name, I just go by "L" because most people can't pronounce the whole thing. You are welcome to try but if you can't, it's no big deal. I am a pretty simple person always willing to adapt to any situation seeing that I come from a different culture. I'm an international student from a country called Benin in West Africa. As a junior student in BSC, I am majoring in Physical Education and Psychology. This comes from the fact that I am addicted to physical activities of any kind and behavior observation of the human beings in general. I like to think of myself as strong and open minded toward life and everything it has to offer. I am always up for a little challenge on my beliefs because I'm aware that I do not have insight on everything that does exist around me. I refused to judge anybody because I believe that I do not have that right. I have a grand interest in all that makes us different and at the same time comes into unifying us all as one and the same. I love listening and being supportive of people. I do my best to understand and help out, and I'm always happy to be there for others. Don't hesitate to contact me, for anything. I live about 30sec from campus and my contacts are: Tel: 1-774-826-9352 eaqossouaque@bridgew.edu

Shawn M. Fiedler (He, His, Him)

Born and raised in rural Maryland, I am a third year Political Science major here at Bridgewater and enjoy discussing politics and GLBT civil rights. My faith is my foundation and is my inspiration for the social justice I pursue. Growing up in a conservative region made it hard for me to come out, but I am convinced it only made me stronger! I'm only a mile from campus and willing to help anyone and anytime. Please don't hesitate to ask! sfiedler@bridgew.edu

William J. Foley (He, His, Him)

First and foremost, I hate writing bio's ESPECIALLY about myself. I never seem to know what to say. Here goes nothing. I am a junior enrolled at Bridgewater State College, pursuing a degree in Biology. I took upon a major career change and swapped from Criminal Justice. (Two opposite ends of the spectrum, I think.) I could have not made a better choice. I commute from Fairhaven and live at home (to save money.) Food and music are my passions. (Though it does not apply to my studies, oh well.) I am a manager at an excellent seafood restaurant in my town; voted best seafood 11 consecutive years...and counting. Raised in a Buddhist household, my family and friends are extremely important and I look up to both my parents as my mentors and as my best friends. Most of my friends agree that I am an easygoing, caring, and fun person, so if anyone needs to talk about anything, I have an open ear. Contact me anytime! wfoley@bridgew.edu

Ryan C. Manning (He, Him, His)

I am a sophomore here at Bridgewater State College, currently Undecided as of a major. I am originally from Sharon, Mass. but reside in Brockton, Mass at the moment. I enjoy volunteering on and off campus whenever I can. I love doing outdoor things and being outside, so if I'm not in the Pride Center, most likely I'm outside walking around. I'm pretty down to earth once you get to know me, and I'm always here for my friends, so if you ever need someone to talk to, don't be afraid to come and talk to me!
rmanning@bridgew.edu

Eric Sherlock (He, Him, His)

I am in my third year here at Bridgewater State studying political science. I am originally from Whitman, Mass. and I graduated from Cardinal Spellman High School in Brockton, Mass. Not only do I identify as being a gay male, but I also identify as a Christian. Many say that these two cannot be combined, but I always love to prove them wrong. I am interested in sexuality and spirituality studies so if you ever want to talk about reconciling your sexuality with your spirituality please don't hesitate to approach me!
You can contact me at esherlock@bridgew.edu

GLBTA Pride Center

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Check us out online at bridgew.edu/GLBTA

The GLBTA Pride Center offers a variety of services and resources to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and ally community that promote student learning and development. We are also committed to fostering a safe and affirming environment in which to work and learn.