

THE PRIDE CENTER WORKING GROUP

Report



Background

In August of 2016, in response to the defunding of the Pride Center, the U.T. Faculty Senate convened a group of concerned faculty, alumni, and staff to formulate a long-term plan for the Center's viability. The members of the Pride Center Working Group represent multiple colleges, departments, and offices,¹ and have all previously been allies and supporters of the Center. During fall semester 2016, the Working Group met with the Pride Ambassadors and other interested constituencies across campus and conducted extensive research on best practices as well as the practices of peer and aspirational institutions.² The Working Group conducted online research, reviewed literature, and, in select cases, interviewed relevant staff at peer and aspirational institutions. This reports summarizes our conclusions and recommendations. It is divided into five parts, with two exhibits attached:

- I. The Need for a Center Meeting the Needs of LGBTQ+ students³
- II. The History of U.T.'s Pride Center
- III. Testimonials from U.T. students about the atmosphere on campus and the impact of the Pride Center on their lives
- IV. The Proposal of the Pride Center Working Group
- V. Conclusion

Exhibit A: The 2016 Pride Center Brochure (representing programming planned prior to defunding)

Exhibit B: The 2013-2014 Impact Report from the U.T. Office of Diversity

¹ The Working Group is co-chaired by Wendy A. Bach, College of Law, and Mary McAlpin, College of Arts & Sciences, and includes the following members: Dr. Angie Batey, Associate Dean in Arts & Sciences; Dr. Karen Boyd, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies; Professor Donna Braquet, University Libraries; Elliott N. DeVore, LGBTQ+ Alumni Council President; Dr. Lars Dzikus, Kinesiology, Recreation, and Sports Studies; Dr. Leslee Fisher, Kinesiology, Recreation, and Sports Studies; Dr. Camille Hall, Social Work; Dr. Joanne Hall, Nursing; Dr. Jennifer Jabson, Public Health; Dr. Joe Miles, Arts & Sciences; Dr. Rebecca Morgan, Student Health Center; Mr. Ed Patterson, Alumnus of CCI; Rashad Small, former Center practicum student, and currently LGBT Center Program Director at the University of Georgia; Dr. Eric Wade, Engineering; and Dr. Nicole Wallenbrock, Arts & Sciences.

² The institutions surveyed, through online research and, in some cases, phone interviews with key staff, include the University of California, Berkeley; University of California, Los Angeles; University of Virginia; University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; University of Wisconsin, Madison; University of California, Davis; University of California, Santa Barbara; University of Washington, Seattle; Pennsylvania State University; University of Florida; University of Texas, Austin; Ohio State University; University of Maryland; University of Pittsburgh; University of Georgia; Clemson University; Purdue; Texas A&M; University of Minnesota; Rutgers; Indiana University; Michigan State University; Iowa State University; North Carolina State University, Raleigh; Louisiana State University; University of Kentucky; Virginia Polytechnic University; and the University of Cincinnati.

³ Variations in the acronym used reflect the choices of the different entities/studies under discussion.

I. The Need for a Center Meeting the Needs of LGBTQ+ Students

There is no question that university campuses must dedicate resources to serve their LGBTQ+ populations. Research shows that a college or university's reputation regarding the climate for LGBT people influences their choice of whether to attend a particular school.⁴ Once on campus, LGBT students experience harassment at rates higher than those of their non-LGBT counterparts (Rankin, 2005). For example, in a study of 1,000 undergraduate students, 150 faculty, and almost 500 staff members at fourteen institutions, Rankin found that more than one third of LGBT undergraduate participants reported experiencing harassment, with derogatory remarks from other students being the most common form of harassment reported. Experiences like these negatively shape students' perceptions of the campus climate, which, in turn, can negatively impact their physical and mental health (e.g., Woodford, Kulick, & Atteberry, 2014), as well as academic outcomes (e.g., Woodford & Kulick, 2015).

A recent report, *The 2010 State of Higher Education for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People* (Rankin, Weber, Blumenfeld, & Frazer, 2010) described the results of a large-scale study of campus climate for LGBT people. Over 5,000 students, faculty, and staff from all 50 states who identified as LGBTQQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and queer) completed surveys on their experiences on campus. All but 16% of the respondents identified as some sexual orientation other than heterosexual, and 13% of respondents identified as transmasculine, transfeminine, or gender non-conforming. The authors stated that their results support the conclusion of previous studies that "LGBT individuals, as the least accepted group when compared with other under-served populations [are], consequently, more likely to indicate deleterious experiences and less than welcoming campus climates based on sexual identity" (p. 9). Perceptions of the campus climate were significantly worse among LGBQ respondents, and participants who identified as transgender or gender non-conforming had significantly worse perceptions of campus climate than their cisgender⁵ counterparts. All of these challenges are intensified for respondents who experience multiple stigmatized cultural and social identities. The authors conclude that steps need to be taken in order to improve the climate, and ultimately educational and health outcomes, for LGBT people on campus, including developing an institutional commitment to improving the climate, integrating LGBT issues into curricular and co-curricular education, seriously addressing bias incidents, and creating "brave spaces" for civil dialogue between LGBT and non-LGBT students on

Mission

The Pride Center works to provide a safe and inclusive environment for UT's diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning, transgender, and intersex communities and their allies.

⁴ M.S. Schneider & A Dimito, *Factors influencing the Career and Academic Choices of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People*, 57 J. HOMOSEX. 1355 (2010).

⁵ The Oxford English Dictionary defines cisgender as, "Denoting or relating to a person whose self-identity conforms with the gender that corresponds to their biological sex; not transgender."

campus. Each of these “best practices” is something that often falls under the umbrella of a campus LGBT resource center.

In order to support LGBT students and ensure their well-being and academic success, many campuses have LGBT resource centers. LGBT resource centers provide a wide-range of valuable services for LGBT and ally students. In addition to creating a physical space that is safe from harassment, LGBT resource centers provide visibility for LGBT students, educate the broader campus about LGBT issues, engage in ally training (e.g., Safe Zones), and help develop leadership skills (Damschroder, 2015). In a recent study on the roles of LGBT resource centers, Damschroder describes the “essential value” that LGBT resource centers play on campus from the perspectives of the students who use these centers, as well as university staff and administration. Damschroder notes that these centers’ activities (e.g., advocacy, ally development) typically reinforce the core institutional missions around student success, diversity, and social justice.

II. History of U.T.’s Pride Center

In response to these needs, the U.T. Pride Center was founded and has been operating for almost seven years. Plans for the Center were initiated in the summer of 2008, after then Interim Chancellor Jan Simek met with the executive board of the Commission for LGBT People. After Chancellor Simek designated a space in Melrose Hall for the prospective Center, the Commission produced a report outlining a plan for the use of the space, and the OUTreach: LGBT and Ally Resource Center (as it was known until 2013) opened on February 25, 2010.

From its inauguration until the summer of 2013, the Center operated with the assistance of the Commission’s graduate student assistant and monies from its budget, as well as the dedication of a volunteer director, Professor Donna Braquet (Biology Librarian). However, in June 2013, the Center became an independent unit in the newly created Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity. At that point, Vice Chancellor Rickey Hall and Dean of Libraries Steve Smith agreed to the 25% appointment of Professor Braquet as Director of the Center and Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor. The Center was also able to hire two work-study students (each at 10-15 hours per week), in addition to a graduate assistant (20 hours per week), allowing it to be open approximately 46 hours per week. Under Donna Braquet’s leadership, the goal of the Center’s various employees and volunteers was to provide a safe and welcoming environment for U.T.’s diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual communities. As a physical symbol of U.T.’s commitment to diversity, the Center provided support, resources, and a community space for U.T.’s LGBTQIA and ally students, faculty, and staff, as well as anyone seeking to learn about sexual orientation or gender identity (see Exhibit A, the 2016 Pride Center brochure; please note that all of the advertised activities were not able to be held due to the withdraw of funding in the Spring of 2016).

Vision

A campus where everyone belongs.

Among the programs established at the Center after it was incorporated into the Office of Diversity and Inclusion was the Pride Ambassador Program, piloted in 2013, and formally established in spring 2014 with a generous grant from the Ready for the World initiative, as well as supporting grants from the Council on Diversity and Interculturalism and the United Residence Hall Council. Ten undergraduate students were selected as ambassadors for 2014—eight who identified as LGBTQQIA, and two allies. During the spring semester the ambassadors worked to develop a number of events for the upcoming year, including four 30-minute workshops that were offered to residence halls as part of a newly formalized SpeakOUT! Program (a speaker's bureau for campus classes and organization visits). The ambassadors were also provided with development opportunities, including attendance at Vanderbilt University's Office of LGBTQI Life's Out in Front Conference and Middle Tennessee State University's LGBTQ College Conference.

The many other accomplishments of the Center under Professor Braquet's leadership are outlined in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion's "Diversity Impact Report" covering the academic year 2013-2014 (attached here as Exhibit B). Almost all of these activities, however, came to an abrupt halt in spring 2016, when the Tennessee State Legislature passed Tennessee Public Chapter 1066 (also known as House Bill No. 2248). After passage of the law, a decision was made to defund the Pride Center. The Pride Ambassadors were informed that they would retain control of the space but that there were no longer funds available for the Center or its Director. At that point, Donna Braquet returned to her full-time position on the library faculty and the Pride Ambassadors became an official student organization and took on the nearly impossible task of delivering the Pride Center programs while maintaining their academic work. In the fall of 2016, the Office of Student Life dedicated 10% of a staff line to support the Pride Center and placed Danny Glassman into this line. The Center has been operating with this structure since that decision. Needless to say, without its previous level of support, maintaining the programs of the Pride Center became impossible and many of these crucial and important programs are no longer in operation.

III. Testimonials from students about the atmosphere on campus and the impact of the Pride Center on their lives

"I was so excited about the center when I first got here. I found a place where I could be myself."

"The center is the only place on campus I feel completely safe."

"I finally came out after spending time at the Center."

"I would have dropped out of college if it weren't for the Pride Center."

"Being in a STEM field it can be shocking what is joked about in the lab."

"I hear homophobic and transphobic language around campus."



“I can't really be out in my department. I can be out at some places on campus but not all.”

“I've been called slurs on campus and misgendered in class.”

“I heard two students say that the next initiation event should be to burn down the Pride Center.”

“With UTK listed as one of the ‘most homophobic’ schools when I went to college, the UTK Pride Center & community gave me hope and provided a place to meet other amazing people during my 5 years time. It's disheartening to see this [defunding] as this is a school where your work is most needed.”

“Makes me feel sick & wonder if I can survive at UT.”

“A bewildered looking young lady walked past the Center several times one day before timidly walking in. [Pride Center] staff asked if they could help her and she remained quiet for a few more moments before saying, ‘I didn't know a place like this existed. I was told that I would be fired for holding my girlfriend's hand on campus if they caught me.’ The staff assured her that that would not happen. This graduate student was from Washington, DC and had come to Knoxville and UT with such fear of the South and its discrimination that she was afraid to be out in her department or as a GTA for fear of losing her job and being kicked out of the program.”



“The [Pride] Center is what made the difference in me coming to UT or going to another school. I knew there was a place here where I would fit in.”

“The Pride Center to me is so much more than some rooms in an old building. It is a second home... The Pride Center has helped me figure out who I am and taught me so much love for everyone. The Pride Center is not exclusive of anyone. It welcomes all who are welcoming to us. If the Center could not afford to be there for me or for others, I don't know what I would do.”

IV. The Proposal of the Pride Center Working Group

Mindful of and seeking to build on U.T.'s own history and context, the Working Group ultimately settled on a proposal outlining what we consider to be key characteristics of a newly invigorated Pride Center.

The Working Group proposes that U.T. establish a Pride Center with the following characteristics (following this summary, we discuss each characteristic in turn, linking each to both nationally-recognized best practices and the practices of our peer and aspirational institutions):

1. Constituted as an office within the Division of Student Life
2. Programming
 - a. Educational Outreach and Ally building
 - b. Support and Community Services
 - c. Advocacy
 - d. Pride Ambassador Program
 - e. Ongoing Web Presence
 - f. Academic program elements listed below
3. Affiliation with Academic Programs
 - a. Affiliated leadership course modeled on the diversity educators run out of OMCSL, listed as an academic course and taught by faculty
 - b. Engagement of faculty involved in LGBTQIA+ research, teaching and practice
 - c. Institution of a group of affiliated faculty
4. Staffing
 - a. Full-Time Staff Director
 - b. Full-Time Programming Coordinator
 - c. Part-Time Educational Coordinator
 - d. Three Graduate Assistants
 - e. 10-12 Work Study Student Assistants
5. Establishment of an ongoing advisory board (faculty, staff, students) chaired by the Director of the Pride Center
6. Designated, visible, centrally-located, fully-accessible space including:
 - a. Three offices
 - b. Modular meeting space that can accommodate up to 50 with updated audio/visual capacity
 - c. Quiet study and library space to accommodate 25
 - d. Lounge/reception area with kitchen facilities
 - e. Full ADA accessibility
7. Hours of operation 8 am to 5 pm Monday – Friday, and during evening and weekend times as needed for programming

8. Annual Budget sufficient to fully support the proposed programming and staffing

1. Administering The U.T. Pride Center as an Office Within Student Life

In reviewing our peer and aspirational institutions, it became clear that the majority of Pride Centers⁶ are housed within Student Affairs or analogous administrative units. For example, Pride Centers at the University of North Carolina, Texas A&M, the University of Cincinnati, and Penn State are all administered within their divisions of Student Life.⁷ In addition, since the defunding of the Pride Center, the Division of Student Life has already taken on this responsibility, making it the logical choice.

2. Program Elements

Our research concerning program elements began with our own history as well as best practices acknowledged by our peers. We believe it is essential to recapture and build on the hard work already done, and laid out in the history above, in building the programming of a newly reinvigorated Pride Center. Programs like the Pride Ambassadors, Lavender Graduation, SpeakOUT, and Safe Zone are all invaluable and need to be preserved and expanded in the future. Although the Pride Ambassadors have valiantly attempted to keep up some of this programming, without a director or staff, much has been lost since the defunding. Our research into best practices began with a Self-Assessment Guide authored by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education⁸ as well as information produced by the National Consortium of Directors of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Resources in Higher Education.⁹ That body identified several areas of programmatic engagement associated with best practices, including support services (e.g., physical safety, bias reporting, health, and academic), educational outreach and ally building, engagement in research, advocacy, and community service. When reviewing our peer institutions we saw evidence of these programs at many of these institutions. Of the thirty institutions surveyed, all thirty¹⁰ provide services related to educational outreach and ally

⁶ Across institutions, these Centers use various names to describe themselves. For ease, in this report, despite the diversity of names, we use the generic term Pride Center to refer to all these bodies.

⁷ University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (*LGBT Center*, unc.edu, <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/>), Texas A&M (*Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center*, tamu.edu, <https://studentlife.tamu.edu/glbti>), University of Cincinnati (*LGBTQ Center*, uc.edu, <http://www.uc.edu/lgbtq.html>), Penn State (*LGBTQA Student Resource Center*, psu.edu, <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/lgbtqa/>)

⁸ Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, *CAS Self-Assessment Guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Programs and Services* (August 2006), https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Lesbian_Gay_Bisexual_Transgender_Programs_and_Services_SAG.pdf.

⁹ The extensive resources provided by this Consortium are available at www.lgbtcampus.org.

¹⁰ University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (*Our Mission*, unc.edu, <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/about-center/our-mission>), Texas A&M University (*Educational Programs*, tamu.edu, <https://studentlife.tamu.edu/glbti.eduprograms/panels>), University of Cincinnati (*Ally Training Curriculum Series*, uc.edu, <http://www.uc.edu/lgbtq/ally-training.html>), University of Florida (*About*, ufl.edu, <http://lgbt.multicultural.ufl.edu/about/>), Penn State (*Safe Zone*, psu.edu, <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/lgbtqa/safezone.shtml>), University of Washington (*Safe Zone*, washington.edu, <http://depts.washington.edu/qcenter/wordpress/education/safe-zone/>), University of Georgia (*Trans Awareness Week*, uga.edu, https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu/content_page/transgender-awareness-week), Purdue University (*Safe Zone*, purdue.edu, <http://www.purdue.edu/lgbtq/safezone/index.html>),

Clemson University (*Ally Training*, clemson.edu, <https://www.clemson.edu/centers-institutes/gantt/lgbtq-programs/ally.html>), University of California, Davis (*About*, ucdavis.edu, <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/about/index.html>), University of Texas at Austin (*Allies in Action*, utexas.edu, <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/find-an-ally/>),

Ohio State University (*LGBTQ Initiatives*, osu.edu, <http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu/resources/lgbtq-allies/>), University of California, Berkeley (*LGBTQ+ Resources*, berkeley.edu, <http://ejce.berkeley.edu/geneq/lgbtq-resources>), University of California, Los Angeles (*LGBTQ 101*, ucla.edu, <http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/Events-Programs/LGBTQ-101>), University of Virginia (*Programs*, virginia.edu, <http://www.virginia.edu/deanofstudents/lgbtq/programs/>), University of Michigan (*Educational Opportunities*, umich.edu, <https://spectrumcenter.umich.edu/taxonomy/term/154/>), University of Illinois (*Panel Program*, illinois.edu, <https://oiir.illinois.edu/lgbt-resource-center/our-programs/lgbt-speakers-panel-program>), University of Wisconsin (*Training & Workshops*, wisc.edu, <https://lgbt.wisc.edu/training.htm>), University of California, Santa Barbara (*About*, ucsb.edu, <http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/RCSGD/about>), University of Maryland (*Speakers Bureau*, umd.edu, <http://www.lgbt.umd.edu/speakers.html>), University of Pittsburgh (*LGBTQIA+ Resources*, pitt.edu, <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/lgbtqia/>), University of Minnesota (*Queer X*, umn.edu, <https://diversity.umn.edu/gsc/queerx>), Rutgers University (*Safer Space Training Program*, rutgers.edu, <http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/safer-space-training-program/>), University of Indiana (*About*, indiana.edu,

building; twenty-two¹¹ provide support services (e.g., physical safety/bias reporting, health, and academic) to the students, primarily members of the LGBTQ community; eleven¹² provide services to the larger university community; and seventeen¹³ conduct advocacy related activities. Thus our proposed program elements both build on what is strong about our current Center and are also firmly in line with best practices and with the practices of our peer institutions.

<http://gibt.indiana.edu/about/index.php>), Michigan State University (*Educational Programs*, msu.edu, <http://lbgtrc.msu.edu/educational-programs/>), Iowa State University (*Programs and Events*, iastate.edu, <http://www.lgbtss.dso.iastate.edu/programs>), North Carolina State University (*Educational Opportunities*, ncsu.edu, <https://oied.ncsu.edu/gibt/education/>), Louisiana State University (*Programs*, Spectrum LSU, <http://www.spectrumlsu.com/programs>), University of Kentucky (*Programs and Services*, uky.edu, <https://www.uky.edu/lgbtq/programs-and-services>), Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (*Safe Zone*, vt.edu, <http://www.mps.vt.edu/lgbtq/safezone/index.html>).

¹¹ University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (*Our Mission*, unc.edu, <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/about-center/our-mission>), Texas A&M (*Resource Library*, tamu.edu, <https://studentlife.tamu.edu/gibt.library>), University of Cincinnati (*Resources*, uc.edu, <http://www.uc.edu/lgbtq/resources.html>), University of Florida (*Programs and Services*, ufl.edu, http://lgbt.multicultural.ufl.edu/programs_services/), Penn State (*Student Engagement*, psu.edu, <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/lgbtqa/engagement.shtml>), University of Washington (*Health Resources*, washington.edu, <http://depts.washington.edu/qcenter/wordpress/hall-health-resources/>), Purdue University (*Academics*, purdue.edu, <http://www.purdue.edu/lgbtq/academics/index.html>), University of California, Davis (*Support*, ucdavis.edu, <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/support/index.html>), University of Texas, Austin (*Jobs and Scholarships*, utexas.edu, <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/resources/jobs-scholarships/>), University of California, Berkeley (*Academic Resources*, berkeley.edu, <http://ejce.berkeley.edu/geneq/resources/lgbtq-resources/academics>), University of California, Los Angeles (*Bias Report*, ucla.edu, <http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/Report-an-Incident>), University of Virginia (*Awards and Scholarships*, virginia.edu, <http://www.virginia.edu/deanofstudents/lgbtq/awards-and-scholarships/>), University of Michigan (*Bias Report*, umich.edu, <https://expectrespect.umich.edu/topic/report-incident>), University of Illinois (*Services*, illinois.edu, <https://oir.illinois.edu/lgbt-resource-center/services>), University of Wisconsin (*Leadership Programs*, wisc.edu, <https://lgbt.wisc.edu/leadership.htm>), University of Maryland (*Safe Space Discussion*, umd.edu, <http://www.lgbt.umd.edu/safespace.html>), Rutgers (*Resources*, rutgers.edu, <http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/resources/>) and (*Share a Concern*, rutgers.edu, <http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/concerned-do-something/>), University of Indiana (*Scholarships and Financial Support*, indiana.edu, <http://gibt.indiana.edu/Scholarships%20and%20Financial%20Support.php>), Michigan State University (*Get Support*, msu.edu, <http://lbgtrc.msu.edu/get-support/>), University of Iowa (*Scholarships and Awards*, iastate.edu, <http://www.lgbtss.dso.iastate.edu/scholarshipsawards>), North Carolina State University (*Sexual Health Resources*, ncsu.edu, <https://oied.ncsu.edu/gibt/sexual-health-resources/>), University of Kentucky (*Awards and Scholarships*, uky.edu, <https://www.uky.edu/lgbtq/awards-and-scholarships>).

¹² University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (*Healthy Relationships Program*, unc.edu, <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/programs-services/healthy-relationships-ipv-programs>), University of Cincinnati (*Programming*, uc.edu, <http://www.uc.edu/lgbtq/programming.html>), University of Florida (*Parents & Family*, ufl.edu, http://lgbt.multicultural.ufl.edu/parents_family/), University of Georgia (*Lunch with Leaders*, uga.edu, https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu/content_page/lunch-with-leaders-content-page), Purdue (*Health Insurance Informational Session*, purdue.edu, <http://www.purdue.edu/lgbtq/events/event-listing.php?eid=hrh7tjidida30v2In1sopmv514>), University of California, Davis (*HIV Testing*, ucdavis.edu, <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/support/hiv-testing.html>), University of Texas, Austin (*Serving Women and LGBT Communities Since 2004*, utexas.edu, <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/>), University of California, Los Angeles (*Internship and Volunteer Opportunities*, ucla.edu, <http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/Students/Internship-and-Volunteer-Opportunities>), University of Virginia (*The LGBTQ Center*, virginia.edu, <http://www.virginia.edu/deanofstudents/lgbtq/center/>), University of Illinois (*Mission and Goals*, illinois.edu, <https://oir.illinois.edu/lgbt-resource-center/about-lbgtrc/mission-and-goals>), North Carolina State University (*Sexual Health Resources*, ncsu.edu, <https://oied.ncsu.edu/gibt/sexual-health-resources/>).

¹³ University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (*Our Mission*, unc.edu, <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/about-center/our-mission>), Texas A&M (*Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center*, tamu.edu, <http://studentlife.tamu.edu/gibt>), University of Florida (*LGBT Affairs: About*, ufl.edu, <http://lgbt.multicultural.ufl.edu/about/>), University of Georgia (*About Us*, uga.edu, https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu/content_page/about-us-content-page), Purdue (*Mission*, purdue.edu, <http://www.purdue.edu/lgbtq/about/mission.html>), Clemson University (*LGBTQ Programs*, clemson.edu, <https://www.clemson.edu/centers-institutes/gantt/lgbtq-programs/>), University of California, Davis (*About the LGBTQIA Resource Center*, ucdavis.edu, <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/about/index.html>), University of Texas, Austin (*Gender and Sexuality Center*, utexas.edu, <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/>), University of California, Berkeley (*Chancellor's Advisory Committee*, berkeley.edu, <http://ejce.berkeley.edu/geneq/resources/lgbtq-resources/chancellors-advisory-committee-lgbtq>), University of California, Los Angeles (*Welcome to the LGBT Campus Resource Center*, ucla.edu, <http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/>), University of Wisconsin (*Mission*, wisc.edu, <https://lgbt.wisc.edu/mission.htm>), University of California, Santa Barbara (*About*, ucsb.edu, <http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/RCSGD/about/>), University of Maryland (*About*, umd.edu, <http://www.lgbt.umd.edu/about.html>), University of Minnesota (*Mission*, umn.edu, <https://diversity.umn.edu/gsc/mission>), Rutgers (*About Us*, rutgers.edu, <http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/about-us/>), North Carolina State University (*Mission and Vision*, ncsu.edu, <https://oied.ncsu.edu/gibt/mission-and-vision/>), University of Kentucky (*University of Kentucky LGBTQ*, uky.edu, <https://www.uky.edu/lgbtq/>).

3. Affiliation with Academic Programs

In addition to the programmatic elements listed above, the Working Group concluded that it was tremendously important to build and solidify the Pride Center's relationships with campus academic programs. Many U.T. academics study, write, and teach in subjects that overlap with the mission of the Pride Center,¹⁴ and, in the last year and a half, it has become clear that formalizing the relationship between the Pride Center and various parts of academic life on campus is essential. As we conducted our research, we found that this is not only considered a best practice but is also already the practice of many of our peer and aspirational institutions as well as current programming on our campus.¹⁵ First, we propose the creation of a course associated with the Pride Center and modeled on the Diversity Educators Course already housed within the Office of Multicultural Student Life. Second, we propose solidifying and strengthening the engagement of faculty involved in LGBTQIA+ research, teaching, and practice. Many of our peer institutions prioritize this kind of programming; for example, the Director of the Center at the University of Washington in Seattle holds a Lectureship in the Department of Social Work and regularly sits on the dissertation committees of graduate students conducting LGBTQIA+ related research.¹⁶ At the University of Georgia, the Center regularly partners with academic departments such as Education, History, and Women's Studies. At Penn State, the Center offers a speaker series entitled *Straight Talks* in coordination with Academic Departments as well as an associated course in Bio-Behavioral Health, while Purdue offers distinguished lecture services and collaborates with the College of Liberal Arts to provide an LGBT Studies Minor.¹⁷ Finally, to ensure the growth and ongoing viability of these academic elements, we propose the creation of an Academic Advisory Board, perhaps a body within the larger proposed advisory board.

4. Staffing

The staffing we propose above will enable the Center to deliver the programs we envision while also allowing it to be open during the proposed hours. These suggestions are firmly in line with the best practices of our peer and aspirational institutions. Nineteen institutions¹⁸ have what appears to be a full

¹⁴ Core faculty of Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies include Dr. Patrick R. Grzanka (*Department of Psychology: Bio*, utk.edu, <https://psychology.utk.edu/faculty/grzanka.php>), Dr. Gerard Cohen-Vrignaud (*Department of English: Bio*, utk.edu, <http://english.utk.edu/people/gerard-cohen-vrignaud/>), Dr. Rachel Golden (*School of Music: Bio*, utk.edu, <http://www.music.utk.edu/faculty/golden.php>), Dr. Mary McAlpin (*Modern Foreign Languages & Literatures: Bio*, utk.edu, <http://french.utk.edu/people/mcalpin.php>), Dr. Lynn Sacco (*Department of History: Bio*, utk.edu, <http://history.utk.edu/people/lynn-sacco/>), Dr. Maria Stehle (*Modern Foreign Languages & Literatures*, utk.edu, <http://german.utk.edu/people/stehle.php>).

¹⁵ University of Florida (*Home*, ufl.edu, <http://lgbt.multicultural.ufl.edu/students/>), University of Washington (*Queering a World Class Education: Advising*, washington.edu, <http://depts.washington.edu/qcenter/wordpress/>), Purdue (*LGBT Studies Minor*, purdue.edu, http://www.purdue.edu/lgbt/academics/lgbt_studies_minor.html), Ohio State University (*Crossing Identity Boundaries Course*, osu.edu, <http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu/education-and-training/crossing-identity-boundaries-es-hesa-25771/>), University of California, Los Angeles (*Current Courses*, ucla.edu, <http://lgbtqstudies.ucla.edu/undergraduate/current-course/>), University of Michigan (*LGBTQ Studies Minor*, umich.edu, <https://spectrumcenter.umich.edu/article/lgbtq-studies-minor>), University of Wisconsin (*Courses of Study*, wisc.edu, <https://lgbt.wisc.edu/courses.htm>), University of Pittsburgh (*LGBTQIA: Academics*, pitt.edu, <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/lgbtqia/academics/>), University of Minnesota (*Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies*, umn.edu, <https://diversity.umn.edu/gsc/gwss>), Rutgers (*LGBTQIA & Social Justice Courses*, rutgers.edu, <http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/lgbtqa-social-justice-courses/>).

¹⁶ <http://depts.washington.edu/qcenter/wordpress/contact-us/staff/>; Phone interview of Dr. Jen Self, Director of the Q Center.

¹⁷ *Straight Talks* at Penn State (*Straight Talks*, psu.edu, <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/lgbtqa/straighttalks.shtml>) with associated course in Bio-Behavioral Health (BBH 251) (*Biobehavioral Health: BBH 251*, psu.edu, <http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergrad/courses/B/BB%20H/251/>); Purdue lecture series (*Welcome to the LGBTQ Center*, purdue.edu, <http://www.purdue.edu/lgbtq/>) and a minor: (*LGBT Studies Minor*, purdue.edu, http://www.purdue.edu/lgbtq/academics/lgbt_studies_minor.html).

¹⁸ University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (*Our Staff*, unc.edu, <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/about-center/our-staff/terri-phoenix-phd>), University of Cincinnati (*LGBTQ Staff*, uc.edu, <http://www.uc.edu/lgbtq/staff.html>), University of Florida (*Staff*, ufl.edu, http://lgbt.multicultural.ufl.edu/about/staff/lauren_b_hannahs), Penn State (*Full Time Staff and Interns*, psu.edu, <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/lgbtqa/staff.shtml>), University of Washington (*Staff*, washington.edu, <http://depts.washington.edu/qcenter/wordpress/contact-us/staff/>), University of Georgia (*LGBT Resource Center Staff Directory*, uga.edu, https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu/contact_page), Purdue (*Meet Our Staff*, purdue.edu, <http://www.purdue.edu/lgbtq/about/staff.html>), University of California, Davis (*Contact Us*, ucdavis.edu, <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/about/contact.html>), University of Texas, Austin (*Contact*,

time director, and twenty-two have additional professional staff.¹⁹ Beyond this, they generally utilize paid graduate and undergraduate assistants²⁰ as well as volunteer resources.

5. Ongoing Advisory Board (Faculty, Staff, and Students)

Because of the unique role and political context of U.T.'s Pride Center, the Working Group concluded that it is essential to create and maintain an advisory board. The board would be chaired by the Center Director and would support the Director and work closely with Center staff and the Division of Student Life on broader issues of concern to the Pride Center. To maintain a strong connection between the Pride Center and larger diversity and inclusion related efforts on campus, we propose that this body include the University's Chief Diversity Officer.

6 & 7. Space and Hours of Operation

The Pride Center is currently housed within Melrose, a building that is slated for renovation. Although the Working Group does not propose any particular physical location on campus for the Pride Center going forward, it is crucial that it have a designated, visible, centrally-located, and fully accessible space sufficient to provide the proposed programming and to maintain and build on its role as a physical safe space for the students it serves. It is equally essential that it have staffing adequate to keep it open during regular business hours and as needed on weekends and evenings. Locating these Centers visibly and centrally and offering these hours of operation is a common practice among peer and aspirational

utexas.edu, <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/contact/>), University of California, Berkeley (*GenEq Staff*, berkeley.edu, <http://ejce.berkeley.edu/geneq/about-geneq/staff/>), University of California, Los Angeles (*Our Staff*, ucla.edu, <http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/Our-Staff/>), University of Illinois (*Contact Us*, illinois.edu, <https://oiir.illinois.edu/lgbt-resource-center/about-lgbtrc/contact-us>), University of Maryland (*Center Staff*, umd.edu, <http://www.lgbt.umd.edu/staff.html>), University of Minnesota (*Staff*, umn.edu, <https://diversity.umn.edu/gsc/staff/>), Rutgers (*Meet the Staff*, rutgers.edu, <http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/about-us/meet-the-staff/>), University of Indiana (*Staff*, indiana.edu, <http://glbt.indiana.edu/about/Staff.php>), University of Michigan (*Center Staff*, msu.edu, <http://lbgtrc.msu.edu/about-us/center-staff/>), Iowa State University (*Staff*, iastate.edu, <http://www.lgbtss.dso.iastate.edu/about/staff/>), North Carolina State University (*About Us*, ncsu.edu, <https://oied.ncsu.edu/glbt/about-us/>), University of Kentucky (*About Us and Contacts*, uky.edu, <https://www.uky.edu/lgbtq/about-us-and-contacts>).

¹⁹ University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (*Our Staff*, unc.edu, <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/about-center/our-staff/>), Texas A&M (*Staff*, tamu.edu, <http://studentlife.tamu.edu/glbt-staff/>), University of Cincinnati (*LGBTQ Staff*, uc.edu, <http://www.uc.edu/lgbtq/staff.html>), University of Florida (*Staff*, ufl.edu, <http://lgbt.multicultural.ufl.edu/about/staff/>), Penn State (*Full Time Staff and Interns*, psu.edu, <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/lgbtqa/staff.shtml>), University of Washington (*Staff*, washington.edu, <http://depts.washington.edu/qcenter/wordpress/contact-us/staff/>), University of Georgia (*LGBT Resource Center Staff Directory*, uga.edu, https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu/contact_page), Purdue (*Meet Our Staff*, purdue.edu, <http://www.purdue.edu/lgbtq/about/staff.html>), University of California, Davis (*Contact Us*, ucdavis.edu, <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/about/contact.html>), University of Texas, Austin (*Contact*, utexas.edu, <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/contact/>), University of California, Berkeley (*GenEq Staff*, berkeley.edu, <http://ejce.berkeley.edu/geneq/about-geneq/staff/>), University of California, Los Angeles (*Our Staff*, ucla.edu, <http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/Our-Staff/>), University of Illinois (*Contact Us*, illinois.edu, <https://oiir.illinois.edu/lgbt-resource-center/about-lgbtrc/contact-us>), University of Wisconsin (*Meet the Staff*, wisc.edu, <https://lgbt.wisc.edu/staff.htm>), University of Maryland (*Center Staff*, umd.edu, <http://www.lgbt.umd.edu/staff.html>), University of Minnesota (*Staff*, umn.edu, <https://diversity.umn.edu/gsc/staff/>), Rutgers (*Meet the Staff*, rutgers.edu, <http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/about-us/meet-the-staff/>), University of Indiana (*Staff*, indiana.edu, <http://glbt.indiana.edu/about/Staff.php>), Michigan State University (*Center Staff*, msu.edu, <http://lbgtrc.msu.edu/about-us/center-staff/>), Iowa State University (*Staff*, iastate.edu, <http://www.lgbtss.dso.iastate.edu/about/staff/>), North Carolina State University (*About Us*, ncsu.edu, <https://oied.ncsu.edu/glbt/about-us/>), University of Kentucky (*About Us and Contacts*, uky.edu, <https://www.uky.edu/lgbtq/about-us-and-contacts>).

²⁰ University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (*Our Staff*, unc.edu, <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/about-center/our-staff/>), Texas A&M (*Staff*, tamu.edu, <http://studentlife.tamu.edu/glbt-staff/>), University of Cincinnati (*LGBTQ Staff*, uc.edu, <http://www.uc.edu/lgbtq/staff.html>), University of Florida (*Staff*, ufl.edu, <http://lgbt.multicultural.ufl.edu/about/staff/>), Penn State (*Full Time Staff and Interns*, psu.edu, <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/lgbtqa/staff.shtml>), University of Washington (*Staff*, washington.edu, <http://depts.washington.edu/qcenter/wordpress/contact-us/staff/>), University of Georgia (*LGBT Resource Center Staff Directory*, uga.edu, https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu/contact_page), University of California, Davis (*Contact Us*, ucdavis.edu, <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/about/contact.html>), University of California, Los Angeles (*Our Staff*, ucla.edu, <http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/Our-Staff/>), University of Wisconsin (*Meet the Staff*, wisc.edu, <https://lgbt.wisc.edu/staff.htm>), University of Minnesota (*Staff*, umn.edu, <https://diversity.umn.edu/gsc/staff/>), Rutgers (*Meet the Staff*, rutgers.edu, <http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/about-us/meet-the-staff/>), Michigan State University (*Center Staff*, msu.edu, <http://lbgtrc.msu.edu/about-us/center-staff/>), North Carolina State University (*About Us*, ncsu.edu, <https://oied.ncsu.edu/glbt/about-us/>).

institutions. For example, UGA, UC Davis, UT Austin, Ohio State, Purdue, and UNC Chapel Hill all describe their centers as being either in central locations, locations with high student traffic, or within buildings housing Student Services.²¹ In addition, these institutions generally keep their Centers open for hours in line with this proposal.²²

In addition to visibility and centrality, providing space adequate both to deliver programming and to create a central safe space for students is both essential and common practice.²³

8. Annual Budget Sufficient to Fully Support the Proposed Programming and Staffing

The Working Group would be willing to consult with concerned constituencies during spring semester 2017 on a detailed proposed budget for the Center for the academic year 2017-2018. We would also like to factor in expected growth in subsequent years. We cannot stress enough the need for adequate funding to support a Pride Center on our campus that is in line with the practices of our peer institutions and that, most importantly, meets the needs of our students.

V. Conclusion

The defunding of the Pride Center and the removal of its Director has made it impossible for the Center to pursue in any meaningful or sustainable way its mission to provide a safe and welcoming environment for LGBTQQA students and to improve campus climate through awareness, visibility, and education. It is the profound hope of the Pride Center Working Group that a new, fully-funded Center will fulfill the wish expressed at the end of the 2013-2014 Diversity Impact Report: “May our hope and determination for a better campus spur the entrepreneurial ingenuity, grassroots spirit, and steadfast resolve that we need to be even greater in the future.”²⁴

²¹ University of Georgia (*The LGBT Resource Center*, uga.edu, https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu/content_page/about-us-content-page), University of California, Davis (*Contact Us*, ucdavis.edu, <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/about/contact.html>), University of Texas, Austin (*Building Details: Student Activity Center*, utexas.edu, <http://facilitieservices.utexas.edu/buildings/UTM/0278>), Ohio State University (*LGBTQ Initiatives*, osu.edu, <http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu/resources/lgbtq-allies/>), Purdue University (*Welcome to the LGBTQ Center*, purdue.edu, <http://www.purdue.edu/lgbtq/>), University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (*Visit Us*, unc.edu, <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/about-center/visit-us>).

²² University of Georgia: M-F 8am-5pm (*About Us*, uga.edu, https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu/content_page/about-us-content-page), University of California, Davis: M-Th 10am-6pm, F 10am-5pm (*Contact Us*, ucdavis.edu, <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/about/contact.html>), University of Texas, Austin: walk-in hours 10am-4pm (*Contact*, utexas.edu, <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/contact/>), Purdue: M-F 8am-5pm, (*Welcome to the LGBTQ Center*, purdue.edu, <http://www.purdue.edu/lgbtq/>) University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill: M-F 9am-5pm (*Hours of Operation*, unc.edu, <https://lgbtq.unc.edu/about-center/hours-operation>).

²³ University of California, Davis (*Map of the LGBTQIA Resource Center*, ucdavis.edu, <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/about/map-center.html>), Texas A&M University: “Stop by the GLBT Resource Center if you're looking for service references, resources, or just a safe space to hang out, study, and relax” (*Welcome*, tamu.edu, <https://studentlife.tamu.edu/glbt/>), University of Cincinnati: “The Center includes a LGBTQ resource library and a common safe space for educational, social and recreational programming related to LGBTQ student issues” (*LGBTQ Center*, uc.edu, <http://www.uc.edu/lgbtq.html>), Penn State: “We work to create and maintain an open, safe, and inclusive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students at The Pennsylvania State University” (*Mission*, psu.edu, https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/lgbtqa/mission_shtml), University of Washington: “The Q Center is the HUB of Q Life. This is where you can be yourself and get away from the hectic campus. Come and lounge for a bit or if you need to study or print out your term paper, they've got it all for you. There's a Q library for you as well as Q Advisers and even a Q Mentoring program if you'd like to be paired with a Faculty/Staff/Grad” (*Q Campus Walking Tour and Map*, washington.edu, <http://depts.washington.edu/qfsa/q-campus-map/>) and virtual tour of the Q Center (*Virtual Tour of the Q*, washington.edu, <http://depts.washington.edu/qcenter/wordpress/about/tour/>), University of Georgia: “The LGBT Resource Center consists of a spacious reception area which houses our extensive library of over 1000 books, a collection of current magazines, a growing DVD library of both entertaining and educational films, several varieties of organizational and education pamphlets, and sexual health resources. Our student lounge provides a place where you can rest, socialize, eat lunch, or study between classes. The lounge is equipped with three computer stations, a microwave, and small refrigerator. There is also a small, shared conference room which is often used by various student organizations for leadership meetings” (*About Us*, uga.edu, https://lgbtcenter.uga.edu/content_page/about-us-content-page).

²⁴ 2013-2014 Diversity Impact Report, p. 23.

 **YOU BELONG HERE.**



Exhibit A



T PRIDE CENTER

Pride Center Discussion Groups

OPEN TO STUDENTS WHO IDENTIFY (OR ARE QUESTIONING)

QueerABILITY

ACE & ARO

QUEER & TRANS PEOPLE OF COLOR (QTPOC)

TRANS & GENDER QUEER

BI & PAN

Pride Center Programs

InQueeries: A weekly program where students discuss topics that are important and relevant to the LGBTQIA community.

Dinner Dialogues: A monthly dinner where students discuss intersectionality and social justice.

Signature Pride Center Events

Welcome Week Open House

Ice Cream Social

Pride Week

FriendsGiving Dinner

Birthday Celebration

Ally Week

Day of Silence

Lavender Graduation



pridecenter.utk.edu
 865-974-7803
 pridecenter@utk.edu
 @UTKPrideCenter

About Us

The Pride Center is open to all students, faculty, and staff as a brave space on campus.

As a physical symbol of UT's commitment to diversity, the Pride Center provides support, resources, and a community space for UT's LGBTQIA and ally students, faculty, and staff, as well as anyone who seeks to learn about sexual orientation or gender identity. Pride Center achieves this by sponsoring programs and events that raise awareness, increase visibility, and engage in advocacy regarding LGBTQIA issues.

Vision

A campus where everyone belongs.

Visit Us

We are located in Melrose Hall next to Hodges Library.

Mission

The Pride Center works to provide a safe and inclusive environment for UT's diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning, transgender, and intersex communities and their allies.



Ambassador Program

The Pride Center Ambassador Program is a student leadership initiative for LGBTQIA and ally students. Pride Ambassadors are student leaders who represent the Center, help plan programs and events, and welcome those who visit the Pride Center.

FYS 129: OUT@UT

OUT@UT is a first-year studies class designed for LGBTQIA students at UT which aims to facilitate both personal growth and campus leadership. This class gives students the space to explore LGBTQIA history and culture, while also learning about the importance of being an engaged student and what it means to be "out" at UT. Other resources exclusively offered to OUT@UT students include a peer mentor program with upper level LGBTQIA students at UT and volunteer opportunities at the Pride Center. Class topics include, but are not limited to, coming out, campus life, healthy relationships, mental health, body image, becoming an active citizen, and intersectionality.

Exhibit B

DIVERSITY IMPACT REPORT 2013 – 2014

pgs 17-23:

OUTREACH: LGBT & ALLY RESOURCE CENTER

Background

Plans for the center began in the summer of 2008, when then Interim Chancellor Jan Simek met with the executive board of the Commission for LGBT People. After receiving a positive response from Simek, a Resource Center Committee was established within the Commission. In June 2009 the committee completed its study and issued a committee report outlining a proposal for a Center. During this time, a space in Melrose Hall was designated by Simek to be the location of the new Center. The Commission's executive board and members of the Resource Center committee met throughout fall 2009 to devise a plan for the space.

The OUTreach: LGBT and Ally Resource Center opened on February 25, 2010. The Center operated with the assistance of the Commission's graduate student and budget, as well as a volunteer director (Donna Braquet) from February 2010 to August 2013. In June 2013, the Center became an independent unit in the newly created Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity. In August 2013 Vice Chancellor Rickey Hall and Dean of Libraries Steve Smith agreed to the 25% appointment of Donna Braquet as Director of the Center and Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor. In addition to the Commission's graduate assistant who works at the Center 20 hours per week, the Center hired two work-study students who work approximately ten hours per week, allowing the Center to be open approximately 46 hours per week.

Mission and Purpose

The LGBT and Ally Resource Center works to provide a safe and welcoming environment for UT's diverse lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual communities.

As a physical symbol of UT's commitment to diversity, OUTreach provides support, resources, and a community space for UT's LGBTQQI and ally students, faculty, and staff, as well as anyone who seeks to learn about sexual orientation or gender identity. OUTreach achieves this by sponsoring programs and events that raise awareness, increase visibility, and engage in advocacy regarding LGBTQQIA issues.

Staff

- Director, 25% (Donna Braquet, Associate Professor)
25% OUTreach Center Director and Special Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor. 75% Biology Librarian, University Libraries.
- Graduate Student, 20 hours/week, 10 month appointment (Charlie Clifton, 2013-14)
- 2 Student Assistants, 10-15 hours/week (Max Cross, Robin Lovett)

Priorities

- Student Engagement & Development

The Center has been intentional in creating opportunities for student engagement and development. One such initiative is the OUTreach Ambassador Program. The program

was piloted in 2013 and the formal program was established in Spring 2014 with a generous grant from Ready for the World and supporting grants from the Council on Diversity and Interculturalism (CDI) and United Residence Hall Council (URHC). Ten undergraduate students were selected as ambassadors for 2014—eight who identify as LGBTQQIA and two allies.

During the spring semester ambassadors worked together to develop strategic events for the upcoming year, allowing them to form a cohort and learn about the history and goals of OUTreach. In doing so, the ambassadors also internalized the Center's values, which allowed them to represent the Center and its mission to others. The ambassadors worked in small groups to create four 30-minute workshops that will be offered to residence halls as part of a newly formalized SpeakOUT! Program, a speaker's bureau for campus classes and organization visits. The ambassador workshops consist of the following: More Than Marriage: Important LGBTQ Issues, Being an Ally, Intro to Trans* Issues, and That's So Gay: An Introduction to Slurs & Stereotypes.

As part of the program's promise for leadership development and peer networking experiences, ambassadors attended Vanderbilt University's Office of LGBTQI Life's Out in Front Conference and Middle Tennessee State University's LGBTQ College Conference. Ambassadors also participated on a Women's Coordinating Council sex education panel, a student panel focused on the political and personal meanings of the word 'queer,' and a Women's Studies class panel.

- Collaboration & Alliances

In order for OUTreach to expand its impact on campus, it has worked to develop partnerships with allied departments on campus, as well as groups and individuals in the community. OUTreach has been intentional in connecting LGBTQ students to strategic partners on campus such as Career Services, the S.E.E. Center, and the Student Success Center. As specific examples, Shane Bierma from the UT Department of Psychology facilitated a discussion on healthy relationships and shared information about their same-sex inclusive RelationshipRx program and interns from the Student Counseling Center and Student Health Center provided a session on the Trans* Student Health Program. The OUTreach Center invited Tennessee Equality Project, the state's leading LGBTQ equality organization, to present its Advocacy 101 training to students in preparation for the Annual Equality Day on the Hill and invited the Student Counseling Center to provide a LGBTQ specific QPR Suicide Prevention training session.

The Center and its ambassadors are currently working toward a stronger relationship with local gay-straight alliances in efforts to provide mentoring and role models, and to also market the resources available at UT to prospective students. OUTreach has made a new partnership with the organizers of Oak Ridge P-FLAG and several gay-straight alliances hosted the first annual Youth Pride Fest in May. Four OUTreach ambassadors assisted on-site and served on a panel about what it is like being out in college titled, It Gets Better.

- Branding & Marketing

This year the Center has been intentional in creating a consistent look and feel to its flyers, website, newsletters, and social media. Our branding is centered on the Center's positive, supportive, and inclusive motto—"You belong here." Several new communication initiatives were undertaken this year including a new website, monthly

newsletters, the addition of a Twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram presence, a large banner and rainbow flag outside of the Center, and an dedicated OUTreach announcement list. The OUTreach logo was also updated to represent the Center's new administrative reporting line to the Vice Chancellor for Diversity and UT branding such as Big Orange, Big Ideas was used within our marketing to strengthen our tie to campus.

In addition to outward marketing, OUTreach was intentional to include students in participative marketing campaigns by creating opportunities for students to share OUTreach's messages. A few examples of these are the I Love Allies/I am an Ally photo campaign and the National Coming Out Day campaign, which included painting the Rock, chalking the Pedestrian Walkway, and photo statements.

- Education & Awareness

OUTreach has a two-fold mission to provide a safe and welcoming environment for LGBTQQA students and to improve campus climate through awareness, visibility, and education. This academic year has seen an increase in our educational efforts. For example, the Center was contacted by prospective students and faculty, community members, and parents seeking information ranging from questions about campus climate to trans* supportive homeless shelters. Students also participated in increasing awareness on campus by representing the Center at nine information fairs and orientation sessions including Multicultural Student Life browse session, ME4UT weekend, and several InVOLvement fairs.

OUTreach held many educational events including webinars on how to support bisexual and transgender students, a LGBTQ History Month Film Series that included films about the AIDS crisis; marriage equality; Don't Ask, Don't Tell; Stonewall; and Harvey Milk. Many of these events piqued the interest of student journalists and the director was interviewed for articles that appeared in the Daily Beacon and TNJN.com.

In 2013-14 the director of OUTreach also served as the special assistant to Vice Chancellor for Diversity and as chair of the UT Faculty Senate's Benefits & Professional Development Committee. In these roles Braquet compiled several reports that were used to inform key personnel and departments on campus. The reports included researching, compiling, and analyzing data on the following policies at Top 25 institutions: gender inclusive housing, sick and bereavement leave, tuition discount or waiver for same-sex spouses/domestic partners, and faculty family leave. Additionally, Braquet compiled and analyzed benefit policies for Tennessee Board of Regents schools, as well as THEC peers of UT Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Memphis.

Progress

The Center's mere existence serves to create a more welcoming and inclusive campus environment. Against the odds, UT's OUTreach Center serves as the state's only LGBTQ Center at a public institution. Although the Center strives toward being an office comparable to its longer established and better funded peers, our improbable establishment and persistence should not be forgotten or taken for granted.

In order to be seen as an equal and rightful campus partner, OUTreach has worked diligently to integrate into campus events and traditions such as Welcome Week, Homecoming, InVOLvement Fairs, FYS 101 textbooks, New Student Orientations, campus tours, RA training, and the Division of Student Life semester calendar. Having LGBTQ representation woven within the fabric of campus moves our community from being "other" to being a part of the Volunteer family. Given UT's history with banning

the first lesbian and gay student group in the 1970's, to its resistance to including sexual orientation and gender identity to the non-discrimination statement in the 1990's-2000's, to its discouraging lack of leadership on domestic partner benefits in the 2010's, the campus needs to be reminded that LGBTQ students, staff, and faculty always have been and always will be part of the University of Tennessee.

In addition to integrating LGBTQ content into existing venues, the Center takes the lead on campus by providing LGBTQ specific programs and events, both those targeted for LGBTQ students, staff, and faculty, and those who are allies or potential allies. Largescale events such as National Coming Out Week, LGBT History Month, Ally Week, Bisexual Awareness Day, Transgender Day of Remembrance, OUTreach Birthday Celebration, and Lavender Graduation provide awareness, visibility, and education throughout campus.

Vol Vision

One of Vol Vision's goals is to retain and graduate undergraduate students. Several years ago a study at UT revealed that a majority of students who did not persist cited that they did not feel a sense of belonging at the university. This finding is why OUTreach uses the double-meaning motto "You belong here," which both implies that LGBTQ students have a right to be at UT and that UT is a good choice for their education, but also that they 'belong' in terms of being supported by the Center and others who accept them as their full, authentic selves. Creating that sense of belonging is always at the forefront of planning and decision making. As a first year student mentioned to the director, "The OUTreach Center is what made the difference in me coming to UT or going to another school. I knew there was a place here where I would fit in."

Another Vol Vision goal is to increase the number and diversity of graduate students. While creating a sense of belonging for graduate students overall is difficult due to their lack of time, the intensity of their coursework, and the amount of time spent within their departments, the isolation felt by LGBTQ graduate students is even greater. In a real life scenario, a bewildered looking young lady walked past the Center several times one day before timidly walking in. OUTreach staff asked if they could help her and she remained quiet for a few more moments before saying, "I didn't know a place like this existed. I was told that I would be fired for holding my girlfriend's hand on campus if they caught me." The staff assured her that that would not happen. This graduate student was from Washington, DC and had come to Knoxville and UT with such fear of the South and its discrimination that she was afraid to be out in her department or as a GTA for fear of losing her job and being kicked out of the program. This exemplifies the need for more resources for LGBTQ graduate students. The OUTreach Center has been working with students this semester to create a LGBTQ graduate student group for fall 2014 called OUTgrads.

Challenges

- Funding

The OUTreach Center had a very modest programming budget of \$3000 for the 2013-14 year, which was supplemented by a \$5000 Ready for the World grant, two \$300 grants from CDI and URHC, a successful \$500 Impact Big Ideas campaign, and private donations which had accumulated in the R account over several years. The Vice Chancellor for Diversity also generously covered the operational costs of the Center's

telephone, cable, web hosting, furniture and refurbishments, as well as Lavender Graduation and professional development for the director. In order to meet the needs of the students and create greater awareness, education, and visibility on campus, the Center's budget will need to be increased significantly. Compared to other similarly located institutions in the South that are in the top 25, the Center's current staffing and funding is dramatically small. Funding will need to be allocated toward a full-time director position, a full-time programming staff member, and at least a \$20,000 programming budget in order for OUTreach to move beyond its current level of service.

• Campus Climate

The OUTreach Center has operated in a limited, stealth mode until given a permanent administrative home in July 2013. Though stifling and overall detrimental to campus diversity and inclusion, members of the Commission learned to operate under this pretense due to years of both overt and inferred communications from different administrators. As OUTreach moves forward on campus by seeking collaborative partners, by increasing its visibility, and by being vocal on issues that impact LGBTQQIA students, staff and faculty, it is anticipated that the Center will face challenges that may not be overt, but instead subtle, yet no less difficult. It is hoped that the Vice Chancellor for Diversity will continue to make changes on campus and begin to dismantle the campus' long-standing resistance to true inclusion.

Notable Achievements

This year has been one of great improvement for the OUTreach Center. More has been accomplished in this one year than in the previous three years since the Center opened. Three main reasons have contributed to this which are: 1) having an administrative home with strong and supportive leadership, as well as administrative and budgetary assistance; 2) the director being given official appointment in both status and percentage of time; 3) the director now seeing herself as a student affairs professional which is accompanied by her involvement with student affairs units on campus, her understanding of student affairs theory, and her participation in student affairs professional organizations and conferences.

The Center has moved from being a grassroots-feeling, drop-in space on campus to being a professional office that offers quality services and is open on a reliable and consistent basis. In the past, the Center was open 20 hours per week and the hours of operation varied based on the graduate assistant's class schedule. This year the Center was open 10:00 am-6:00 pm Monday through Friday. Two Federal Work Study students were hired in the spring semester that allowed the Center to expand Tuesdays and Thursdays to 9:00 pm. The director also had regularly scheduled hours that allowed her not only provide a presence, but to also observe and influence Center culture. Owing to the students' initiative and funding from the Vice Chancellor, the Center also underwent a huge aesthetic transformation this year including a more inviting layout, better use of space, additional movable seating, and comfortable, homelike design elements such as photographs, posters, pillows, plants, and paint.

Another distinct change from years' past is the level of involvement and impact that the director has been able to have with students. The director led trips to the Laverne Cox talk and the Out in Front Conference at Vanderbilt University, as well as the LGBTQ+ College Conference at MTSU. The director had weekly meetings with Ambassadors and attended weekly Rainbow Coffeehouse programs to learn about and listen to students'

needs, viewpoints, and input. One outcome that speaks to the director's level of involvement was being asked to provide recommendations for ten students who were applying for opportunities such as FYS 101 peer mentors, diversity educators, internships, graduate schools, and Vol2Vol peer educator program.

Although the Center held dozens of events and programs this past year, these two metaaccomplishments—

creating a safe and welcoming, professional office and providing an available, authentic, principled leader and role model for students—have been the most notable achievements for this year.

Future

The future is bright and full of excitement as OUTreach approaches toward its 5th anniversary. The nation is heading towards marriage equality. Americans have the highest understanding and acceptance of LGB citizens ever seen and trans* issues are moving to the forefront. I see great possibilities for the Center and an LGBTQ-inclusive campus in the next five years. I envision the upcoming 5th anniversary as a time for rebirth and expansion of the Center with the support and momentum in place that ideally would have existed at the time of its creation.

The short-term goals will be to further stabilize the Center and offer a full-range of services and opportunities to students— from prospective students in high school gaystraight alliances, to first year students, to upper class students, to graduating seniors, and ultimately to alumni. In order to accomplish this I will focus on two long-term strategic goals—Assessment and Fundraising.

In order to be successful in providing high-impact services and programs with limited time and funds, OUTreach will focus on assessing the needs of students, staff, and faculty, including those who identify as LGBTQ, those who identify as allies, those who are potential allies, and those who are resistant to inclusion. The director hopes that LGBTQ concerns will be part of plans for a larger diversity climate survey. Should a campus-wide diversity climate survey not be on the horizon, OUTreach would like to develop a LGBTQ survey so to provide baseline data and to inform future directions. OUTreach also will focus on incorporating assessment into its programs and events to be able to show impact, as well as for continual improvement. In tandem with assessment will be a goal toward more fundraising which will be accomplished by working with the newly founded LGBTQ+ Alumni Council, developing relationships with corporate affinity groups, strategic fundraising around milestone events and specific programs, and building relationships with prospective donors.

Conclusion

The OUTreach: LGBT & Ally Resource Center realizes the hopes and dreams of alumni, staff, and faculty who never thought they would see the day of such permanent and official support from the university. This coming fall will mark the first time that all classes of students will have never know the University of Tennessee, Knoxville without the OUTreach Center. It is an honor and a privilege to have the opportunity to direct the Center and be part of this exciting time in the university's history. The OUTreach Center serves as the perfect example of the saying, "Where there is a will, there is a way." May our hope and determination for a better campus spur the entrepreneurial ingenuity, grassroots spirit, and steadfast resolve that we need to be even greater in the future.