

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

It is hard to believe that 2011 is coming to a close. It was an historic year for LGBT people in America: Don't Ask, Don't Tell was overturned, same-sex couples in New York won marriage equality and in Massachusetts, Governor Patrick signed "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights," adding gender identity to most of the state's non-discrimination statutes. But with every victory we celebrate, we are reminded of how much work still needs to be done.

Students at the LGBT Center continue to do their part to make our campus a more welcoming and socially just place, and this semester was filled with achievements. As you look through this newsletter, you'll find some photos highlighting our most successful events. From "Guess the Straight Person" to our National Coming Out Day rally, the LGBT Center and our education group Team Q have been a consistently visible presence on campus.

In addition to our larger events, Team Q has also started implementing Safe Zone training for members of the Tufts community to help allies develop their understanding of LGBT issues and vocabulary so that they are more equipped to address homophobia and transphobia on campus. I am so proud of the work that these students have done; their commitment to improving campus climate has been truly inspirational.

Even though the fall is just coming to a close, we have already begun planning some exciting events for our spring semester: We will be continuing our successful 2nd Friday Lunch Series with a discussion of sexuality and religion led by former Metropolitan Community Church minister Joan Saniuk. We are proud to be sending eight students to the National Creating Change conference in Baltimore, where two members of Team Q, Katie Hegarty and George Murphy, will be leading a caucus called "Not on My Campus: Making Queer Student Activism Personal." And, of course, our discussion groups—Men's Group, Women's Group, Bi Group, and Queer Students of Color—will continue doing outreach and providing an invaluable space for students to come discuss the issues that most impact their lives.

Thanks so much for reading our newsletter. We hope to see you around or hear from you this semester!

—Tom Bourdon, Director



Team Q's annual retreat in Provincetown, MA, September 2011

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ALUM SPOTLIGHT: RALAN HILL (E '00)

Can you tell us a little about your work for the Operations Center at the State Department?

Serving the American public as a Foreign Service Officer in the U.S. Department of State is a real pleasure. My current assignment is a thirteen-month tour as a Watch officer in the Operations Center in Washington, DC. Previously I served overseas at our consulate in Kolkata, India, and the embassy in Asuncion, Paraguay. The Ops Center serves as a conduit of information for Secretary Clinton and other senior department officials. It is an exciting place to be because I see the news before it makes the papers. I also get to connect the Secretary telepathically with her counterparts around the world. The other day we put together a conference call with several foreign leaders -- I don't think any other organization in the world could get a dozen foreign ministers or heads of state on the same phone line in a matter of minutes.

How did your time at Tufts prepare you for this work?

Tufts provided a great foundation for my Foreign Service work, and the international aspects to the University are world class. A few years ago I found myself sitting at a table with the German Ambassador to India-- what did we have in common? We both attended Tufts. Study abroad, the large contingent of international students, and the University's commitment to exposing students to the world and public service really inspired me to this career. As one example of Tufts' international commitment, the Dalai Lama's brother came to speak at the University while I was there. I remembered that in India, where in March 2008 I found myself in the mountainous border region between Bhutan, China, and Nepal as the U.S.

government's designated representative at the enthronement ceremony of the third reincarnation of His Eminence the Domo Geshe Ripoche, then a cute four-year-old, New York-born boy.

Were you out during your time at Tufts? What was your experience like?

I was pseudo-out. I didn't actually come out to myself until the summer between my sophomore and junior years. And from that point on, I was out to my friends and classmates. Amongst my Tufts' ROTC friends there was an unspoken understanding: we all knew what was going on, but all made the effort to avoid compromising discussions that explicitly referenced my sexual orientation.

What do you miss most about Tufts?

I miss the warm, encouraging atmosphere Tufts provided; there are a lot more naysayers in the real world.

What advice do you have for LGBT students interested in doing government work?

If you want to live and work overseas, and you are a patriotic U.S. citizen, then the only thing to hold you back at the State Department is yourself. Secretary Clinton has done amazing things to ensure my family is treated, bureaucratically, like any other Foreign Service family. She is hampered in many cases by the law, but has shown extraordinary flexibility and creativity in the areas under her control. The Foreign Service is full of LGBT officers and on a personal level I have been welcomed and well taken care of. Even Congress has confirmed some gay ambassadors.



Foreign Service Officer Ralan Hill, E'00, began work in the Operations Center of the State Department, in Washington, DC, in July 2011.

Check out this 2009 Washington Times article about Secretary of State Clinton's work on behalf of LGBT State Department employees, featuring Ralan Hill:

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/weblogs/kralev-diplomacy/2009/feb/04/clinton-gives-hope-to-gay-diplomats/>



Tufts Alumni

Looking to connect with LGBT Tufts alumni/alumnae, get career advice, or find out what life is like after Tufts? Look no further than Pride on the Hill (POTH), Tufts' own LGBT alumni/alumnae organization.

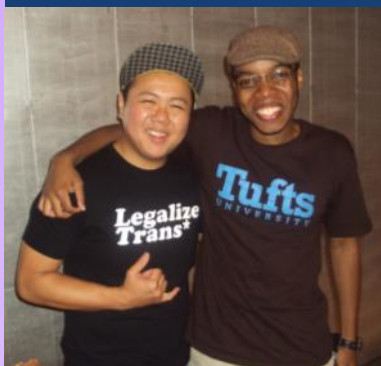
POTH seeks to support and connect LGBTQ alumni/alumnae, faculty and staff, foster links between the LGBTQ alumni community and the university, and to enrich LGBTQ life at Tufts through academic, cultural and social programming.

To stay informed about POTH events, sign up for our email list at <http://ase.tufts.edu/lgbt/alumni/index.aspx>. You can also check the POTH web site at www.prideonthehill.org, or find the group on Facebook.

ALUMNI/ALUMNAE NOTES

- **Stuart Falk (A '66)** in Los Angeles would be happy to organize a meet-up for west coast residents in either LA or San Francisco. He can be contacted at: stuartfalk@me.com or (323) 962-7006.
- **Leah L. Knobler (LA '05)** recently returned to work at Tufts University in Student Services and loves dressing up in her fleece cat suit.
- After more than 11 years as a couple, **Dan Weiller (A'81)** and Tom Lamb were married on Friday, September 23 in Albany, New York. Weiller, 52, is a communications consultant and managing director of PLACommunications, a unit of Patricia Lynch Associates, a government relations firm in New York City and Albany. Lamb, 51, is a project manager and engineering designer at PlumbExcel Group in Albany.

LGBT CENTER EVENTS: FALL 2011



Slam Poet Kit Yan (left) with LGBT Center Intern Aliandro Brathwaite. Yan performed for a packed audience in Sophia Gordon on September 29th, 2011.



Robyn Ochs, bisexual activist, author and teacher engaged students in an interactive lesson about sexuality and gender called "Beyond Binaries" on November 2, 2011.



In commemoration of World AIDS Day, the LGBT Center and the International Center sponsored a display of this block of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt in Remis Sculpture Court.

Students and staff also had an opportunity to make panels to send to the AIDS Quilt.

World AIDS Day (December 1) also featured a lecture by several local activists (including Community Health lecturer, Kevin Irwin) on the current state of HIV/AIDS.

If you would like to help support the work of the LGBT Center, contact LGBT Center Director Tom Bourdon at tom.bourdon@tufts.edu

**STUDENT ARTIST SPOTLIGHT:
SAMANTHA GOZLAN
SCHOOL OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS**



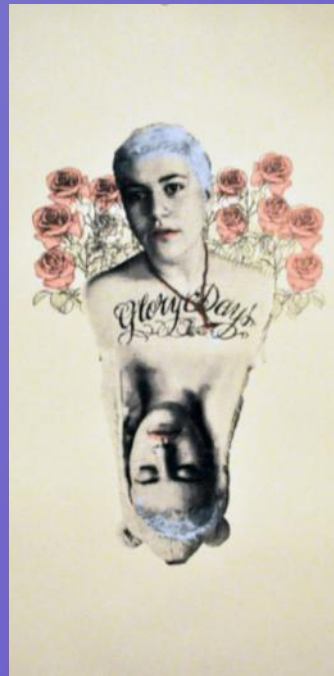
Samantha Gozlan, SMFA '14

Artist's Statement:

My work deals with the possibility for symbolism in our changing american [sic] nation and tries to implicate different ways images are represented and interpreted. My work is a dialogue with the viewer about socially constructed binaries which are enforced by individuals on both a community level and a one-on-one basis. The work that I make is process driven and often fractured by an individual's ability to see past some character/imagery featured in my work. My academic work directly impacts the art I make. I'm constantly researching and creating back stories for pieces and ensuring that they make sense and are being investigated through a political lens.



Onyx I



Glory Days



Onyx II

Check out this Advocate article about queer campus activism happening at Tufts, featuring Team Q member Grainne Griffiths (A'14)!

http://www.advocate.com/News/Daily_News/2011/12/12/LGBT_Rights_Religious_Faith_at_Odds_at_Some_Colleges/

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: EMILY MEARS STAFF ASSISTANT

My work with the LGBT Center is rewarding on many levels but the one that is most important to me is the personal one. I am a 27-year-old woman who is just starting to become comfortable with combining her sexuality with her professional life. At 17, I signed up for the Coast Guard Reserves and I was taught that combining your work life with your personal life was a threat and could be dangerous to the mission at hand. I took that belief so literally that I stifled my personal life from my coworkers and did not think twice about it. A year later I finally admitted to myself that I was a lesbian. It wasn't until then that I fully understood what Don't Ask, Don't Tell was and how it was going to affect my career and my ability to be successful. Talking about my sexuality was considered unprofessional and illegal. I felt trapped!

It was also during that time that I was sexually assaulted. I carried this secret with me, like my sexuality, until my sophomore year of college at UMass Dartmouth. Along with hiding my sexuality I was also discouraged from coming forward with my rape because I did not have physical evidence. Going through the investigation process drastically changed my view of the military because of how they treated victims of these crimes. I was also questioned about my sexuality multiple times and in my efforts to keep open the investigation about my rape I started to lie about who I really was. Aggravated that I was unable to fully commit to the military and myself, I turned my focus to school. I was majoring in psychology and I found myself leaning towards taking women's studies classes. I didn't know at the time, but it was the best medicine for the angst and confusion over the inequalities I was facing.

Throughout the yearlong investigation I became entrenched in the world of women's rights, gender and sexuality, and social justice. I decided that aside from my work as an Administrative Assistant that I would use my free time to intern at a local substance abuse and domestic violence shelter. It was there that I realized I had an intrinsic passion for working with groups that often experience great adversity, especially women who've suffered tragic events similar to my own. I channeled my anger into non-profit work because it was the only outlet I had at the time and it helped me cope.

Inevitably, the investigation of my rape ended and the case was closed. Although the perpetrator was acquitted I acquired an indescribable feeling of justice for myself and to others that were unable to come forward with the violence that many have experienced. It was then that I finally figured it out: taking a stand for the things you believe in not only makes you stronger but it helps others and it teaches you a great deal about the power of having a voice. I realized that hiding yourself is a crime to yourself and society. It doesn't help anyone in the long run.

Once I found a voice to discuss sexual assault I was able to start opening up about my sexuality in the work place. I started opening up to the idea that talking about sexuality could be a source of education and outreach and not a distraction. When I first started working at Tufts I was still a little unsettled as to how I was going to combine who I was with what my job entailed. Once I met the students, I was quickly reminded that I was in a Center that unconditionally supported me for who I was. College was where I learned the most because it was during that time that I was personally changed the most. Then I thought that if these students can challenge themselves to be involved and push themselves academically then I can challenge myself to develop professionally within the LGBT world. My path of figuring out who I am and what I want to do in life is evolving all the time and if I can offer anyone assistance through their journey and time at Tufts then I will feel successful. Whether I'm coordinating with a student to create a program for the LGBT Center or working on the Latino Center budgets to host a speaker for ALAS (Association of Latin American Students) I feel as though my work at the Bolles House surpasses my job title. I have a personal connection with the work that is being done here at the LGBT Center and I am extremely happy to be a part of the social justice initiatives that we facilitate. The most rewarding part of my job is that I have the opportunity to work with our amazing students who continuously surprise me with their passion, diligence and personality! They are constantly reminding me that being yourself is beautiful and it is important.



Emily Mears is in her second year as staff assistant for the LGBT Center and the Latino Center.

A GRADUATING STUDENT INTERN REMEMBERS HER TIME AT THE LGBT CENTER

By Katherine Nittmann

As I reflect on my time as an LGBT Center intern, I take pride in how far Team Q, our peer educator group, has come in the last 3 years.

I vividly remember arriving at Tufts as a scared, lonely freshman very far away from her native Colorado. The LGBT Center and Team Q in particular immediately became some of the most welcoming structures I could latch on to. I spent a lot of time at the Center, taking advantage of its resources and the great conversations that always seem to be happening. Through these groups, I met many people who would keep me socially fulfilled as I attended classes and expanded my academic views.

I had the honor of being a Team Q member my freshman year and its student coordinator my sophomore, junior, and (truncated) senior year. I also had the good fortune to attend our ridiculously fun Provincetown retreat 4 years in a row. During this time I participated in the transformation of Team Q from its original role as the Center's speakers' bureau to its current diverse (and diversifying!) role as a peer educator group.

I was a part of the first "Guess the Straight Person!", performed in Dewick dining hall, filled to capacity with incoming freshmen and hundreds more waiting outside the doors. The moment of stepping onto that stage in a cafeteria transformed to be a performance venue felt so new, exciting, and refreshing. The Team Q members on that panel had trained extensively together in the days preceding that inaugural event, and it had bonded us. We were nervous but knew we were about to bring something never seen before to the campus that would be fun, engaging, and educational. It was also the first time anything LGBT Center-related had drawn such a huge crowd. We felt like a success before we even started. I really view that moment as the starting point of a greater transformation of Team Q over the years.

My role as student coordinator has never failed to bring me new and intriguing challenges in effective, educational student programming. I also have had the privilege of guiding several groups of new members through Team Q's responsibilities and so have seen first hand the incredible talent, tenacity, joy, enthusiasm and creativity that floods the LGBT Center each year, making me certain of Team Q's bright future.

On top of the great work that I get to do, I have been incredibly blessed to work consistently with such wonderful people. I have felt more emotionally, psychologically, and professionally nurtured and supported at the LGBT Center than anywhere else on campus, and it has truly become my home-away-from-home, more than any residence hall ever was. Professionally speaking, when I think about graduating and entering the working world, I can only hope to find another place that will care so genuinely about me as a person and make such efforts to show me that my work is appreciated. Personally speaking, the people of the LGBT Center, who are the ones who truly create its comfortable and welcoming atmosphere, will be sorely missed. I am sad to leave this place and my role in it, but I feel so lucky to have experienced it at all. I will always keep the memories of my time here close to my heart.



Katherine Nittmann (A'12) is leaving the LGBT Center after finishing coursework a semester early.

What the LGBT Center Staff will miss most about Katherine...

"Katherine has shown more dedication to the LGBT Center and our campus-wide educational efforts than any student I have ever worked with. As an outspoken Ally, she is making a huge difference for the LGBT community, and she is going to be greatly missed at Tufts!"

-Tom Bourdon, LGBT Center director

"Katherine's shifts at the Center always included a delightful mix of heartfelt conversations and laughs. I will miss working with such a dedicated Ally and friend."

-Aaron Hartman, graduate assistant

"I can't imagine what it'll be like at the Center without Katherine's warm smile, friendly giggle, and consistent helpfulness! Katherine is a huge part of what the center means to me and has been such an amazing coworker and friend. I'm sad to see her go but so proud the Center is sending off one of our own into the real world!"

-Katie Hegarty, student intern

"No matter how stressed or exhausted Katherine is she is never too tired to have a smile on her face to greet you. She is smart, witty, kind hearted and thoughtful. She is always considerate of other people and has a true passion for bringing social justice to the forefront of all of our minds."

-Emily Mears, staff assistant

"Katherine is truly one of the kindest, most sincere people I have had the pleasure to know at Tufts. I wish we had had more time together."

-Nino Testa, graduate assistant

"She is the most reliable member on Team Q. She always has a vibrant smile and energetic attitude. I don't think anyone else on Team Q can fill the void she is leaving."

-Mark Tyson, student intern



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VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.ASE.TUFTS.EDU/LGBT

The programs and services of The LGBT Center support the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students, faculty, staff and alumni of Tufts University.

The Center is available to anyone on campus interested in learning more about LGBT-related subjects or issues of sexual and gender identity. The Center is committed to maintaining LGBT visibility on campus and providing campus-wide education on sexual and gender identity and the effects of homophobia.

Our services include advocacy on behalf of LGBT students; counseling and referrals to students in need; information about resources available to LGBT people on and off-campus; research assistance with topics relating to sexuality; a student outreach and education team (Team Q); a peer-support network (Queer Peers); trainings and workshops for faculty, staff, or student groups; email lists networking people affiliated with Tufts University; and programming that reflects the diversity of students at Tufts.

The LGBT Center works collaboratively with many groups on campus, including the Dean of Students Office, the Women's Center, the Asian American Center, the Latino Center, the Africana Center, the International Center, Greek Life, the Office of Residential Life and Learning, the Hillel Center and the Tufts Chaplaincy.

Drop by the Center and enjoy a comfortable and safe space dedicated to supporting and celebrating lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer identities.



Team Q members at our "Guess the Straight Person" orientation event in Cohen Auditorium, with an audience of 600 first-year students



Members of Team Q at the National Coming Out Day Rally held on the Mayer Campus Center Patio, October 11, 2011.



STAY CONNECTED WITH THE CENTER

New ways to stay up-to-date on all the goings on around the Center:

"Follow" us on Twitter! <http://twitter.com/tuftslgbtcenter>