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Final Report As A Member Of The LGBTQ Center Staff

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Final Report As A Member Of The LGBTQ Center Staff

It is with a heavy heart that I write my final report as a member of the LGBTQ Center Staff. I have been part of the Center since 2002 and have seen it grow in many ways over the years. It is my hope that it will continue to improve and establish the programs and services that make it a leader and innovator in LGBTIQQ and cultural studies. The following is a brief breakdown of the spring 2012 semester.

- As the Administrator of the [Community, Equity, & Diversity Digital Collections](#) (CEDDC) over this last year I have established a brief timeline and record of the LGBTQ Center and other areas across campus.
 - As of 7/8/2012 the CEDDC has had 42,984 downloads of its digital assets of which the LGBTQ Center accounts for 30,110 of those downloads.

- Dana and I applied for [the Innovative Approaches Using Technology to Advance the Student Experience grant 2012/2013](#).
 - We created a collaborative program between the Office of Community, Equity and Diversity, Instructional Media and Technology Services and the Harrington School of Communications called Community Voices. Representing the Office of Community, Equity and Diversity and the LGBTQ Center I cofounded the [Digital Community Voices Committee](#) (DCVC) with Dana. The overarching goal of this committee is to encourage dialogue around diversity education while encouraging a digital media literacy skillset. Working together Dana and I had the access to equipment and the skills required to utilize the Chaffee HD Studio and the Verizon/Cox Rhode Island Statewide Interconnect, to go beyond internet sharing and reach approximately one million potential television viewers in Rhode Island alone.

 - An [inventory list](#) was pieced together and plans were started to get the rights to show these programs on TV and put them on the CEDDC in order to promote the LGBTIQQ Symposium and Diversity week through past programming. A once a month round table TV show was planned to have been broadcast from URI under the Dimensions of Diversity name. This round table show was intended to share views from the community and encourage knowledge sharing across a variety of topics.

 - I arranged to have Lynn McKinney talk about his experiences at URI through a televised interview that would have launched the round table show. Dana will be taking over this interview and including the footage in the URI diversity documentary that is being worked on. It is uncertain if the show will now be realized.

 - Several media project collaborations with students were done that are available on the CEDDC. [Gender-Neutral Restrooms: Creating Safe and Accessible Spaces for all](#)

[Students at URI](#), [Gender: An Infinite and Evolving Theory](#), [Victim-Blaming: A New Term for an Old Trend](#), [Gender Identity Disorder: An Unethical Diagnosis of Normal Human Diversity](#), [STAND UP! A Viral ATTACK on Bullying](#), and [Love To Sign](#), were all accepted to be part of the CEDDC.

- Dana and I, as Co-Chairs of the DCVC were awarded the Innovative Approaches Using Technology to Advance the Student Experience grant. Dana will be reorganizing the DCVC to meet its goals and take the lead on the grant alone.
- After talking with Abu Bakr and Gary Bozylinsky Dana will be taking over as the Administrator of the [Community, Equity, & Diversity Digital Collections](#) (CEDDC). All requests for assistance with the CEDDC should be referred to him.
- There were two [Town Hall meetings](#) for the LGBTQ Center.
- Conversation Groups remain one of the students' favorite programmatic activities that the LGBTQ Center facilitates.
- The Welcome Wednesday program was reorganized to become the Community Connections Program. This program organized a social, and a peace and nonviolence lecture this semester.
- I taught CSV 302-0008: Personal & Organizational Cultural Engineering: Leadership by Design for The Center for Student Leadership Development.
- The writing and dialogue group, Tomorrow's Voice, had its fourth year anniversary. The group originally started in 2008 as a community outreach group for the GLBT Center. The main goal of the group is to foster the communication and commonality between people across cultures and to offer a common ground that all people may be able to take part in. The writing circle is open to the public and offers a forum for the URI community to network and to raise concerns and/or topics applicable to the group (faculty, staff, adjunct, council and committee members, alumni, students, and community members) that frame the conversations and focus for topics to be explored. The circle utilizes both writing and dialoging to break down the barriers associated with topics and communicating with other people on sensitive issues. This group provides an educational social activity that connects people to each other and to the many services available at URI. It is my hope that with me leaving the LGBTQ Center it will continue on. Members of the group are choosing to reorganize at the beginning of the year and due to retirement of faculty, and attrition of staff, there is no stated contact person at this time.

- Collaborated with the URI Peace and Nonviolence Center, Diversity House, and the Pharmacy program that did a fundraiser event designed to support a the Tibetan orphanage and school. I was one of the founding members of this group that is establishing the URI Peace by Piece initiative in the fall. Trip Hutchinson and Judy Carroll are the points of contact for that new group.
- I planned and collaborated with Lynn McKinney the LGBTIQQ Faculty and Staff Social. This event brought in people from across campus and was hosted at Lynn's home in Wakefield RI.
- A LGBTIQQ Grad Social was held at the URI U Club on campus.
- The LGBTIQQ Symposium brought in presenters and a crowd from across the US this year. Many of the programs are live on the CEDDC.
- In response to hate speech and online bullying incidences the GSA, LGBTQ Center, eXposure, ASA, and HVC, cosponsored the [Love is Louder Rally](#). The DCVC edited and made the [Love Is Louder Rally](#) one of the first productions created to be streamed on the CEDDC and later released on TV.
- [Trainings for the URI Resident Assistants on LGBTQ topics and issues](#) were done on January 20 2012.
- I presented on [Digital Advocacy & Activism](#) at Brown University for the Northeast Consortium Meeting.
- I met with Lynn McKinney about the donation he is making to the LGBTQ Center. I had planned on creating a marketing campaign working with the media that we produced to get donations to grow the fund. This was one of the things we were about to start putting together for his interview.
- I served the URI community by being active on the following groups and committees: Diversity Awards Committee, Student Affairs Diversity Committee, LGBTIQ2 & Friends Alumni Group, Bias Response Team, Equity Council, President's Commission on LGBTIQQ Issues, Student Affairs Diversity Committee, LGBT Architects meetings, Digital Community Voices Committee (Co-Chair), assisting with the Office of Community, Equity, & Diversity website and presence, and Tomorrow's Voice Writing & Dialogue Group.

In closing

When discussing topics of sexuality and identity some people do not feel comfortable talking about all areas of the subject in a well-informed way. This can cause them not to talk much at all about things that are distinctive elements of identity. When people do not understand something it is easy for them to treat it differently. I have always wanted people to know that we are always sharing ourselves when we are communicating with others. We are all seeking out information online that is making it easier to talk about and explore topics that in the past have been reserved to face-to-face private conversations. For the first time students were able to find information about their questions that brought them back to the programs and services we were doing at URI. The data from the CEDDC downloads of the LGBTQ programs suggests that we were able to reach people before they ever stepped foot on campus. As a result we had a greater number of parents and perspective students calling us and asking to see the LGBTQ Center and inquiring about housing options. There were also more students contacting us to learn more about what we do than we have ever had in the past.

It is very important to not only have information that is engaging to those seeking it, but that information has the ability to link back to us and share what we think and feel about topics. When we engage with media all of us notice qualities about others that we are drawn to and there are those elements we are repelled by. Notice I didn't even mention the quality of the information being communicated. It is our positive interactions with others that will make a difference in how they think about these areas that they may know little about. Think about how often many of us go to bed at night with an internet connected phone close by. Little by little emphasizing the connections we all share within our organization, with our multiple identities, with each other, so we can shape the future that we want to be part of. Thinking about planning strategically your electronic communications should be no different than planning a face to face program. I believe this is an area that many don't understand well and therefore do not think much about. Online presence and ability to get informed and interact is something those people we serve are thinking about. They are engaged here daily and it is not an area we can afford to ignore in our programing.

I have greatly enjoyed being part of URI and the LGBTQ Center and I will miss it very much. The support I was offered helped me develop professionally over the years and I hope to work with many of you again. I worked at URI with the philosophy in mind that anything I do should be open to be built upon by others. There is an external referral report of how people discovered our digital assets (articles, documents, pictures, audio, video, etc., data files) is included with this document. You will notice that in this report the majority of people find these digital assets through Google, we have already gotten international interests through Google Scholar, and we were included in a NASPA journal. If you have any comments or questions please feel free to contact me through email or on [LinkedIn](#).

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