

## **51 Fabulous Ways to Support LGBT Students on Campus\***

### **Across the UM-St. Louis campus**

1. Take the time to examine your own personal feelings about LGBT people.
2. Have a non-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation.
3. Value their perspectives and opinions in your residence halls, your classrooms, and your committees.
4. Don't tokenize.
5. Make your environment a safe place.
6. Publicly acknowledge LGBTs presence on campus and in society. Do so at high levels and often.
7. Don't agree with everything an LGBT person says; challenge him/her, too!
8. Help heterosexual students understand that LGBT people are a presence on campus and in society—whether they like it or not.
9. Support LGBT students because they add to the vibrancy of thought, activity and life on your campus; not because it's politically correct.

### **At Career Services**

10. Display information about local career resources, such as LGBT-affirmative employers, for LGBT clients.
11. Provide staff with training about the social and political impact of LGBT issues in the workplace.
12. Be open to discussing LGBT issues with students as these relate to career choice, resumes, interviews, determining the policies of a company, and coming out at work issues.
13. Maintain a list of people who can be used as resources for LGBT students.
14. Know which employers interviewing on your campus have non-discrimination and domestic partner policies for LGBT people and offer that information to students.

### **At the Financial Aid office**

15. Ensure that staff has training on how the impact of a student's "coming out" at home can affect parents' financial support.
16. Include information about LGBT specific scholarship opportunities that exist.

### **In the Residence Halls/ On-Campus Apartments**

17. If a roommate refuses to live with a sexual minority, inform the LGBT student of the available options and allow them freedom to choose which option is best.
18. Ensure that handbooks and contracts have a statement regarding non-discrimination as it relates to sexual orientation and Indicate where students should report if they feel harassed.
19. New student orientation programs should address LGBT issues and make new students understand that LGBT students are a welcomed part of campus life.

### **At Health Services**

20. Make sure your health educators are comfortable with phrases and concepts such as "continual condom usage," "anal intercourse," "dental dams" and are comfortable talking about sexuality that is not exclusively heterosexual.
21. Make sure your health care providers understand that "sexually active" does not necessarily mean "needs birth control."

### **At Counseling Services**

22. Include sexual orientation and coming out issues in the paperwork as options for discussion.
23. Include a variety of partner status options in the paperwork.
24. Display some LGBT-affirming materials in the center, including LGBT magazines and newspapers in the waiting area.
25. Include LGBT material in Counseling Services publicity.
26. Use inclusive language.
27. Don't automatically assume your clients are heterosexual. For example, don't ask a female client if she has a boyfriend.
28. Insist there be a "coming out" support or discussion group at least once per school year.
29. Identify a counselor who has some understanding of LGBT issues who can serve as a confidential referral to students.

### **At the MSC**

30. Make sure the LGBT student organization has adequate professional staff support and an advisor. If there is no one on the staff or faculty to take on this role, assist the group in identifying a local alum or local community member for the task.
31. Know names of local and national LGBT organizations, their associated acronyms and/or letters in the proper order (even if they change it once in a while).
32. Insist that the student government allot the LGBT student organization some reasonable funding. If they refuse, assist the group in finding alternative sources of funding.
33. Insist that fraternal organizations have a discussion on how they would deal with one of their members "coming out."

### **At the Athletic Department**

34. Ask the director of Athletics to have a discussion with coaches about how heterosexism and homophobia affect athletes.

### **In the classroom**

35. Include information about LGBT people who made significant contributions in the past.
36. When discussing current events, include LGBT issues.

37. Use examples of LGBT people in lectures and discussions so they are not marginalized.
38. Be clear with your students that homophobic and heterosexist comments and actions are not acceptable and will be addressed in an educational, informative, and non-threatening manner.

#### **In all Student Affairs departments**

39. Include LGBT people in examples in classes, workshops and presentations.
40. Ensure that publications are written in such a way that LGBT students will feel included in the audiences; avoid heterosexist language and assumptions.
41. When possible, include openly LGBT students as members of the student work force.
42. All student service departments should participate periodically in structured dialogues with LGBT students. The purpose of this dialogue would be to raise awareness of the nature and extent of homophobia/heterosexism within the university and the particular unit, and to explore avenues for the problems related to the access and quality of services for lesbian and gay students.
43. When LGBT students complain, take them seriously.
44. When they are verbally assaulted, make loud, personal statements in public venues condemning such action. Empower others to do the same.
45. When their belongings are vandalized, make loud, personal statements in public venues condemning such action. Empower others to do the same.
46. When LGBT students are harassed or assaulted, make loud, official statements condemning such action. If you know who the aggressors are, punish them.

#### **Support LGBT faculty and staff**

47. Give equal benefits to their partners.
48. Assure their safety.
49. Value their perspectives and opinions on your staffs and committees.
50. Endorse an association for LGBT faculty and staff.
51. Invite their partners and families to university functions.

*\* Created by Troy Gilbert, Stanford University. Adapted by Jamie Linsin for UM-St. Louis*