



1809 LGBT Alumni Connection

Winter 2008

www.1809LGBTAlumni.org & www.MiamiAlum.org/1809LGBT

1809 LGBT Alumni Strategic Plan

Every strong organization needs a strong strategic plan. Our last strategic plan, which included the successful 2006 LGBT Alumni Reunion, provided the foundation for our organization.

Now, we are in the middle of our next Strategic Plan. This plan includes the 2009 LGBT Alumni Reunion. See our Web site (www.1809LGBTAlumni.org or www.MiamiAlum.org/1809LGBT) for details, but here is an overview:

- 2006 – Year of the Board
(We added five board members!)
- 2007 – Year of the Donor
- 2008 – Year of Marketing
- 2009 – Year of Development &
LGBT Reunion Weekend (Oct. 9-11)

While each year will focus on a different strategic goal, we will continually need volunteers and leaders to work on all parts of the strategic plan. Our goal is to have all items completed by the end of 2009.

Please go to our Web site to read the details on how you can own a portion of this work. We need you and hope you will share our vision. **We will hold a conference call at 9 p.m., March 24 to review the documents with the entire membership. RSVP to Michael Burkhardt at mrburkhardt@comcast.net or 312-545-7535 if you wish to be part of the call.**

SECOND 1809 LGBT ALUMNI REUNION SET FOR OCTOBER 2009

You are cordially invited to attend Miami University's second 1809 LGBT Alumni Reunion Weekend, Oct. 9 - 11, 2009.

The Board of Directors has decided to hold the reunion two years earlier than originally planned so we can be part of Miami University's Bicentennial Celebration. At a meeting between several board members and Miami President David Hodge this past spring, in which GLBTQ issues on campus were discussed, President Hodge requested that 1809 consider hosting our reunion in conjunction with Miami's Bicentennial.

Since this invitation is precisely the kind of inclusion and recognition that 1809 has historically struggled to attain, we decided it would be in the organization's best interest to comply with the president's request, especially since the University is the principle sponsor of our Reunion Weekend.

Approximately 100 people attended the last Reunion Weekend in April, 2006, and we are hoping to welcome more than 300 people back to Miami in 2009. The weekend will include a welcome reception, panel discussions, a networking brunch, and much more. We are planning to co-sponsor some National Coming Out Day events with Spectrum, Miami's LGBTQ campus group, so there should be something for everyone.

Mark your calendar now, and stay tuned for more details later this year!



OFFICE OF GLBTQ SERVICES UPDATE:

Within the past year, the Office of GLBTQ Services has officially integrated with the Office of Diversity Affairs (ODA). Additionally, I have a new working job title and office location.

My new title is interim assistant director of diversity affairs for GLBTQ Services. I now spend about 80 percent of my time in 31 Kreger Hall, with the rest of the ODA staff, and 20 percent of my time in MacMillan Hall, where the Spectrum office is located.



We kicked off the year with a very well attended opening reception for the newly named HAVEN: LGBTQ Graduate Group, with many graduate students, staff, and faculty in attendance and an appearance by President David Hodge and his wife, Valerie Hodge, Miami University ambassador.

National Coming Out Day (NCOD) activities were highly successful, highlighted by John Amaechi's presentation to a packed house. Other activities included Walking Theatre Project's performance of *A More Perfect Union*, which was followed by a panel discussion, and an inspiring Spectrum meeting where students shared coming out stories. The week culminated in the annual *Miami Student* advertisement. (A copy of this year's NCOD ad is on our Web sites, www.MiamiAlum.org/1809LGBT or www.1809LGBTAlumni.org).

The year continued its busy streak, with much collaboration taking place between various student organizations and departmental groups, and ended with Spectrum's fall semester drag show in support of World AIDS Day.

We have had many administrative changes that could impact campus climate issues. Gail Walenga is the new assistant vice president of student affairs for health services and health promotion. I know pushing for greater understanding in regards to LGBTQ health will be paramount. Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Richard Nault, has announced his retirement at the end of the fiscal year, and the search will begin soon for his replacement. Christine Taylor was hired in December as the new associate VP for institutional diversity, succeeding Dr. Michael Stevenson.

Finally, although there is so much more to report, let's end with this year's goal for the Division of Student Affairs: *inclusion*. Every person in the division, including graduate students, must work toward inclusion, which includes language, staffing, programming, etc. How about that?

Leslie Morrow '93

Interim Assistant Director of Diversity Affairs for GLBTQ Services

We Need Your Help

We need you! Our organization breathes life from the diverse family, friends, and alumni of the Miami University LGBTQ community.

We have a new strategic plan that succeeds when we all work together toward a common mission.

The mission of 1809 LGBT is "to provide a professional and educational network of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered alumni, as well as to foster support for LGBT students currently attending Miami University."

We need you to review the strategic plan (an overview is featured on page one) and take ownership. No matter what your expertise or interest, there is a part of the plan that is calling your name. Once you choose to lead in a certain area, we can help you recruit volunteers and set up conference calls.

While our board has become a strong group, we can not do it all and really need your help. Please visit one of our Web sites and let us know in which areas you want to lead or participate.

1809 LGBT Board Members

Debbie Bazarsky '97, '99

Robert Burns '91

Ron Clemons '75

Alex Conover '10

Jeffrey Logel '89

Benjamin Drake '90

Pat Bottiggi '75

Michael Burkhart '93

Suzanne Gray '88

Christopher Hughes '97

Khristopher Lowe '93

Leslie Morrow '93

Beth Oliver '98

LAVENDER GRADUATION '07 HOSTED IN APRIL

On April 15, 2007, the Miami University Office of GLBTQ Services, 1809 LGBT Alumni, Spectrum, and the GLBTQ Graduate Group presented "Lavender Graduation 2007." This year's services commenced at Sesquicentennial Chapel.

The welcome was provided by Leslie Morrow of the Office of GLBTQ Services and Jeff Logel, co-chair of 1809 LGBT Alumni. Barrett Floore of the class of 2004, an HIV/AIDS/ Sexuality Educator working in Cincinnati, was the guest speaker. Lavender Graduates included:

Justin L. Eddy, B.A. microbiology; Michaela Frischherz, B.A. diplomacy & foreign affairs; Sarah Marie Kirkwood, B.S. nursing; Matthew Lickfelt, B.S. business; William J. Lohr II, Bachelor of Philosophy - interdisciplinary studies;

Ceclilia E. Suarez, M.S. in college student personnel; Tim Yaczo, B.A. political science; Joshua David Peaslee, B.A. American studies.

Jeff Logel awarded a pair of \$1,000 scholarships from our alumni group to Jake Carr and Devin Rodgers. This was a milestone for our group, which had awarded only one scholarship in years past. The Outstanding Ally Award was presented to Eloiza Domingo-Snyder, Director of Diverse Student Development in the Office of Diversity Affairs, and Amy



Please visit our Web sites for more photos of Lavender Graduation.

Greenbaum, Executive Director and Rabbinic Resource of Hillel at Miami.

Closing Remarks were presented by Rhonda Jackson of the Campus Women's Center and Elana Rosenberg, Spectrum graduate advisor.

1809 LGBT ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ANNOUNCED

1809 LGBT Alumni awarded two \$1,000 scholarships at the Lavender Graduation and Awards Ceremony last April. Here's a little more about the recipients in their own words.

Jake Carr, recipient of the eighth annual Roy Bowen Ward LGBT Scholarship, is a junior, majoring in theatre and psychology, from North Olmsted, Ohio.

What I like best about Miami....

"... is the close-knit theatre community. Although I sometimes feel the greater Miami population doesn't appreciate the fine arts, I am lucky to be part of a group of hard working and driven students and to benefit from professors who genuinely care for our welfare and success. I always feel comfortable to be myself, and I can't measure how much my knowledge of and love for theatre has increased."

The best class I have taken so far....

"... is Theatre 231: The Actor's Process. It is extremely refreshing to be able to open up and express myself among my acting peers, as opposed to sitting in lecture classes. I have learned many techniques and tips that will help me in my prospective future career."

The scholarship money helped me

"... pay for my rent and my extensive set of textbooks. Considering my course load this semester, the money was greatly appreciated. I will probably thank you again after I get out of college and my loan payments are just a bit smaller."

Devin Rodgers, recipient of the Honorary J. Plese LGBT Scholarship, is a junior, majoring in music and special education, from Lisbon, Ohio.

What I like best about Miami ...

"... it is such a beautiful school, and I have met some of my best friends here. Miami has become more home-like than my hometown. I love taking classes, and I have had the opportunity to learn music from some of the best in the profession."

The best class I have taken so far....

"... is Literature and Sexuality. We read some great literature and had some awesome discussions. The teacher was great, and the people in the class were so involved. I loved it."

The scholarship money helped me

"... to pay for my apartment, school books, and various school costs. Going to college is so expensive. It took a lot of stress off of my shoulders knowing I was okay financially, and it freed me up to become more involved on campus."

SOPHOMORE ALEX CONOVER NAMED STUDENT LIAISON TO 1809 LGBT ALUMNI BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees of 1809 LGBT Alumni includes a student liaison selected by the Assistant Director of Diversity Affairs for GLBTQ Services from the leadership of Spectrum. This position keeps 1809 LGBT Alumni connected to the group we seek to serve through our mission.

We asked our current student liaison, Alex Conover, to share a bit about himself. What follows is some of Alex's background and his outstanding commitment to improving LGBT life on Miami's campus.

Last year, when I was a freshman, Miami University became my home and changed my life forever. Now that I'm a sophomore, it continues to help me grow while presenting me with once-in-a-lifetime opportunities.

Before I came to Miami, I grew up in Michigan, Ohio, and finally New Jersey with my parents, older sister and brother, and twin brother. I spent most of my time growing up in Ohio, and I always thought I would live there forever. Then, as a sophomore in high school, I moved to Morristown, N.J., a small town in mid-northern New Jersey.

Going from the slow Midwest lifestyle to the fast-paced life of New York and New Jersey was a total culture shock for me. Once I got used to it, though, I never

wanted to leave. Ironically, I ended up coming back to Ohio to attend Miami University, where the culture shock, even though I was coming back to a state I had previously lived in, was again tremendous.

Starting my undergrad and deciding what to do and where to go with it was a mystery to me, as much as it was to everyone else. I had no idea where I was going and how I was going to get there once I decided. Everyone was pushing and pulling me in their own different directions. Finally, I went against what everyone else said and decided I wanted to join the business school and become a marketing major.

Knowing only a few people and not getting along with many of the guys in my hall, I was nervous about making friends. Then my mom suggested that I go to Miami's gay straight alliance, and that is where I found Spectrum. I quickly became very active, going to speakers, or going to various venues where I would speak myself. It was an awe-inspiring experience for me and helped me think about my own identity more than I ever have before.

After second semester started, I was looking for more ways to get involved in Spectrum and that is when I was



presented with the option of becoming the student liaison for the 1809 LGBT Alumni. It helps me connect with people who are not students, which helps me grow into a more professional student and gain experience in many other ways.

Along with working with the 1809 group this year, I also have become the treasurer of Spectrum where we are working to get our word out on campus and make a difference. Even though I have only been working with 1809 for about a semester and a half, I am more excited than ever to start this year on the right foot and see what we can get accomplished on campus.



Follow the Red Bricks Home - June 12 - 15

Alumni Weekend is for all Miami alumni, friends, and families, so "Follow the Red Bricks Home" and join us for good times, great food and music, and the always popular Alumni College.

Mark your calendar today to be part of Miami's event of the summer!

1809 LGBT ALUMNI CLASS NOTES ...

1990 —

MARRIED: Douglas Watkins and Ricardo Pava, Oct. 7, 2006, in Vancouver, B.C. Douglas works in the reservations department at Air Canada. Ricardo is a customer service manager at Canadian Tire. They live in Vancouver.



(L-R) Douglas and Ricardo.

1992 —

BORN: A son, Devan Alexander, August 20, 2007, to Don and Marie (Pawlowski) Calabrese. Marie, known by many as MiMi, resides with her family in Highland Heights, Ohio.

BORN: A daughter, Ava Dorothy, July 7, 2006, to Sherri (Umansky) Comerford and adopted September 22, 2006, by Carol Comerford through second-parent adoption. The family resides in Kensington, Md.



(L-R) Sherri, Ava, and Carol.

1993 —

Khristopher Lowe relocated to San Diego, Calif., from Columbus, Ohio, over Labor Day weekend 2007. He will be working at UC San Diego in the medical education department.

Leslie Morrow received the Graduate Student Award at Miami's Women's Leadership Symposium and Celebration. Leslie is interim assistant director of GLBTQ issues at Miami. Awards were given to those who serve as advocates for equality and models of leadership.

Check Out Your Alumni Association

If you are not already a member of the Miami University Alumni Association, check us out at www.MiamiAlum.org to sign up or learn more about the benefits:



- Discounts with the MUAA's corporate partners.
- Special online services, including access to the Miami University Libraries, updated online Class Notes and photo galleries, and podcasts.
- Access to Miami's Office of Career Services
- And much more!

1997 —

Debbie Bazarsky is a 2007 Honor Awards Recipient, presented annually by the New Jersey Lesbian & Gay Coalition and Personal Liberty Fund, recognizing people who have worked for the betterment of the LGBTI community through a sustained period of transforming work.

2001 —

Brett Gambill was hired as an Instructional Coach for Westerville City Schools. He will be providing professional and teacher growth opportunities for educators at Pointview Elementary. Brett has previously taught for Westerville City Schools.

2002 —

Sandy and Amy (Herron) Neumann (also '98) moved to Marshfield, Wisc., for Sandy's job



(L-R) Sandy, Phoebe, and Amy as an asst. professor at the University of Wisconsin—Marshfield/Wood County campus. Amy is a new stay-at-home mom. Sandy and Amy welcomed Phoebe Joanne into the world on March 2, 2007. Amy gave birth and Sandy adopted. To create a more easily identifiable family, Amy changed her last name to Neumann.

What's New With You?

We welcome you to share your recent life events and accomplishments with all your Miami University LGBTQ friends.

We invite you to tell us about:

- Weddings, civil unions, and commitment ceremonies
- Births and adoptions
- Promotions and new jobs
- Graduations and other educational achievements.
- Vacations and/or gatherings of Miami LGBT Alumni

In your submission, please include all relevant information, including your name and year(s) of graduation; any accompanying photos (please include names of those included in photos). 1809 LGBT Alumni reserves the right to edit for content prior to publication. We may contact you for clarification as needed.

Send submissions to:
mrburkhart@comcast.net



Miami 1809 Alumni

Connection

Announcement From Miami's Alumni Association

Miami University's 1809 Alumni are online, and we want to hear from you!

Visit us at www.MiamiAlum.org and select the Chapters/Groups link.

- Take the survey and let us know how you would like to stay connected.
- Read updated news.
- Look for other alumni in the photo album or in the search feature.
- Update your personal profile.
- Email other 1809 Alumni.
- Join the Miami University Alumni Association and enjoy all the benefits and services.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Joanne Harper of your Alumni Association at GroupReunions@muohio.edu or 513-529-1451.

Class of 2007: As a new graduate, you are still eligible to purchase a Miami University Alumni Association membership for \$15. Thereafter, renewable memberships are \$45 for single or \$55 joint, Lifetime Member single is \$750 and joint \$900. Please visit www.MiamiAlum.org for more information, including a complete listing of money saving benefits, or to sign up.

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