



**Tufts**  
UNIVERSITY

**Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Center**

**Volume IV  
Issue I**

# **Tufts LGBT News**

**Fall 2012**

## **DIRECTOR'S WELCOME**

Greetings-

First and foremost, I would like to say “HAPPY 20<sup>th</sup>”—to the LGBT Center! It was [Fall 1992](#) when a resource center was first established, and two decades later, we are still fortunate enough to have a space which has continued to grow, become even more inclusive, and feels like a ‘second home’ for many students on the Tufts campus. With that said, I would like to ask students, faculty, staff, and alumni to please ‘save the date’ for Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013, when we will be holding a formal celebration at Tufts to commemorate the occasion...more details coming soon.

It is always exciting to kick off a school year, and 2012/2013 is no exception. Last year was filled with exceptional educational and social programming, a great deal of concentrated efforts around LGBT health issues (our theme for the year), and highly recognized campus-wide efforts such as our [Lavender Letter Ally Campaign](#). This upcoming year, we hope to build on that energy and continue to make Tufts a welcoming and affirming school for students of all identities, especially when it comes to sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

In many ways, Team Q has served as the backbone of educational efforts coming out of the LGBT Center. This peer-educator group has continued to grow and evolve. This year the group has already engaged almost 700 freshman in the optional Orientation program “Guess the Straight Person” (which examines stereotypes in a fun and informative way), and will conduct upcoming Safe Zone trainings for Health Services, TUPD, and many other groups on campus. Team Q will even begin a new venture with PFLAG Boston, as members are now eligible to serve as speakers in local schools for this amazing non-profit organization. In two weeks, we will be holding our annual Team Q weekend-long retreat in Provincetown, where a whole new crew of undergraduate educators will be trained ([applications](#) due this Friday!). The students of Team Q work so hard

to make Tufts a safe campus for everyone...I would love to give a special thanks to recent Team Q alum Kay Salwen ('12) for helping create our new Safe Zone sticker which will start appearing around campus this Fall!



I hope you enjoy this newsletter. In addition to highlighting upcoming programming (such as Kate Bornstein’s visit to Tufts on 9/24), in also includes a continuation of our LGBT Health series, snapshots of a few exciting student and alum experiences, and introduces you to our new graduate assistant, Kris Polk! For 2012/2013, Kris will oversee our LGBT newsletters, and also guide much of our efforts in regards to this year’s theme: global LGBT issues. Stay tuned for one of her bigger projects: an LGBT-guide to studying abroad, offering insight to issues which queer students might face when studying in a different country. We are very excited to have Kris, and the rest of our wonderful LGBT Center staff onboard!

Have a wonderful Fall 2012! ~Tom Bourdon, Tufts LGBT Center Director

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## LGBT CENTER FALL 2012 EVENTS



### LGBT Center Open House

Wednesday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 3-4pm

### Orientation Event: Guess the Straight Person

Saturday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 8pm, \*Cohen Auditorium\*

### LGBT Center Welcome Event (Thai dinner provided)

Wednesday, Sept 5<sup>th</sup>, 4:30-6pm

### Being "Out" at Tufts (presented by Team Q, pizza provided)

Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 5-6pm

### LGBTQA Faculty/Staff Caucus Wine & Cheese

Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 5-7pm

### Queer Group kick-off meetings

(Men's, Women's, Bi, Queer Students of Color & Allies)

Beginning week of September 17<sup>th</sup>

### Confidential Questioning/Coming Out Support Group

Contact Center Director [Tom.Bourdon@tufts.edu](mailto:Tom.Bourdon@tufts.edu) for details

### Kate Bornstein: World Peace, Gender Anarchy and Sex Positivity

Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 7pm, Cohen Auditorium

### Toilet Training: A "Your Voice Matters" ISIP Program

Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 12-1:15pm, Women's Center

### Team Q Retreat in Provincetown

September 28-30 in PTown.

For details & application, go to: <http://ase.tufts.edu/lgbt/organizations/teamQ.asp>

### National Coming Out Day Rally & Events

Week of October 8<sup>th</sup> (Rally on Wed, Oct 10<sup>th</sup> @ noon, Campus Center Patio)

### Graduate Student Wine & Cheese Social

October 16<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm

*We try to offer 1 graduate student social a month, join the grad listserv or "LGBT Tufts Grad Students" on Facebook to stay connected!*

### Boston's Hispanic Black Gay Coalition (HBGC) Presentation

Friday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 12-2pm

### Thanksgiving "Family" Dinner

Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 5pm

### Transgender Day of Remembrance

Tuesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>

### World AIDS Day: Free HIV Testing all week

M-F, November 26-30<sup>th</sup>, Tufts Health Service

### **AND A TASTE OF WHAT'S COMING THIS SPRING:**

**LGBT Center's 20th Anniversary (4/6)**

**Queer Theorist Lecture: U. Utah's Kathryn Stockton! (4/11)**

**This is What an LGBT Family Looks Like (date TBD)**

## NEW GRADUATE ASSISTANT BIO: KRIS POLK



Hello! I am the 2012-2013 Graduate Assistant in the Tufts LGBT Center, as I am working towards an M.S. degree in College Student Development and Counseling at Northeastern University. My desire to take on this particular assistantship came from a deep appreciation for what this campus has already achieved in raising awareness and support for the LGBTQ community. What I really love about LGBT related topics is how we can never stop learning. I look forward to building upon my current knowledge and skills as I blend what I have learned from my hometown in the Midwest with the experiences of New Englanders and all global citizens here at Tufts. I am encouraged by how fluid and evolving identities are, and want to share this appreciation with others. After graduate school, I hope to work in an international or study abroad office at a university, but my main goals will always be to work with college stu-

dents and to help them discover their personal identities through interactions with a diverse community.

I grew up in the suburbs of Detroit and attended Albion College, a small liberal arts school in Michigan. I was active in several music groups, the Canoe Club, and worked as an intern for the Center for International Education and as a Resident Assistant. As an RA, I went through training in which the Dean of Students would tell us why students withdrew. Two common reasons reported were that the school was “too liberal” or that it was “too conservative.” Most importantly, I observed that, amongst those two groups, there were pockets of both socially progressive students and discriminatory students. In terms of LGBT discussion, the majority of my classmates were simply not interested in pursuing conversations about gender and sexual identities that differed from their own. To me, this lack of conversation breeds ignorance. For this reason, I am constantly encouraging conversations regarding people's knowledge or awareness of LGBT topics through the discussion of current events or through the sharing of information about local, upcoming events.

Far too often, I think that straight-identifying individuals take their gender and/or sexual orientation for granted and that the majority of those persons are privileged to the extent that they fail to put in the effort to consider the differences amongst us. While the rise of LGBT rights and awareness on the political stage is encouraging, it saddens me that we are still fighting for acceptance and basic human rights in our present day. I have close friends who still struggle with telling their family about their true identity, or who have difficulty “fitting in”—largely based upon how others would be perceived to react. Because of this, I want to serve as a solid support system by being someone who will listen to and encourage people to do what is best for themselves in their own lives. I know that in some way my support will help them be comfortable with themselves and others. In going with this year's International theme at the LGBT Center, I hope to organize events that will teach students about LGBT issues on a global scale—highlighting the struggles and victories of individuals in both social arenas and judicial systems. I also wish to hold conversations with students at Tufts about the rapidly expanding trends of advertising and/or company support (or lack thereof) of the LGBT community. My goal as the Tufts LGBT Center's Graduate Assistant is to enable the students and professionals of the center to achieve their goals. By working alongside students, I plan to function as a peer, an advisor, and a mentor—while bridging the gap between those same students and the Tufts faculty and staff.

## LGBT HEALTH SPOTLIGHT

# ACUTE HIV-THE EARLIEST SIGN OF INFECTION

Did you know the first sign of HIV infection is often a “mono or flu-like illness” that occurs 2-4 weeks after becoming infected with the virus, and weeks before a regular HIV test shows infection? These early symptoms are often missed, because they are so non-specific, unless patients and medical providers are alert to the possibility. This article describes some of the symptoms of what is known as “acute HIV”, how it is diagnosed, and why it is important to detect infection early.

Acute HIV is the earliest stage of HIV infection, when the virus is rapidly replicating and spreading through the body, but the infected person is not yet aware of it. Symptoms are believed to occur in as many as 80-90% of people during this time, usually within several weeks of contracting the virus.

The symptoms of acute HIV are fever, swollen glands, sore throat, body aches, headache, and sometimes rash. These same symptoms can be caused by many different viruses, including mono and flu. Students are seen every day at Health Service with mono-like or flu-like illnesses, and often many times a day. Most of these students do not have acute HIV, so it is challenging to pick out whom to investigate for HIV infection. If the regular blood and throat tests don't point towards mono or flu, or some identifiable illness, particularly in students with longer lasting symptoms, then we would want to explore risk factors for HIV. In our student population, the highest risk factor for HIV infection is MSM (Men who have Sex with Men) who have unprotected sex. Unprotected receptive anal sex (bottoming) is the highest risk sexual behavior for HIV acquisition, but unprotected topping (insertive anal sex) and oral sex can also give you infection. So if the clinician is considering the possibility of acute HIV, he/she will ask questions about specific sexual behavior. About a quarter of people with acute HIV will also have ulcers in their mouth, throat, genital area or anus. Ulcers are not seen as frequently with other viral illnesses, so acute HIV should be considered in anyone with fever and mouth or genital ulcers.



Margaret Higham, MD  
Medical Director of Health Services

Most people with acute HIV are sick for at least a week, and eventually symptoms resolve on their own. Just because the symptoms get better doesn't mean the infection is going away. The infection is still there, it's just that the body's response is less.

Acute HIV can be diagnosed by the use of a special test called “viral load”. The test measures the presence of HIV virus in the blood, and can measure the amount of virus particles in each ml of blood. The viral load is a direct test of the amount of infection present. The routine HIV test measures antibody—the immune response to the virus, so it is an indirect test. It takes 6-8 weeks for antibodies to develop, so the regular rapid HIV test is always negative when someone has acute HIV. The viral load test, however, will be positive during acute HIV. So a student with unexplained fever, swollen glands, body aches and headache, who has a history of unprotected high risk sexual activity, should have the viral load test.

Why is it important to diagnose HIV during this early stage? That is a good question. There is conflicting data about whether starting treatment with HIV medication during this acute phase is helpful to the infected person or not. This issue is continuing to be studied carefully. We don't know yet if early diagnosis changes the course of the illness. What is definitely known is that during this acute stage, people are **highly** infectious and have enormous amounts of virus in their blood and genital fluids. It is believed that a large proportion of all HIV infections are transmitted by persons with acute infection. Early detection and counseling to stop risky sexual behavior could significantly decrease the number of new infections and have a real impact on this epidemic.

Why should you be aware of acute HIV? If you develop compatible symptoms and have risk factors for HIV infection, please let your clinician know. Ask if you should be tested for it. Your clinician could find a different cause for your symptoms, but if the situation is unclear, your information could be a vital clue for the clinician.

We'd be happy to talk to you more about any questions at Health Service. If you are concerned that you have acute HIV, you can be evaluated the same day through our Walk In Clinic. No appointment needed—you can just...walk in. Routine STI testing, for students without symptoms, is available by appointment.



## TUFTS HEALTH SERVICES

**LOCATED AT 124 PROFESSORS ROW ACROSS FROM FLETCHER FIELD.**

**PHONE NUMBER: 617-627-3350.**

**FAX NUMBER: 617-627-3592**

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK TO A NURSE OR CLINICIAN, SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT, OR SPEAK TO SOMEONE IN THE BUSINESS OFFICE, CALL 617-627-3350**

## ALUMNI REFLECTIONS: ALLISTER CHANG BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER TUFTS



### **What did connections to the LGBT Center & community during your time at Tufts mean to you?**

As I changed over my 4 years at Tufts, so did my connections to the LGBT Center & community. As a freshman, I remember pacing back and forth in front of the LGBT Center, afraid to actually step in. I stepped inside and I remember the staff & older students being overwhelmingly caring and supportive. I lacked self-confidence then. The Center and the community helped me build that.

As a sophomore, I was eager to get more and more involved with the LGBT community. Tufts provided me with opportunities and resources to teach other students about LGBT issues on-campus, and with contacts to fight against LGBT discrimination with NGOs and elected representatives.

These last two years, as I became increasingly involved with off-campus projects and organizations such as GLAD, I took a more peripheral role in on-campus programming as a participant and peer-mentor. When I saw that freshman pacing back and forth in front of the LGBT Center, I tried to give him a little nudge of encouragement.

### **How did you engage with the Tufts LGBT Center & community while at Tufts?**

Directly, resources and contacts from the LGBT Center supported me to launch a new branch of the National Marriage Boycott at Tufts (with funding from the Tufts Progressive Alumni Association), and to intern for Carl Sciortino (a Tufts alumnus) at the Massachusetts State House to contribute to the passing of the Transgender Rights Bill.

What I love about Tufts, also, is that LGBT resources and support comes not just from the Center, but from throughout the university. As a history student, I had the opportunity to concentrate my studies on gender and sexuality.

In the fall of 2011, I applied for one of the opportunities outlined in the LGBT Center's monthly e-mail updates about upcoming opportunities and events. A few months later, the International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association (IGLTA) flew me to Florianópolis, Brazil to attend a conference on LGBT Travel. I was one of 2 American students who got this opportunity. At the least, it was encouraging to meet people who not only work to improve the experiences of gays and lesbians, but also make a comfortable income. At the most, I hope to eventually launch a successful new gay travel venture!



Allister Chang, National  
Coming Out Day, 2009

### What are you doing after you graduate?

The question I dreaded most before I heard back from graduate schools. I knew I wanted to go to graduate school for public policy, but was not sure if public policy schools wanted me!

In retrospect, I am glad I made plans B, C, and D, even though I was eventually accepted into my first choice program. I ended up deferring graduate school for a year for family reasons.

I'll be in Taipei for the year, living with my grandmother, studying Chinese language and literature at the National Taipei University, and working on projects regarding LGBT programs, policies, and travel. I wrote my senior honors thesis on the history of the LGBT movement in Taiwan, for which I conducted interviews of several of the pioneers of the gay rights movement in Taipei. Since last March, I have been peripherally involved with the first officially recognized LGBT organization in south-east Asia (the *Tong Zhi* Hotline Association). This year, I plan to follow the ongoings of the Hotline Association closely, and I'll be keeping a blog called LGBTaiwan to update the English speaking world on the exciting developments regarding LGBT rights in Taiwan.

I am also working on another project to expand gay travel into Taiwan. One French ex-pat in Taipei once said to me that Taipei was more gay-friendly than Paris in the 1970s. It is an amazing travel destination with a rich history, delicious foods, hot springs, beautiful mountains, the nicest people, and a thriving gay and lesbian culture.

I plan to come back to Boston in the fall of 2013 to attend the Kennedy School at Harvard. I intend to focus my studies on LGBT policy both domestically and internationally.

## ALUM NOTES



- **Marea Murray**, LCSW, J' 81 is the Chair of the Advocacy Committee for Gaylesta, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender therapists association of the Greater San Francisco Bay Area. Currently the Committee is hard at work to pass CA Senate Bill 1172 which would be the first in the nation to ban so-called reparative or conversion therapy with minors. Gaylesta is co-sponsor of a petition on [www.change.org](http://www.change.org) (type in SB 1172 in "browse petitions" at the top of the page) to urge Governor Brown to sign the bill if it passes the CA Assembly this month.
- **Matt Wood**, J 88, Staff Attorney at the Transgender Law Center recently won a landmark victory on behalf of transgender employees. In *Macy v. Holder*, the U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission held for the first time that Title VII's prohibition against sex discrimination includes discrimination against transgender employees.
- **Ari Kristan**, will be teaching a co-class in the Ex College this fall titled: The Right to Marry: A Legal Perspective (EXP-0047-F), which I think may be interesting to students involved with the LGBT Center. Of particular note, we will be closely tracking the litigation in the DOMA and Proposition 8 challenges as they make their way to the Supreme Court. I'd appreciate any help you can give me in getting the word out about the class so that we have a strong enrollment.

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VISIT THEIR WEBSITE AT [WWW.PRIDEONTHEHILL.ORG](http://WWW.PRIDEONTHEHILL.ORG)



**Tufts**  
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Social Justice Leadership Initiative Presents:

# Kate Bornstein



*World Peace*

**THROUGH  
GENDER  
NARCHY  
AND SEX  
P⊕SITIVITY**

## September 24, 2012 at 7 pm • Cohen Auditorium

Kate Bornstein is a world renowned transgender activist, author, playwright, performance artist, blogger and educator who focuses on issues of gender and sexuality. In this lecture, Bornstein uses gender and sexuality to examine the mechanics of oppression and the cultural structures that hold them in place.

Free tickets will be available beginning Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup> at the Mayer Campus Center Info Booth

Funding from the AS&E Diversity Fund

Co-Sponsored by the Africana Center, Asian American Center, International Center, Latino Center, LGBT Center, Women's Center, Dean of Students Affairs Office, Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Students Office, ISIP, Fraternity and Sorority Affairs, the Office of Residential Life and Learning, and the Office for Campus Life.

For more information contact Tom Bourdon & Jane Etish-Andrews, SJLI Co-Chairs:  
tom.bourdon@tufts.edu jane.etish-andrews@tufts.edu

# SUMMER VOLUNTEERING: CAMP OUTRIGHT

Team Q's very own **Taylor Strelevitz** and **Michael Kareff** (Jumbos class of 2015) took part in an amazing opportunity they heard about through the LGBT Center's e-list weekly calendar. **Camp Outright** is a seven day/six night residential summer camp program for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, queer, questioning, and allied youth, ages 13-22., in South Hero Vermont. Taylor and Michael are pictured below (center photo) and wrote us about their experience!



Without a doubt Camp Outright has been a transformative experience for us both. We signed up as volunteer cabin counselors not knowing anyone and unsure of what to expect. We were immediately welcomed into the friendliest, cuddliest community either of us have been apart of. The first few days were spent getting acquainted with our fellow staff members and trained on what to expect at camp, specifically queer camp. When the quampers (queer campers) arrived we knew no amount of training could prepare us for the emotional roller coaster that lay ahead. The daily struggles these youth (ages 14-22) face are seemingly insurmountable, yet they participated in camp activities with smiles on their faces. As cabin counselors, we were looked to as role models and survivors. With many quampers having no one in their home town to turn to, there was a deep appreciation for the fact that Camp Outright literally saves lives. A moment that will stick with us, the rest of the staff and all our quampers was when an individual announced that because of camp they have accepted that they deserve to live. This defining experience won't leave us anytime soon and we both hope to return to our quampers next year .



VISIT CAMP OUTRIGHT  
[WWW.CAMPOUTRIGHT.ORG](http://WWW.CAMPOUTRIGHT.ORG)



VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT  
[WWW.ASE.TUFTS.EDU/LGBT](http://WWW.ASE.TUFTS.EDU/LGBT)

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## 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/tufts-lgbtcenter>