College Campuses Protest Discrimination

Matty Easton, a political science major and valedictorian at Mormon’s conservative Brigham Young University, came out of the closet during his graduation speech. “I stand before my family, friends, and graduating class today to say that I am proud to be a gay son of God. I am not broken. I am loved and important in the plan of our great creator.”

Over 2,200 current and former students at Baylor University protested after far-right blogger Matt Walsh was invited to speak at the conservative Baptist college in Indiana. The protesters are also working to get a charter for the school’s GSA, denied since the group’s founding in 2011.

At another conservative Indiana school, evangelical Taylor University, students protested the choice of VP Mike Pence to speak at commencement on May 18. Taylor kept the veep, but two years ago, over 100 University of Notre Dame students walked out. One person signing the Change.org petition suggested Pete Buttigieg, a presidential candidate from Indiana, would be more suitable to address Christianity than Pence.

At Amherst College (MA), over 100 students carrying a rainbow flag walked out of a speech by former AG Jeff Sessions, leaving Johnson Chapel almost half empty.

New York Police Department Commissioner James P. O’Neill apologized for the 1969 police raid on the Stonewall Inn, a gay/lesbian bar in Greenwich Village, that caused an uprising which led to the modern-day Q rights movement. He said: “What happened should not have happened. The actions taken by the NYPD were wrong, plain and simple. The actions and the laws were discriminatory and oppressive, and for that, I apologize.”
GLAPN Declares Local Couple Queer Heroes

Every year, GLAPN names 30 people “Queer Heroes” to celebrate Pride Month. Nell and Rebecca Austen are two of the people whose risk, sacrifice, service, inspiration or example make them heroes to the LGBTQ community at large.

Nell and Rebecca (right) owned and operated a gay women’s resort in northern Michigan in the 1980s and 90s and helped organize a local Women’s History Project for many of those years.

As gay parents to an adopted Chinese daughter they faced many legal hurdles including having to “closet” their relationship to pass the “home visit.”

They moved to Portland in 1997 partly to escape the homophobia and racism in their rural community regarding gay adoption. They were okay as lesbians living quietly on the outskirts of town but the moment they adopted Maya and became parents, some in the community freaked out. “Whose baby is it, anyway?”

They moved to the Oregon Coast in the summer of 2013. Nell retired from the City of Portland’s Office of Neighborhood Involvement, and their daughter Maya had just graduated from St. Mary’s Academy when Rebecca got a job as Lincoln County’s Health Department Director. They’ve been living in Seal Rock ever since.

Nell and Rebecca have actively spearheaded the local organizing of women’s marches and been involved in Central Oregon Coast NOW (Oregon’s largest chapter). Nell does NOW public relations and also administers three Facebook groups—Stronger Together Newport, NOW, and Resist and Persist. They have been a part of the coastal lesbian potlucks as well.

At this time, their political priority is preserving rights for women and minorities and saving our democracy.

Past Lincoln County “Queer Heroes” include CM Hall (2014), Jeanne St.John (2015), Nel Ward (2016), and Ineka Estabrook, now moved to Europe (2017).

All interested Q (LGBTQ) people are invited to march in the annual LaDeDa Parade in Yachats. Come to the Pavilion behind Yachats Commons at 11:30 am, July 4. Bring your rainbow gear, and we’ll have some to share.

[Right: Enthusiastic GSA members from Waldport High School.]
Politics on Our Side


Austin (TX): Because the school district is forced to rent its Performing Arts Center to the Q-phobic Celebration Church after threats from the state’s AG Ken Paxton, it donated $10,000 to the district’s “participation in the annual Austin Pride Parade and other LGBT districtwide activities.”

New York City: The MTA rolled out the rainbow carpet for Pride Month and the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising with special MetroCards, Pride-themed Transit merchandise, and a new heart-shaped Pride logo on 50 subway cars. Google “new york mta pride” for more information and visuals.

Salt Lake City: Two football players were suspended from their team at Kearns High School after they burned a rainbow flag.

Colorado: Gov. Jared Polis signed a law banning conversion therapy to change a minor’s sexual orientation or gender identity, making Colorado the 18th state to prevent this practice after Maine signed this ban into law. He also signed a bill for transgender people to more easily update their gender on birth certificates, identification documents, and driver’s licenses.

New York: After three years, Giana Desir won her lawsuit against a landlord and a management company who refused to rent to her because she was transitioning. The landlord told her that he couldn’t rent her a place “around people and children” but might find her an apartment “in a basement somewhere with its own entrance” and not “around too many people.” He was the fifth landlord to refuse her a rental and has been ordered to pay a fine of $15,000 and civil penalty of $10,000 as well as undergoing anti-discrimination training.

New York: Legislators passed a ban barring the use of “gay panic” and “transgender panic” defenses in murder cases. Five other states—California, Connecticut, Illinois, Rhode Island, and Nevada—have similar laws.

Tennessee: After 200 Nashville lawyers called for an ethics inquiry, the state Court’s Board of Professional Responsibility is investigating the Coffee County DA who bragged about refusing to recognize same-gender spouses as legally married when using laws to prosecute domestic violence perpetrators.

Washington: The state Supreme Court ruled that state courts did not act with animosity in a decision that a florist broke the state’s antidiscrimination laws by refusing to provide flowers for a gay couple’s wedding. Flower arrangements do not constitute free-speech, said the court.

United States: The Supreme Court rejected a Pennsylvania appeal, leaving a school district’s trans-inclusive bathroom policy in place. The Christian Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) unsuccessfully argued that trans students using the same facilities is sexual harassment.

United States: A federal district court refused the HHS demand to dismiss a lawsuit from married same-gender Texas couple, Fatma Marouf and Bryn Esplin, denied permission to apply to serve as foster parents for refugee children by a USCCB affiliate because they don’t “mirror the Holy Family.” The program is solely funded with taxpayer money. The couple, married for four years, both teach at Texas A&M University.
Botswana: The High Court ruled that colonial-era anti-Q laws are unconstitutional and legalized homosexuality. Laws, inherited from British penal codes, previously put Q people in prison for seven years. The country of 2.3 million is considered one of Africa’s most stable democracies. Homosexuality is criminalized in over half of African countries, sometimes punishable by death.

Brazil: The nation’s Supreme Court voted 8-3 to make homosexuality and transgender unconstitutional under existing anti-discrimination laws that prohibit intolerance and bias based on race, religious intolerance, and xenophobia—despite the autocratic and proudly homophobic President Jair Bolsonaro. People facing discrimination for sexual orientation or gender identity will be able to sue, but they still fear for their lives.

Ecuador: After its Constitutional Court ruling 5-4 in favor of marriage equality, Ecuador was the fifth South American countries legalizing same-gender marriage. The others are Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, and Brazil.

World: The World Health Organization (WHO) has removed transgender from its list of mental disorders in its updated *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD)*. The text now uses the term “gender incongruence” that has been moved from “mental disorders” to “sexual health.”

[Below: Employees of the US Mission in Nepal celebrate Pride despite disapproval from the U.S. State Department.]
I moved to the Oregon Coast two years ago, and I was about completely disconnected from my previous friends and support network in San Diego. I was surprised and extremely disappointed to find that there wasn’t a GSA at the community college, which I intended to join to make friends. There were multiple attempts to start one up over the years, but it had fizzled out due to the lack of interest. The high school I went to in San Diego had a very active and extremely well attended GSA, with nearly thirty to forty people every week. The idea that there just wasn’t a GSA at this college blew my mind.

Because of my interest in joining a GSA, I was approached to start one myself. The idea of starting my own club and leading was terrifying to me. I had never really seen myself as a leader before, and I had no idea of what I was doing. But with the help of Debbie Spicer, a faculty member with connections to the PFLAG in Newport, I started it.

It was hard. I advertised for and promoted the club as much as I could, but no one showed up. Since I was new to the area, I didn’t have any friends to take to meetings. It was an uphill battle, and one I just couldn’t see an end to. Every week I would sit in the meeting room for an hour and realize that no one was coming, like no one came the week before, and that no one would come the week after. It was incredibly demoralizing. I felt isolated, like I truly was the only LGBT person at this school.

I powered through it and kept showing up for months, and eventually it did get better. Starting my second year, I got a solid group of members that showed up to every meeting, week after week. I now have seven members, and now I have the resources to plan events for both the club and the college as a whole. In the fall I showed the documentary, *Becoming More Visible*, which focused on the lives of young transitioning adults. This June I’m planning on taking the club to Yachats Pride [June 1-3] and putting on my own Pride celebration filled with color, music, and of course a water balloon fight.

Faculty and staff members have come up to me and said that they doubted anything like these events would have happened at this school if not for what I’ve done personally, in the efforts of visibility and acceptance. I’m very proud of the club I have built, and I feel comfortable knowing that it’s going to be in capable hands when I move on to University next year.

I have also been working on getting the high school GSA more connected with our own for both a wider support group, and to let young high school students know that their local community college is both cost effective and accepting of their identities. No one should have to choose between money and safety, especially in the 21st century.


**Below: The face that epitomized the crowd this year at Portland Pride from Ann Hubard.**

**Take Action:** You can sign this petition protesting a cruel and arbitrary campaign from the Indianapolis archbishop, Charles Thompson, to force Catholic schools across the archdiocese to fire Q teachers after Brebeuf Jesuit High School refused his order. https://act.faithfulamerica.org/sign/indianapolis-lgbt-teachers/?t=1&akid=1606%2E190700%2E4I-ZWi

**Another protest petition:** https://www.change.org/p/cathedral-high-school-leadership-an-open-letter-to-chs-leadership-e8d27f69-26be-46e3-4bed-8d400adae125
People Who Make a Difference

Judge Michael McShane, a gay federal judge in Oregon was appointed to the bench by President Barack Obama. Shane’s ruling in *Geiger vs. Kitzhaber* ended Oregon’s prohibition on marriage equality. My friend Ann Hubard shared his 2019 speech at Lewis & Clark Law School with this recommendation: “This is one of the best, funniest, and most personal commencement speeches I have ever read.” I echo her sentiments. I know he made a difference to the graduates. —Nel Ward [https://law.lclark.edu/live/news/41279-2019-commencement-speaker-judge-mcshane-88-speech]

Pioneering transgender activists Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera (left) will be depicted in a permanent installation in Greenwich Village near the Stonewall Inn where they were reportedly key figures in the riots 50 years ago. They worked on behalf of homeless Q youth and people affected by HIV/AIDS, founding STAR House, a housing and support organization for homeless Q youth and sex workers. A Dallas (TX) suburb is also honoring the two activists with a huge mural of the transgender pride flag and portraits of Johnson and Rivera (below).

Left: Why coming out of the closet can be important in ways that we may not realize!
PFLAG Opportunities

No regular meeting in July or August—please march in the Yachats LaDeDa Parade (July 4) and join everyone for the annual Q picnic (August 24).

On June 17, 2019, the Newport (OR) City Council approved a proclamation declaring June 2019 as “LGBTQ Pride Month” to recognize the contributions of the Q communities “within our city and country.”

The city also flew the rainbow flag over the city hall for a week, marking Newport as a welcoming place for residents and visitors who care about the Q family and friends. The flying of the flag was in connection to the proclamation accepted by the city council.

The proclamation also celebrated the work of Oregon Central Coast PFLAG, Out Oregon Coast, and Coastal Queers and Peers who work for equal rights for all.

So much news this month left little room for pride celebration photos and articles. **We’ll celebrate pride the whole year!**

OCC PFLAG Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 4, 11:30 am</td>
<td>Yachats LaDeDa Parade (see p. 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 7, 11:00 am</td>
<td>Out Oregon Coast Breakfast at Newport Café—Newport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 9, 4:00-6:00 pm</td>
<td>LGBT &amp; Allies Happy Hour, All Welcome!—Georgie’s Beachside Grill, Newport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 12, 5:00-7:00 pm</td>
<td>Trans Support Group—Toledo Public Library, 173 NW 7th Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 24, 6:00-7:30 pm</td>
<td>Trans Support Group—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St. Stephens, 9th &amp; Hubert, Newport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 24, 6:00 pm</td>
<td>Coastal Queers &amp; Peers Game Night and Socializing—Café Mundo, Newport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 27, 11:00 am</td>
<td>OUT OR Women at Nana’s for Lunch—NW 3rd and Coast Streets, Newport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 24</td>
<td>Q Family Picnic—Toledo Waterfront Park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The PFLAG OCC Basic Needs Grants provide emergency or urgent relief to LGBT+ people in Lincoln County. Individuals of any age who identify as LGBT+ (or their caregivers) and who demonstrate a financial need for medical aid, housing, transportation, or food can apply. The maximum grant is $250. Much of the Grant’s resources come from other LGBT+ people and straight allies. Contact PFLAG OCC at pflagocc@gmail.com for an application.

Media Matters:

Univision is filming its first telenovela led by a gay couple, *El Corazón Nunca Se Equivoca (The Heart is Never Wrong)*. The 20 episodes started on June 24 as a spinoff of *Mi Marido Tiene Más Familia (My Husband Has More Family)* and follow the gay couple from that show, **Cuauhtémoc or “Temo” (Joaquín Bondoni) and Aristóteles (Emilio Osorio)**, as they start a new life together in Mexico City. Fans call the couple “Aristemo”; they won the honor of Best TV Couple from the E! television network, narrowly defeating the gay couple from the U.S. TV comedy *Schitt’s Creek*.

**Out actress Ruby Rose** will take the lesbian lead in CW’s *Batwoman* after playing a lesbian inmate in *Orange Is the New Black*.

A Birmingham Methodist church showed the episode of *Arthur* featuring the wedding of same-gender aardvarks after Alabama Public Television censored it. Cake was served!
Join PFLAG!

YES! I support the mission of PFLAG. Enclosed is my annual membership fee.*

______ Household ($35)
______ Individual ($25)
______ Student/Limited Income ($15)
______ Contribution $______

*Includes membership in National PFLAG with affiliates in over 365 worldwide communities.

Make check payable and mail to:
Oregon Central Coast PFLAG
PO Box 2172
Newport, OR 97365

Name: ______________________________________________________
Address:  _____________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________
Email: _______________________________________________________

PFLAG is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and has no political or religious affiliations.

Oregon Central Coast PFLAG
P.O. Box 2172
Newport, Oregon  97365