In our third year, the office has grown immensely. This year, Harvard was listed in Campus Pride’s 50 LGBTQ-Friendly campuses. This recognition is one for the books! The work of the office, in collaboration with student organizations, has created opportunities for community building, inclusion, and an increased sense of belonging for students. From our comprehensive student health plan to our new policy for gender inclusive housing, the office has participated in student’s intellectual, social, and personal transformation. Additionally, in partnership with departments and student organizations, the office has provided over thirty programs and activities. We are grateful to continue our efforts and welcome all members of Harvard to build community with us.

While much of our work falls within programming and training opportunities, there were many opportunities to create partnerships and increase the visibility of the office. We were excited to host Boston/Cambridge’s first transgender hack-a-thon, in collaboration with Trans* H4CK and the Harvard Innovation Lab. Approximately, 50 participants from across New England came together to create six application platforms specifically for the transgender community. As the Director, I continue to hold open office hours weekly. Overall, I’ve had 28 dynamic meetings with students from across the university. In these meetings, we discuss personal and professional development.

While, it was a challenging year for many of our students, I celebrate their resiliency. I’m truly in awe regarding the talent and brilliance of our students. Furthermore, we launched a number of policies, including a co-sponsorship policy for streamlined and intentional collaboration with student organizations. Lastly, we hosted the inaugural Lavender Graduation, in which we honored graduating seniors and outstanding community members.

Within this report, you will find an overview of activities and offerings from the Office of BGLTQ Student Life. On behalf of the staff, thank you for your continued support, allyship, and partnerships! We look forward to many more years of impactful campus education and student leadership development that create community and inspire all students.

Kind regards,

Van Bailey, Ed.D.
Director
Harvard College Office of BGLTQ Student Life
One of the Top 50 LGBTQ-Friendly Universities

In September 2014, Harvard University was recognized as one of the nation’s Top-50 LGBT-Friendly Colleges and Universities by the Huffington Post and Campus Pride. The rankings were based on the Campus Pride Index, an assessment tool launched in 2007 to serve as a benchmark of LGBT-inclusive policies and programs. To participate, each university self-assessed their campus climate with over 50 questions corresponding to eight different LGBT-friendly factors:

- LGBT Policy and Inclusion
- LGBT Support & Institutional Commitment
- LGBT Student Life
- LGBT Housing
- LGBT Academic Life
- LGBT Campus Safety
- LGBT Counseling & Health
- LGBT Recruitment and Retention Efforts

The Top 50 list reflects those colleges and universities achieving the highest ratings across all benchmarks for LGBT-inclusive policies, programs, and practices related to gender identity/expression and sexual orientation.

Harvard University supplies a number of resources for the LGBTQ and ally community, including the Office of LGBTQ Student Life, eight student groups, a Queer Resource Center, LGBT-inclusive counseling services, trans* inclusive health insurance policies, and a number of community-building events such as Community Dinners and Leadership Retreats.

EDUCATING OUR CAMPUS

In response to growing need for inclusive and effective training on LGBTQ issues at Harvard College, staff at the Office of LGBTQ Student Life redesigned the Allyship Workshop, a 45-minute comprehensive training that describes how students, faculty, and staff can engage with LGBTQ-identified individuals as supporters in allyship. Created with the aid of sustained community conversations and knowledge of best practices from institutions with renowned diversity education programs, the student-designed and student-facilitated workshop follows a core syllabus that includes lecture items on allyship and advocacy, intentions and impact, systems of privilege, and identities. Each training group receives further scenarios and discussions tailored to their needs. In its first semester alone, over a dozen student and faculty groups received training on the intricacies of LGBTQ identities and experiences.

“I’m a longtime ally and the quiz forced me to stop & think; it shook up my complacency.”

“...The scenarios met my expectations and went far beyond, they were much more relevant and realistic than I had expected.”
Mentorship is a valuable tool for students to network and develop connections with others who can offer support, resources, and guidance toward future academic and career moves. In spring 2015, we launched the QuNNECT Mentoring program, which is designed to promote peer-to-peer relationships in the BGLTQ community outside of student organizations. We matched approximately 50 BGLTQ Harvard College students with peers who shared similar professional or personal interests. The pairs met informally three times over the course of the semester to build friendships and connections. QuNNECT is slated to re-launch in fall 2015 for the 2015-2016 school year.

In its second year, the Queer Advisory Council (QuAC) remained an important pillar of the BGLTQ Community at Harvard College. For the 2014-2015 academic year, the QuAC awarded 21 grants which served to fund a number of diverse programs and events including social events, theatrical plays, visiting speakers, and faculty-student mixers. These grants allowed numerous student organizations to finance BGLTQ-focused programming that educated, entertained, and called students to action. The QuAC further conducted a town hall forum and continued to survey the status of gender-neutral bathrooms.

In April, the Queer Advisory Council selected student organizations to be represented on the QuAC in 2015-2016. These organizations are:

- BAGELS: A Queer/Jewish Group
- Between the Lines
- Contact Peer Counseling
- GaPSpot
- HUBBS: Harvard Undergraduate BGLTQ Business Society
- HBASIS: Harvard College BGLTQ & Allied Students in the Sciences
- Queer Resource Center
- Queer Students & Allies
- Trans Task Force
HOUSE LIFE

To extend our reach into house life, the Office of BGLTQ Student Life provides annual funding for BGLTQ-specialty Tutors and Proctors to develop events that support the BGLTQ student community. In 2015-2016, we provided over $1000 in funding to support house events, including:

- Six “Equality” events with faculty and staff from around the college
- A BGLTQ Picnic
- Two Dunster BGLTQ Smoothie Study Breaks
- The First-Year Ice Cream Social
- Brunch with the Adams BGLTQ Tutors
- Coming Out Day Flag Signing
- The River Holiday Party
- Queer Quad Dinner
- An “It Gets Better” Initiative
- The “Queer Harvard” Forum
- Dudley House Mug Painting at “Made by Me”
- A Dunster BGLTQ End-of-Year Bash

COMMUNICATING WITH OUR CAMPUS

The life of a Harvard College student is busy. In addition to classes, internships, and extracurricular commitments, students have a myriad of events, lectures, and workshops available to them that can open their minds and transform their worldview. To provide frequent and relevant communications with our students about opportunities both on- and off-campus, the Office of BGLTQ Student Life continued to release our weekly QueWeekly Newsletters, filled with information on events, internship opportunities, and biographies of BGLTQ pioneers.

We further shared articles with our Facebook and Twitter communities and created both a virtual and print calendar of events for the 2015 Harvard Pride Month. By continuing to connect with our students through newsletters and social media, we provided students with the information and resources they needed to transform their understanding of what it means to identify as a BGLTQ person in the modern world.
Many students, especially those who are new to the BGLTQ community, may find the prospect of navigating BGLTQ spaces daunting. This year, the Office of BGLTQ Student Life introduced Fun Fridays, which were bi-weekly events that invited students to visit the "QOffice" and relax with an artistic (and often delicious!) arts and crafts project. By creating a low barrier to entry, Fun Fridays encouraged students to gain familiarity with the Office of BGLTQ Student Life, our resources, and other students in the BGLTQ community.

We further developed community through our November Holiday Dinner. The Holiday Dinner provides students with a space to build community and garner support during a time of the year that can be especially tough for BGLTQ-identified students. The 2014 Holiday Dinner also commemorated the Transgender Day of Remembrance with a candlelight vigil and moment of silence which provided an opportunity for reflection on the lives lost within the transgender community over the past year.

We understand that the participation of family and friends promotes long-term community involvement. In fall of 2014 and spring of 2015, the QOffice hosted several successful events for students, friends, and family. These events were overwhelmingly well-attended and filled with food, music, and community. The First-Year Open House was held as a part of Opening Days. This event allowed first-year students to enter our space, meet our staff, and complete a scavenger hunt across several offices. We celebrated Halloween in collaboration with the Harvard College Women’s Center and the Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race relations with Haunted Basements, in which students enjoyed candy, donuts, and lots and lots of pumpkins.

Family Feels was a support-driven event for first-year students to discuss their feelings and find support around Freshman Parents’ Weekend, especially for those students whose parents were unable to visit. Other similar programs included the Junior Parents Weekend Open House, the Visitas Meet and Greet, and the Visitas Queer Brunch. Through these events, we were able to engage with students, parents, and prospective students in a variety of settings. The Visitas Meet and Greet was incredibly successful and well-attended, with over 60 students visiting the QOffice over the course of the evening to introduce themselves to the space and meet other prospective students.

Another particularly successful event was the BGLTQ Prospective Student Call-a-thon. Held in conjunction with the Admissions Office, the Call-a-thon connected BGLTQ students at Harvard with prospective students who had noted involvement in the BGLTQ community in their applications to Harvard College. Current students called approximately 50 admitted students to congratulate them and provide answers to any questions they had about BGLTQ student life at Harvard College.
In November, the Office of BGLTQ Student Life co-sponsored Trans*H4CK at the Harvard i-lab. In the Trans*H4CK hackathon, teams of students from New England colleges generated technology-based solutions to issues facing the transgender community. Among the projects designed were a platform for creating institutional memory for college activists and a platform for rating health care providers for transgender patients.

In conjunction with the Office of International Education, the Office of BGLTQ Student Life promoted an initiative to support BGLTQ students who might be interested in studying abroad. This included the Out Abroad Panel, where several of our undergraduate interns served as panelists, as well as the Out Abroad Peer Contact List, a resource that will allow BGLTQ-identified students who are interested in studying abroad to contact other students who previously studied in the same regions or countries.

Two QUOffice interns, Sasanka Jinaras and Neimy Escobar, served as part of the planning committee for the Women Of Color Collective (WOCC), which met bi-weekly with staff from the Harvard College Women’s Center to coordinate meeting dates and discussion topics. Throughout the year, the WOCC held WOCC socials, discussion events, and formal dinners that aimed to establish a community of support and healing for women of color at Harvard College.

Neimy Escobar also co-facilitated the Diversity and Religion Dialogue series, which drew a variety of participants to discuss topics such as Race and Religion, Sexual Orientation and Religion, and Gender and Religion.

2015 Nicholas Papadopoulos Lecture

The Nicholas Papadopoulos Lecture is a prestigious annual endowed lecture named for Nicholas Papadopoulos, who received his MA and PhD degrees in engineering from Harvard University. After Nick’s death from complications of AIDS in 1994, his mother created a fund in his name to support lectures about gay and lesbian studies or lectures of interest to the gay and lesbian communities at Harvard University. Lecturers in previous years have included Timothy Patrick McCarthy (Director, Sexuality, Gender, and Human Rights Program, Carr Center), Shannon Pinceminster (Legal Director, National Center for Lesbian Rights), KenMi <oshino (Chief Justice Earl Warren Professor of Constitutional Law, New York University), and Cherrie Orsaga (Playwright, Poet, Essayist and Artist-in-Residence, Stanford University).

This year’s lecture was delivered by Shiri Eisner, an activist, writer and researcher residing in Tel Aviv. Eisner is the author of the book Bi Notes for a Bisexual Revolution. Her identities include bisexual, genderqueer, feminist, Marathi (Arabic Jew), disabled/chronically ill, vegan, and anarchist.

Eisner discussed the radical and subversive potential of bisexuality—as potential to be co-opted into a revolution—and described the multiple levels at which a bi revolutionary concoction can function—from the liberation of bi people, through the subversion of sexual and gender hierarchies, to the deconstruction of all oppressive hierarchies and structures. QUOffice intern Joshua Blecher-Cohen delivered the introductory address with office director Dr. Van Bailey and Assistant Dean of Student Life for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Emilyn de la Peña speaking on the need to understand social justice, intersectionality and marginalized lives.

As a result of the growing influence of the Nicholas Papadopoulos Lecture, an unprecedented number of departments and student groups sponsored the lecture this year. Departmental sponsors included the Harvard College Women’s Center, Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Racial Relations, Harvard College Office of Student Life, Harvard College Dean’s Office, the Carr Center’s Sexuality, Gender, and Human Rights Program, Office of the Assistant to the President for Institutional Diversity and Equity, and Committee on Degrees in Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality. Student group sponsors included Harvard BA-GEIS: A Jewish/Queer Group, Between the Lines, Harvard College Progressive Jewish Alliance, and Trans* Task Force.

In another first, there was a sustained outreach effort to invite students, staff and faculty from Boston-area schools, as well as to make the event fully accessible. The event had a scent-free policy and was wheelchair-accessible. The lecture video is closed-captioned and posted online to be viewed by anyone.
On April 2, 2016, the Office of BGLTQ Student Life celebrated the accomplishments of BGLTQ students and their advocates at its inaugural Lavender Graduation. Hosted at Kirkland House, the graduation ceremony included dinner for over 80 attendees and a keynote address delivered by Scott Poulson-Bryant, a PhD candidate in the American Studies Program and a Kirkland House BGLTQ Tutor.

The Office of BGLTQ Student Life was honored to have Professors Tom and Verena Conley, House Masters of Kirkland House, deliver welcoming remarks. Seniors were welcomed as new alumni during the Lavender Graduation Procession and were presented with rainbow stoles from Michael Lewis and Juan de Zengotita of the Harvard Gender and Sexuality Caucus.

The Community Empowerment Award, BGLTQ Advocacy Award, and Outstanding Student Leader Award were also presented during the event. The Community Empowerment Award included a $1000 scholarship thanks to the generous support of The Open Gate Foundation of the Harvard Gender and Sexuality Caucus. Winners are outlined below:

**Community Empowerment Award**

The Community Empowerment Award is granted to any event or program that has left a lasting positive impact on the Harvard undergraduate BGLTQ Community.

**Winner:** Between the Lines: Asexuality and Aromanticism

**BGLTQ Advocacy Award**

The BGLTQ Advocacy Award is granted to any member of the Harvard community, including graduate students, faculty, and administrators, who have been a tremendous ally to the undergraduate BGLTQ community through their efforts at all academic or professional levels.

**Winner:** Avik Chatterjee, Dunster House BGLTQ-Specialty Tutor

**Outstanding Student Leader Award, with generous support from The Open Gate Foundation**

The Outstanding Student Leadership Award is granted to a Harvard College student of any academic year who has demonstrated significant leadership in the BGLTQ community, through his/her/hir/their involvement with and direction of campus or community events during their undergraduate career.

**Winner:** Diego Huerta

The Office of BGLTQ Student Life believes in the power of university-wide co-sponsored events in order to engage our community in multiple ways. We were pleased to co-sponsor the following broad-reaching events:

- **Sins Invalid**
- **Diversity, In(Equity), and Social Justice Research Conference**
- Harvard College Visiting Scholar: Shaun Harper
- FAS Diversity Dialogue Series
- UC’s Side-by-Side Campaign