

The GLSEN WA Bulletin

Fall 2007

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U Prep to Host 5th Annual GSA Leadership Summit

By David A. Hildebrand
Public Relations Director

Everyone here at GLSEN Washington State and the Washington State GSA Network would like to welcome everyone back to a brand new school year! As you can see over on the right, we do have a lot of events and activities lined up all year, leading up to our annual awards banquet in May.

The year is going to kick off with our fifth annual GSA Leadership Summit on October 12th at 8:00 AM, which will be hosted again on the beautiful campus of University Prep in North Seattle. Due to the large popularity last year, we will again enlist the services of Organic 2 Go to provide lunches for the summit. When you register, we will have a list of options for you to choose from, including vegetarian options.

See *Summit, Page 3*

Message From Our Executive Director

School is back in session and we're eager to share our exciting plans with you here in the pages of this newsletter. I'm sure you will agree that there is a lot to look forward to this year!

First, I want to give you a short summary of all the fun and exciting things GLSEN Washington State did over the summer break. In addition to visiting with all of you at various Pride events the state and at our Region 4 barbecue at Gasworks Park, we traveled to a conference of GSA networks in Albuquerque, NM and met with GLSEN chapter leaders in Phoenix, AZ. We were also honored as the Organizational Grand Marchers at Seattle's QueerFest and participated in the Pride march through downtown on Sunday alongside the GSA from Shorecrest High School.



We also had another round of excellent and dedicated worker bees working in the office this summer. Emily Storer, a student at Haverford College (Haverford, PA), interned with us. Conner Peretti, a student at Stanford University (Paulo Alto, CA), returned for a second summer as a Stanford Fellow. Neil, our Student Empowerment Director, and Jordan, our GSA Development Director, also put in countless volunteer hours.

Their hard work means that we are prepared to deliver another year of support, advocacy and training to LGBT and allied students and staff in schools across Washington State. However, we all have a role to play in hastening the end of bullying and harassment in our schools. Whether you can give a little or a lot of your time and/or your money, everything helps.

Sincerely,

Robert Raketty
Executive Director
GLSEN Washington State

GLSEN WA Events Calendar

Be sure to mark these dates on your calendars, as we have a fun-filled year in the works for all of you to have fun, engage in dialogue with your peers and help further the cause of GLSEN by ending the bullying and harassment of all youth, regardless of their sexual orientation and/or sexual identity in Washington State.

October

Gay and Lesbian History Month
10.11: National Coming Out Day
10.12: Fall Leadership Summit
10.13: Lambert House Student Activism Event
10.14-20: Ally Action Week
10.26: Intersex Awareness Day

November

11.19: Transgender Day of Remembrance

December

12.01: World AIDS Day

January

01.11-14: Dr. MLK Organizing Weekend
01.21-25: No Name-Calling Week

February

WA GSA Regional Summits, Dates/Locations TBA
02.06-02.12: Creating Change Conference

March

WA GSA Regional Summits, Dates/Locations TBA

April

WA GSA Regional Summits, Dates/Locations TBA
04.25: Day of Silence & Night of Noise

May

05.16: 4th Annual WA GSA Network Awards Banquet

June-July

Statewide Pride Events

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GLSEN WA's New Digs!

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GLSEN WA Gets New Digs!

Since 2002, GLSEN Washington State had the unique ability to have a physical office in the heart of Capitol Hill to coordinate the work that we do to follow the charter of GLSEN.

As time went on, as more people became involved, the small 150 square foot office, as wonderful as the yellow paint was, was too small for us to do our work effectively.

Earlier this summer, a tenant moved out of a suite in the same building we have been in and was nearly three times the size of the old office, so we took

A Message From Your Jump-Start Leaders

by Cullyn Foxlee
GSA President, Port Angeles High School

First, I would like to congratulate all GSA members for participating in such a successful alliance in promoting safe schools and tolerance. The fact that you are willing to take time out of your hectic high school schedules to meet for an altruistic purpose, truly shows your caliber. Good job!

I hope everyone had an excellent summer holiday! A new school year has started, bringing new opportunities and events for GSA's, GLOW's, etc. nationwide. It is my personal goal to be a beneficial resource to all Washington State GSAs when planning established events such as Ally Action Week, the Day of Silence, as well other original and encouraging novel ideas for events. Kyle, the Board at GLSEN Washington State and myself have established this quarterly newsletter with the purpose of providing and sharing information as well as anecdotes from all corners of our state.

As an introduction for our inaugural newsletter, we decided to share a little about GLSEN and our Jump-Start Summer Program experiences. GLSEN is the acronym for Gay, Lesbian, Straight, Education Network. The first GSA was founded in 1988 by Kevin Jennings, a gay teacher and a student, who was the daughter of two lesbian mothers. There are now over 3,000 GSAs across the country, however, the original mission remains the same: To ensure that each member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

To be honest, my personal knowledge about GLSEN was lacking when I joined the team. Despite my initial apprehension, after I arrived in Philadelphia for the Jump-Start team training, I soon realized that everyone had the same vision, which was all that we needed to unite as a team. The goal of equality, tolerance, understanding and acceptance was the only similarity the students of diverse backgrounds, ethnicity's and sexual and gender identities had initially. As the five days of training passed we discovered other common interests, but this single goal was all that was necessary.

The Jump-Start training was both inspiring and educational. Our days were filled with activities and workshops ranging from basic leadership skills to plans and suggestions for GSAs in the upcoming year. Though the GLSEN workshops were excellent, the most beneficial quality of the Jump-Start training was associating with my fellow organizers and GLSEN staff. Being a straight Caucasian ally, I felt very ignorant to the adversities GBLT students faced. Over the course of our training I was blessed with the opportunity to speak to others about their personal experiences and challenges. True, I will never know what it is like to a minority, however, I feel my understanding and knowledge was greatly improved through the conversations I had during training.

In conclusion, GLSEN's Jump-Start Summer Program was an experience that was so enlightening it is simply ineffable. I look forward to sharing the knowledge I gained during my training with all of you during the coming school year.

by Kyle Rapinan
GSA President, Shorecrest High School

Before I begin I want to thank all the GSA Leaders and members for promoting tolerance and creating safer schools for this generation and the next. My name is Kyle Rapinan and I am, along with my partner, Cullyn, are very excited to represent you and GLSEN National. The Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network is proud to help you, the forerunners, in support services and advocacy in your mission, as are we.

The Jump Start Leadership Convention in Philadelphia really helped me hone my skills in leadership and harness my goal of equality. As a gay white-looking Asian I believed that I was a repressed minority. But attending the summit I learned of my brothers and sisters who were suffering across the country and we lent support and advocacy to each other. Now as we have flown back to our respective homes we are still in contact and it feels like a web stretching from ocean to ocean and from state to state. I want you to know that this web still exists today and will continue to exist as long as GSA's stay in contact with each other.

My job as Student Organizer of Washington State and as the President of the Gay Straight Alliance for Shorecrest High school in Shoreline is to represent you. My GSA held one of the first Pink Prom's for queer youth/allies and had over 200 youth come last February. We were also the only GSA to march in Seattle Pride and I feel like we spoke up for a usually silent minority, queer youth. I feel like now is the time to be heard. Now is the time to plan Days of Action and to use your resources now laid on the table to truly take charge and create change in your community.

Feel free to contact us for any help that you my need for Days of Action. Such as, but not limited to, Ally Action Week, Transgender Day of Remembrance and the Day of Silence.



GLSEN National Jump-Start Leaders Kyle Rapinan and Cullyn Foxlee strike a pose for the camera.

WANTED: GOOD PEOPLE!

The Washington State chapter of GLSEN is one of 40 such chapters across the country that seeks to end the bullying and harassment of youth in K-12 schools, regardless of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Being a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization, the work that our chapter does reaches all corners of our great state: Bellingham to Clarkston; Spokane to Vancouver. Whenever our services have been asked of, either in the form of general information or our physical presence for trainings and workshops, we have been there.

While that is all well and good, due to the increasing demand for the work that we do, we need your help! With our Washington State GSA Network, we are seeking both students and advisers to coordinate events, trainings and workshops. We will still venture out and assist with anything that is needed, big or small.

That being said, brings up the other important as-

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To register now for the event, you can go directly to the Brown Paper Tickets website, www.brownpapertickets.com/event/20203 or follow the link from our website, www.glsenwa.org.

Check-in will begin at 8 am in the Founders' Hall Lobby at University Prep, 8000 25th Ave NE in Seattle. Opening remarks and a welcome will commence an hour later, with workshops starting at 9:30.

The first two workshops will last 50 minutes each, followed by a presentation by our keynote speaker, Connie Watts, Executive Director of Equal Rights Washington, based in Seattle.

Connie hails from Utah, but most recently lived in Washington, D.C., where she worked as the National Field Director for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America for the past seven years. Connie and her partner are also the proud parents of their 2-year-old son.

Lunch will follow with the afore-mentioned food from Organic 2 Go (even the bags are biodegradeable!), then a third workshop and closing ceremonies before you are cut loose at 2 pm to enjoy the rest of the day.

We have rounded up individuals and groups from various non-profits all over the region to facilitate the workshops: University of Washington lecturer Scott Winn, the American Civil Liberties Union, Lambert House, American Friends Service Committee, Verbena Health, Lifelong AIDS Alliance, Seattle Counseling Service, the Northwest Network, Intersex Society of North America, Youth Suicide Awareness Program and Empowerment.

pect of the work that we do: the funding to back all that work we do.

We have had big name individuals speak at our summits and awards banquet, such as Greta Cammermeyer, Marsha Botzer, Brent Hartinger and even GLSEN Founder Kevin Jennings! Then there is travel. The state of Washington is not small and fuel is not as inexpensive as it used to be.

So we are asking not only for people to volunteer their time and efforts in helping with GLSEN Washington State and our Washington State GSA Network and Transgender Youth Awareness projects, we could use your support financially as well. You can find a link on our website, www.glsenwa.org to make a donation online, or you also have the option of dropping off a check in the mail. There is also an option with many companies that you can find GLSEN Washington State listed with gift-matching, sometimes dollar for dollar, thus doubling your contribution. The entire Board thanks you for your support!

But wait, that is not all! GLSEN Washington State has teamed up with Lambert House, a center for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning youth and their allies that encourages empowerment through the development of leadership, social and life skills, with an event that they are putting on at University Prep the very next day!

The event is entitled "Conscious," a free all-ages training session for youth, by youth from 9am-6pm. Anyone attending the GSA Summit has been invited to attend, where you can truly harness and focus current leadership attributes. Lunch will also be provided by Organics 2 Go for a small fee, but will no one will be turned away.

To get tickets for thier event, tickets are also online from Brown Paper Tickets at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/19240. For more information on the phenomenal work that Lambert House does for the youth in the Seattle Metro area, please visit their website at www.lamberthouse.org. They are located on the corner of E Howell St and E Denny Way on Capitol Hill, with easy access to Metro busses. Their drop-in center is open Monday through Saturday from 4pm to 9:30pm.