

UPCOMING EVENTS

WELCOME BACK

August 18th, 3-5pm

CAMPUS Y, ANNE QUEEN LOUNGE

FIRST FRIDAYS

September 4th, October 2nd,

November 6th, 3-5pm

LGBTQ CENTER

NC PRIDE PARADE

September 26th, noon

DURHAM

COMING OUT DAY

October 9th, 12-2pm

THE PIT

TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

November 20th, 12-2pm

THE PIT

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The Growth of Graduate Programs

By Adrienne Gibilisco



PHOTO: ???

Revelers celebrating the LGBTQ Center's first ever Gayla, the brainchild of Graduate Assistant Kristina Wharton (L-R: Angel Collie, Kai Ewing, Kristina Wharton, Rémy Jodrey, Ray Haggerty, Jorge "JD" Donoso)

Wander in to the Tiger Room in downtown Carrboro on a particular Friday at around 5pm, and you'll likely see a group of 25 or so people linked by an inexplicable connection of camaraderie and community. Some are laughing in smaller pockets of the room, others appear to be commiserating and showing support, and all in this group are intent on each other's dialogue as they enjoy a meal, perhaps a drink, and the cozy closeness and ambience of the space.

If you are lucky enough to stumble upon this generally upbeat gathering, congratulations! You've entered the Graduate Social Hour and a Half, otherwise known as GSHAH, one of the most popular of the many programs hosted by the LGBTQ Center solely for graduate and professional students.

A direct outgrowth of the SHAH events that undergraduate **Kelly Barber** had initiated several years prior [ED. note: see our *Spotlight Alumna* story on p. 12], GSHAH had its origins back when the LGBTQ Center's director, **Terri Phoenix**, had begun T's tenure at the Center as a graduate student. "Most of my focus [then] was on Safe Zone and the SHAHs. But we didn't do any direct programming for graduate students," Phoenix recalls.

Well aware of how effective having an official hour and a half devoted solely to graduate students would be, as soon as Phoenix became the director, T immediately took that successful programming model and implemented a graduate version, assigning it as one of the tasks for the graduate assistant. Because the focus was on a different cohort,

(Continued on page 8)

Letter from the Director



PHOTO BY DAN SEARS

“Organizing is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it is not all mixed up.” -- Winnie the Pooh (A.A. Milne)

For the past decade, the LGBTQ Center’s mission has been to foster a safe, inclusive environment for UNC-Chapel Hill community members of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. We have sought to accomplish that mission through three main areas of focus: education, advocacy, and direct services. Last year, we celebrated 10 successful years. It seemed like an ideal time to review, assess, dream a little, and -- as Pooh so eloquently noted -- “organize” so that our moving into the future “is not all mixed up.”

Over the course of this past semester, we have been engaged in a strategic planning process to identify goals to guide the LGBTQ Center through the next 10 years. We have engaged in a number of tasks throughout the process by reviewing the following:

- Findings and recommendations from our 2012 administrative review process (<https://lgbtq.unc.edu/about-center/center-history>).
- Programs, structure, and services of a number of our peer institutions (<http://oira.unc.edu/institutional-effectiveness/institutional-performance-measures/peer-groups/unc-system-defined-peer-group/>)
- The Council for the Advancement of Standards for LGBT Programs and Services (http://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/Lesbian,_Gay,_Bisexual,_Transgender_Programs_and_Services_SAG.pdf).
- The UNC-Chapel Hill academic plan (REACH Carolina) (<http://academicplan.unc.edu/>)

- The UNC-Chapel Hill Diversity Plan (<http://diversity.unc.edu/research-and-publications/diversity-plan/>), and,

- The Student Affairs Strategic Plan

- Our program records and assessment data for the past five years.

Currently, we are working to consolidate all of that information in conjunction with envisioning what the future of the LGBTQ Center might look like in the context of current and anticipated needs of UNC-Chapel Hill students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional), staff, faculty, and alumni/ae.

As the director, I envision a future where the LGBTQ Center is prominently visible and engaged in a number of capacities:

- disrupter of heteronormativity and the gender binary
- advocate for equity in policies, practices, benefits, and opportunities
- provider of information and resources
- provider of cultural competency trainings and consultation
- source of community for the diverse LGBTIQPAA, Two Spirit, and Same Gender Loving communities

Our goal is to complete the strategic planning process before the beginning of the 2015-2016 academic year and begin to use that plan to guide program and service planning and delivery. We welcome your input. If you have ideas, comments, or recommendations we encourage you to send those to lgbtq@unc.edu.

Terri Phoenix

Fall Events In Review

By **Adrianne Gibilisco**



PHOTO: ADRIANNE GIBILISCO

At the Campus Y's Anne Queen Lounge LGBTQ Center assistant Kim Brummell and director Terri Phoenix's daughter, Duncan, share a smile amidst a sea of students.

The 2014 Fall semester was a non-stop calendar of events, programming and activism:

WELCOME BACK (8/18)

It was perhaps the hottest day of the summer when **Adrianne Gibilisco** and **Angel Collie** – the latter only four days into his new job as the LGBTQ Center's assistant director – joined forces to set up our Welcome Back event at the Campus Y. It was a schlep-fest of the highest magnitude [*schlep* – verb, Yiddish; to carry, lug or move slowly, awkwardly or tediously].

Gibilisco had spent the previous evening picking up hundreds of dollars' worth of fruits, vegetables, packaged salads, cookies, pastries, breads, cheeses and dips that had been donated by the fabulous folks at the local Trader Joe's. The bounty was crammed into Gibilisco's small car for transport to SASB North, where Collie met her in the loading area and informed her that the elevator was broken. There was only one option: They had to cart the items up four flights of stairs from the back entrance, staining Collie's shirt with errant strawberries and testing their physical endurance.



Adrianne (left) and Angel, post *schlepfest*

Upon arriving at the LGBTQ Center, drenched in sweat, they realized their error: the items would eventually have to be transported to the Campus Y, across campus. Perhaps this was better done before the car was completely emptied? Fortunately, Gibilisco's husband, **Paul**, was waiting in the no-park zone with the car until the unpacking was complete, so they were able to return the items into the hatchback and onto their laps, drive over to the Campus Y, and unload all over again.

It all went into the upstairs fridge, spilling over onto the tables of the break room for safekeeping until they could bring it back downstairs, unpack the abundant gourmet treats and then set it all up in the spacious, light-drenched

(and, thankfully, air conditioned) Anne Queen Lounge. The turnout was phenomenal, with a full house of hungry, happy students gathering to reconnect with friends they hadn't seen since the last day of classes or meet new folks while enjoying the music, food and ambience.

People got to know each other even better over a game of "Find Someone Who..." Bingo that really warmed up the room with laughter. Winners – who included LGBTQ Center director **Terri Phoenix's** four-year-old daughter, **Duncan** – received jelly bean-filled jars nicked from the recent Student Affairs staff party (though we prefer to think of this as being resourceful with our budget).

Associate Vice Chancellor **Bettina Shuford** honored us with her presence and warm message of welcome to the new school year and encouraged students to be involved in the many events that will be taking place on campus. As the party wound down, Collie and Gibilisco gave away the few remaining food items to the ever-hungry students to take back to their dorms. "It was exhausting and exhilarating," said Gibilisco. "I can't wait to do it again." Yes...but, next year, let's hope for a working elevator!

// It was exhausting and exhilarating! I can't wait to do it again!



Though Many, We Are One: Students celebrate in the NC Pride parade from atop the UNC float.

PHOTO: GINNY LEWIS

NC PRIDE (9/27)

Nothing says Pride better than a float filled with 65 cheering, exuberant Tarheels on a warm autumn day under Carolina blue skies. Work study and volunteer students had toiled all week, preparing colorful puzzle cutouts with intriguing designs and commentary ("Time to Thrive," "One State, One People"). Under a banner that read "Though many, we are one," the UNC parade participants waved their puzzle pieces and cheered. Why puzzle pieces? Collie explains: "We are a puzzle: we all have our individual shapes and pieces. But when we come together, we make a beautiful community."

// When we come together, we make a beautiful community.

COMING OUT WEEK (10/6-10/10), COMING OUT DAY (10/10)

As always, the LGBTQ Center planned a full Coming Out Week of activities, with movie screenings and events galore: The viewings included *Dangerous Living*, (about coming out in developing countries), *Prayers for Bobby* (about a mother's struggle with faith and her eventual advocacy for gay rights after her son's suicide), and *Out in Silence* (an autobiographical

Fall 2014 was like a runaway train of activity, running the gamut from frivolity to solemnity...and everything in-between!



LGBTQ Center Staff celebrate Coming Out Day 2014: (L-R:Terri Phoenix, Kim Brummell, Morgan McLaughlin, Danny Nett, Angel Collie, Kristina Wharton, Daniel Bridges,Adrianne Gibilisco, Ginny Lewis)

story of the filmmaker's marriage to another man and his subsequent assistance of a bullied gay teen).

One of our most powerful programs was the Coming Out Panel discussion, which was comprised of students **Kai Ewing, Travis St. Brice, Alejandra Marquez** and **Kim Brummell**. Their stories were as varied as their experiences, with some on the panel being embraced by their loved ones upon coming out to them...and others facing condemnation instead.



PHOTO BY GINNY LEWIS

Students get into the spirit of Coming Out Day as they celebrate the yearly event, post-Rainbow Cake, in the PIT

Speaking to the rapt audience, St. Brice had people in tears with his riveting story of familial rejection and personal acceptance; Marquez worried that she would be met with rejection when coming out to her mother, but was fortunate to forge a strong, accepting relationship with her; Brummell shared her experience of seeking – and receiving – unconditional support from her mother; and Ewing told the audience that figuring out their identity in the safe and supportive environs of UNC has made them happier than they'd ever been (even in spite of people disrespecting them in their pronouns on a daily basis).

Faculty, staff and graduate/professional students got a chance to mingle during our first Faculty Meetup at Top of the Hill's Back Bar. It was a great opportunity for queer faculty and staff to connect in a relaxed setting off-campus as people listened to upbeat music, played darts, and shared some laughs. The event was such a success that another Meetup was planned for later in the year.



Terri begins the traditional cutting of the Rainbow Cake, much to the delight of hungry, happy onlookers.

PHOTO BY GINNY LEWIS

Closing out the week was Coming Out Day at the Pit, for which the whole office -- plus some terrific volunteers -- came together to create a successful event. We planned our mission -- the picking up, dismantling and subsequent erecting of the rainbow colored door from its storage space on north campus to the Pit -- coordinating details to the minute. With our watches (and iPhones) synchronized for accuracy, we left in groups -- some in cars and some on foot -- to make it all happen. We tugged, lugged, lifted and carried all the heavy components of the door (demonstrating how weighty a closet can be!) and converged on the Pit for set-up.

Folks delighted in the photo opportunities by the door, enhanced by costumes and accessories, and lined up ravenously to partake in the traditional rainbow cake (that sweet n' colorful concoction went fast!). Music blasted as an intense game of Four Square was played by Center director Terri Phoenix, Travis St. Brice, **Carson Roush**, and others. Music, cake, laughter, games, and connecting with one another -- a perfect recipe for Coming Out Day.



PHOTO BY GINNY LEWIS

TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE (11/20)

What was already a solemn occasion was made all the more somber when a bomb threat was texted in YikYak. Although it turned out to be a false alarm by a student whose questionable sense of humor nearly resulted in his expulsion, a building to building search was conducted and police presence was strong at the Pit.

Concern that the threat may still turn out to be real forced us to reexamine our traditional "Die In" protocol -- the laying down of bodies in the Pit to represent lives lost. Instead, we placed placards -- with the images and stories about the transgender individuals who had been slain in the past year -- on the ground. As Phoenix read each name aloud, staff and volunteers took turns placing a lavender rose on each image.

After this ritual of remembrance was completed, we invited all those observing to walk amongst the placards and learn about the individuals. Reactions of shock, dismay, anger and disbelief were prevalent among the viewers. Many of the participants, too, were shaken by



PHOTO BY GINNY LEWIS

Lavender roses are placed in wreath-like formation around a tree at the Pit after the Transgender Day of Remembrance ceremony as onlookers contemplate the solemnity of the event.

the experience, so Gender Violence Services coordinator (and Drop-In Hours facilitator) **Cassidy Johnson** was available at the Center later to counsel folks who needed help processing their feelings.

Before we left the Pit that day, we laid the flowers around the trunk of the tree that had graced us with shade during the event. The simple beauty of that image of nature was a calming coda to our memorial.

First Friday

Of the month...

First Friday!



LGBTQ Center
 450 Ridge Rd, SASB N #3226
 Web: lgbtq.unc.edu
 Email: lgbtq@unc.edu

Drop by on the First Friday of the month for the LGBTQ Center Monthly open house!

★ Join us for snacks, games, hanging out and meeting new folks. **EVERYONE** is welcome!

Fall 2014 First Fridays:

- Friday, September 5th
- Friday, October 3rd
- Friday, November 7th
- Friday, December 5th

3-5 PM

If you need reasonable accommodations due to a mobility, auditory or visual impairment, please contact Adrienne at adrigibi@email.unc.edu or 919-843-5376.

FIRST FRIDAYS

Adding to the “Fun, Food and Friends” promise of our initial First Friday of the semester, we featured games of all kinds. As soon as Collie hooked up his Wii system that he’d brought from home, wild tennis and bowling matches ensued.

Participants noshed on yummy snacks, cheering on the players who expertly wielded their playing wands, contorting their bodies and stretching towards their goals as the competitions heated up.

Although there were no awards given to the winners, the satisfaction of a game played well was enough to put smiles of satisfaction on their faces. It will be hard to top this fabulous Friday!

The Growth of Graduate Programs (Cont'd.)



Students engaged in conversation with LGBTQ Center assistant director Angel Collie, around equality and inclusion, during recent Equality NC conference. Kristina Wharton (bottom left) organized attendance by UNC-CH Graduate students.

modifications had to be made. For instance, while SHAHS were typically held at the Student Union on campus, the graduate students wanted a different environment, with a more social atmosphere, often socializing around food. Since the Center's budget didn't allow for the provision of food and they didn't have access to special space for socializing, they opted for off-campus gatherings at various local restaurants instead. "We've never hosted it in a bar. It's never in a place where the primary purpose is drinking," Phoenix is quick to point out, "but we have it at restaurants where they may have a bar."

GSHAH was an immediate hit, but took a while to hit its stride. What started as an occasional gathering became a monthly event when graduate assistants **Laura Baker** and, later, **Sarah Chi** were at the helm. By 2015, GSHAH had become so popular under graduate assistant **Kristina Wharton's** aegis that the group began to meet every two weeks.

The decision to move to a semi-monthly gathering was not arbitrary, however. It was based on a Needs Assessment conducted by Wharton at the very beginning of the 2014/15 semester, using a Qualtrix

survey that she designed. With the feedback came affirmation that GSHAH was a "keeper." "People really appreciated it [because they] were [often] new to the area and new to the programs and didn't have the opportunity, necessarily, to meet other LGBTQ-identified folks and allies," Wharton explains over a cup of steaming java near campus. "It's kind of a nice, safe space and it's been really fun to see people's relationships and friendships grow through it that they wouldn't have otherwise had. This is so valuable — it helps people get through grad school, through a hard time."

Indeed, GSHAH became the touchstone for the graduate community, with the hour and a half often extending to three hours. "The second you walk in, everybody hugs and says, 'Hey! How's it going? How was that exam?' Everybody knows what's going on with each other. It's very nice and inclusive," notes Wharton, adding that it sometimes feels like a therapy session. "It can get very serious, at times. People come with real issues in their families and issues with faculty at school and personal problems and they feel that it's a safe space to bring it up and open it up to the table. We go around and give a little of the

LGBTQ Lunch & Learn: Graduate Speaker Series

About the Series

The LGBTQ Center, Graduate and Professional Student Federation, Program in Sexuality Studies, and the Graduate School are co-sponsoring this speaker series for graduate students doing LGBTQ-related research to share their work.

Please contact Danny DePuy at depuy@email.unc.edu if you require any reasonable accommodations for the event due to a mobility, hearing, visual, or other impairment.

“Corporate Influence on LGBT Health: Examining the LGBT Tobacco Epidemic” *Joseph Lee, MPH, CPH*
Wednesday, March 27th, 1-2 pm
Campus Y Room 207 & 208

Co-sponsored by the Health Sciences LGBTQ Alliance, School of Medicine Queer Straight Alliance, & Health Behavior Department.

“Queer Conversations: LGBTIQ Consumer/ Producer Interface at Comic-Con International and the Intransitive Writing of Comics”
Ben Bolling, PhD Candidate in English
Thursday, April 4th, 12:30-1:30 pm
Campus Y Room 207 & 208

“Coping Strategy or Social Behavior?: Findings from a Mixed-Methods Study of Alcohol Use among Immigrant Sexual Minority Latinos in NC” *Paul Gilbert, MSPH*
Thursday, April 11th, 12:30-1:30 pm
Health Sciences Library 527

Co-sponsored by the Health Sciences LGBTQ Alliance, School of Medicine Queer-Straight Alliance, and Health Behavior Department



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A flyer created by Sarah Chi, promoting the Graduate Speakers Series, spring 2014

stories and support. It can be a really, really nice warm, affirming thing. It's so heartwarming to have people tell me that it means so much."

In fact, GSHAH is only one of many regularly scheduled events geared around the needs of graduate students, a contingent that had often felt overlooked in the past. When a graduate & professionals focus group panel discussion was conducted in 2012 to assess the LGBTQ Center and the programming that it provides, it was unanimously determined that one of the areas where improvement was most needed was in graduate programming. Panelists expressed concern that most of the Center's programming seemed to be geared towards undergraduates, leaving graduates and professionals feeling marginalized by the very place where they sought a connection.

As a result of these feelings of exclusion, most had never even visited the Center's SASB North location, except for when they happened to be in the Cashier's office in the same building. Its site, on the southeastern edge of the campus, was close to undergrad housing, but terribly far from where many graduate classes are conducted or where they lived. Often, it necessitated at least 15-20 minutes of travel each way, a somewhat prohibitive amount of time. This distance tended to preclude the possibility of participation in any of the programming the Center conducted, a "quick" visit to the Center's Resource Library, or a meeting with staff.

Hence, we saw the implementation of numerous graduate-focused programming. Just as GSHAH grew out of its earlier iteration as SHAH, the Graduate Speaker Series was a more developed version of the Lunch and Learn

series that originated when Phoenix first became director. “We invited faculty and graduate students to present their research and teaching,” says Phoenix. The program started off strong, but after two years, attendance started to taper off, so it was discontinued.

Still, people continued to express interest – it was just a matter of finding someone with the right energy and connections to make it happen. So when Sarah Chi was on board as the graduate assistant in 2013/2014, she took the ball and ran with it. Last year, the LGBTQ Center kicked off the Graduate Speaker Series, an opportunity for graduate or professional students conducting LGBTQ-related research to present their findings. This series is ideal in helping speakers prepare for future presentations, work out any kinks, and allow for an appreciation of each other’s work while providing much appreciated peer support. As Wharton notes, “Who better to present to than a really affirming group of people who are your peers from a variety of different departments or perspectives?”

Since Wharton took over the graduate assistant position, the series has nearly doubled. “The foundation was there...it just kind of built upon itself,” she says, humbly. Still, the Graduate Speaker Series is a difficult one to maintain, due to limitations on budget and the logistics of finding a time and space that is amenable to the most amount of people. “Getting people to lock down, to commit their time, unless they really, really are prepared to do that, [is difficult]. And getting any kind of funding for food is always hard,” she says.

However, the variety and breadth of coverage presented by graduates has been impressive. “We had one person, **Jen Stockwell** in Comparative Literature. It was on the notion of lesbian feminism from a theological and literary perspective. It was very, very complicated and technical!” recalls Wharton, adding, “She was our first [of the semester] and she really wanted the space for that reason. She was going to a conference and was nervous about it and it was really nice for her to get a chance just to practice in a small group and have questions asked. By the time she went to the conference a few weeks later, she had a polished presentation.”

Other presenters included **Kai Ewing**, a second-year Master of Information and Library Sciences student, who spoke on their Master’s project, “LGBTQ Center Resource Library Access,” which was a case study using a project they had been doing here at the LGBTQ Center all year. Ewing discussed a bit of the Center’s history, information about its library, and the methods and strategies they had been using to connect the LGBTQ Center library to the UNC library systems to promote access to more students and hopefully bring more folks to the Center. “It was great to see the end results of cataloging work that I’ve watched Kai and the Center’s work study students work on so diligently for months,” recalls Wharton.

“Queering Middle School Math” was another successful presentation, which came out of the School of Education as doctoral candidates **Summer Pennell** and **Brian Fede** presented on qualitative research they had been conducting in collaboration with a middle school math class. The research was aimed at engaging its students to use and see the value of math to address social justice topics, such as the “Black Lives Matter” movement and state marriage equality legislation. The study

took the class participants’ perspectives on how they learned to set up mathematical models to answer questions they had about current events and whether using math this way changed their perspectives on the subject. “This event drew a great crowd of future and current educators from UNC and other campuses, as well as parents from the school that collaborated with the speakers for the study,” notes Wharton.

Attendance at the presentations also gives graduate students the opportunity to learn about other disciplines. “We come from all different background and disciplines. It’s cool because it gives your department a different perspective on the graduate school. It’s very easy to get ‘siloed’ into your department and never leave it,” Wharton acknowledges.





Wharton and Collie prepare to celebrate the LGBTQ Center's first-ever Gayla.

In addition, she attaches the brochure with every missive on the new graduate student listserv she created, which has been helpful in promoting events. "I can kinda say, 'Okay, there are these activities [taking place]. They're cool for you. There's not going to be entirely undergrads there and you won't feel left out. They're designed for you.'"

The final event of the Spring 2015 semester that Wharton promoted was the LGBTQ Center's first-ever "Gayla," her idea for a "non-Prom." The theme for the Gayla's inaugural year was "Over the Rainbow," of which Wharton laughs, "People can interpret that any way they wish!"

The event, held at The Library (120 E. Franklin Street) included food, dancing, a DJ, and glow-in-the-dark acoutrements to accentuate the convivial post-Lavender Graduation celebration. "It was a perfect end cap to a really full year of graduate events," says assistant director **Angel Collie**, who helped transport (in the back of Phoenix's pick-up truck) a giant balloon rainbow arch purloined from Lavender Graduation for the event. "Graduates had one last chance to connect and take pictures, literally under the rainbow."

This combination of both creative/fun and educational programming is essential to keeping all students engaged in the LGBTQ Center's activities. Having innovative graduate assistants on board to ensure that their peers are included and involved has been a blessing in that regard. Wharton acknowledges of her position with us this year, "When I first [began work here], I didn't know the inner workings of the Center as much. I just saw all the events and not all the behind of scenes and how much goes into them. But you couldn't possibly know that unless you're the person staying up, making chili, until the wee hours [for a student event]. I feel really lucky to have this work. It shows because I'm excited about it."

It gives the LGBTQ Center a greater appreciation, too, of the contributions of all of the graduate assistants who have worked here over the years...and the continuation of terrific graduate outreach and programming!

Graduate programming has also been extended to Safe Zone training, with twice yearly trainings held solely for graduate students, professionals and instructors. Unlike the traditional Safe Zone trainings, in which any one session can include a mix of undergraduates, graduates, faculty, staff and community member participants, these are solely populated by graduate students and instructors, and is far more specific to situations that they would likely face. "It's specialized to the needs of graduate students usually as instructors in roles like TAs or RAs or GA's," explains Wharton. "It addresses their needs from that perspective of what it's like to work with undergraduates or to negotiate relationships with faculty or staff as you work for them."

Key to the success of any of our graduate programming is the networking and communications capability of our graduate assistant. Wharton's formula for success was strong collaborative relationships with GPSF and the Health Science Alliance (with whom she is closely connected as a result of her studies towards her MPH). She devised nifty, colorful brochures that highlight graduate student programs and provide information on related grad student organizations. "I really wanted to be able to say to the graduate students, 'We do all this stuff! I'm here! This is what I do all the time! And it's all in this free little brochure! Here you go!'" Wharton laughs.

Featured Alumna Spotlight

By Adrianne Gibilisco



Barber-Lester in idyllic repose while continuing her studies in Wales

In each edition of *Aluminate*, we feature an article highlighting the adventures and accomplishments of a randomly chosen graduate. In this edition, our featured alumna is Kelly Johnson Barber-Lester (2006).

From the moment **Kelly Johnson Barber-Lester** bounds into a space, the energy in the room immediately lifts. Driven and upbeat, during her years at UNC-Chapel Hill, the Statesville, North Carolina native managed to balance working as a peer mentor at the pre-Center LGBT Office; tutoring young Hispanic mothers in English; being an RA at Ehringhaus; working at both the Carolina Club and the Women's Center; and, mounting a four-woman show as part of her honors thesis...all whilst completing a major in Communications Studies with a focus on Performance.

Yet, even after spending several years as a Teach for America and public grade school teacher after graduation, this perky dynamo shows no signs of slowing down. The multi-tasking married mother of three (all under the age of five) packs in a full day, rising before dawn to exercise, get all the kids fed and off to school or daycare, and arrive on campus at her alma mater in her pursuit of a PhD in education.

During a brief respite between her morning familial duties and her afternoon classes, she stopped by the Center to fill us in on the hectic, but incredibly enriching details of her life.

As a UNC student, what sort of work did you do with the LGBTQ Center?

The LGBTQ Center opened the year that I came here [2002/2003], so I was in the first group of peer mentors with the LGBT Office. I think all of the peer mentors had office hours during the week. Some of them had



Barber-Lester, who “worked like a crazy person” during her UNC years, stops to smell the roses.

office hours and were in doing either administrative stuff or just there in case someone happened to show up and wanted to talk. I helped with the Safe Zone trainings and I started a program called “Social Hour and a Half” – SHAH – because I decided that our LGBTQ students and our allies needed a safe space to come and socialize and everything would be good. We had a room – I’m thinking maybe it was in the Campus Y for a while, and then later on, we did it in a room in the Student Union. We had a Union room every week or every couple of weeks. I think that was my biggest contribution.

It’s a huge contribution – SHAH is still around, but it’s morphed into GSHAH (Graduate Social Hour and a Half).

That’s great that it’s still around. How cool! So that was my biggest thing...and then I was one of the first Lavender graduates [in 2006]. There were not many of us – I would say definitely fewer than 20 of us. What is mindboggling to me is that before [my cohort] were here, there WAS no LGBTQ Office. That was kind of a little bothersome to think that up until that year, there was nothing on campus for our LGBTQ students. I’m glad now, though, that we have one of the longest standing programs in a public university in North Carolina. I think we were one of the first public universities in North Carolina to have it.

Aside from your work with the LGBTQ Office, what kind of activism were you involved with

while you were at UNC?

I’m bilingual, so I did a lot of stuff with Hispanic immigrant-directed organizations around [the area]. I didn’t like learning Spanish in high school and felt like I was really bad at it. And then I started to become aware of the growing Spanish-speaking population in North Carolina and just kind of said to myself, “If I’m going to be able to communicate with the people in my community, this is a skill that I need.” So I studied abroad in Salamanca, Spain, for a semester. It was amazing – I studied at the University there. [It was] all Spanish, all the time, which I should not have been allowed to do, but I weaseled my way in somehow. I wasn’t fluent, going into it. But I somehow convinced them that they should let me go, so they did. And I stayed with a family there that didn’t speak any English and figured it out, quickly, and managed to do okay.

How did you apply your Spanish speaking skills once you returned from the Study Abroad semester?

I did some tutoring with an organization on campus that matched college students with young, Hispanic mothers who were trying to learn English. I also directed an afterschool program for middle school-aged Latina girls. It was at a middle school off-campus. The goal of that program was to inspire these girls to go on and pursue college because, at that time – and I’m not sure what the statistics are now – Latina girls were the LEAST likely to graduate high school and get a college education. So the motivation of that program was to make these connections with the girls, give them some role models to look up to, give them some exposure to what college would be like. We’d take them on trips to the other colleges and do all interesting, fun activities that were a mix of academic and bonding.

That’s terrific mentorship. What was that program called?

Las Guapitas. *Guapa* in Spanish is “pretty” or “beautiful,” so it means “the little, pretty ones.” It doesn’t translate very well! (laughs) So, I worked on that program for a year and then took over directorship of that program in my senior year.

It sounds like you were always working!

I kept myself busy, trying to earn enough money to pay for college. So I had a little stuff here and there. I had some debt when I graduated, but not nearly as much as I could have had because I worked like a crazy person! But I got the most out of it. I was an RA and then in my senior year, I was a community coordinator for Ehringhaus housing community. I worked way too much! I really kept my nose to the grindstone. Working with the Office and working with the volunteer organizations, those were things that were essential for me to feel like I was actually being productive in the world. I worked banquets at the Carolina Club, I did some work with the Women's Center. They were putting on a conference during my senior or junior year and I helped coordinate bringing a performance piece here called "Body and Soul," which is about human trafficking. We put it up at the Sonja Haynes Center in their performance space. That was pretty cool.

That must have been right up your alley, as a Performance Studies major.

Performance Studies was, for me, where it was at! They had a really wonderful faculty and it allowed me to do some really interesting and creative work that I thought was meaningful. One of the biggest things I did was in my senior year when I did an honors thesis in Performance Studies. I got the rights to adapt a book called "Secret Sisters," which is a compilation of autobiographical narratives written by lesbian, gay, bisexual sorority members. So I adapted it as a four-woman show and put it on. It was actually, to my knowledge the first and perhaps only [project] in which the LGBTQ Center and the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life both actually contributed because [they both] gave me money to help put my show up. So it was cool to get the collaboration. So I adapted

it, wrote it, put it up as my thesis. Most of my senior year was a lot of work, dealing with that. It was a really cool piece.

What was it that resonated for you about that particular book?

The whole kind of major theme behind that was dealing with issues of stereotyping and why boxing people in can be detrimental to people's experiences on all sorts of different levels. Because, you know,



Barber-Lester (center), with the cast of her four-woman show

the women in these stories weren't just having issues with their LGBTQ identities and stereotypes related to those. They were having issues related to their sorority sister identities, as well – which is something that rings very true to both of these communities. So it was a really interesting experience, doing that. And my cast was real interesting because there were four women in the cast and one of them was a sorority member and then a couple of the women in my cast were

queer-identified women and one heterosexual woman who was not in a sorority...so part of the experience was working with the cast. Parts of the script were adapted straight from the book, but parts of it were put together from our experiences working with each other and how we approached each other and reacted to each other, in terms of our identities.

How was the turnout?

It was really well attended! We did it in a space in the Union that I don't think is still there – on the lower floor. It was a really cool performance space. We did two shows and we probably got close to 200 people there over the course of the two shows. So, hopefully, we made some people think a little bit. It was one of the coolest experiences I had at UNC.



"The goodness seeps out of him," says Barber-Lester of her husband Tyler, seen here taking some down time from college in London.

Tyler, your partner, also attended UNC.

Yes, wonderful Tyler! He was a Morehead Scholar and graduated in 2005. I met him during the spring of my freshman year and we have been together ever since.

Awww....

I know. How cheesy is that? (laughs) I totally did not expect to be that person. But we were together the whole time at UNC, which is so crazy. Because, I swear, two weeks before I met him, I was saying, "I'm done dating!" I was going to Spain in the fall and I was like, "I'm really happy being by myself. This is a good space to be. Even if I'm not done, I'm done with men right now. I've had it with that!" (laughs) And then here comes Tyler, and he's the best person I know. The goodness seeps out of him. We got married six days after I graduated.

Wow! It's amazing that you found the time, in between putting on productions, volunteering, traveling to Spain, and working to pay your bills...to somehow have a relationship!

(laughing) To SOMEHOW have a relationship, yes! I worked that in.

And then you went straight into teaching. I would imagine that both your performance skills and Spanish skills came in handy when

you became a teacher.

(laughing) Oh, yeah! When I went into teaching, it was with Teach for America as a third grade bilingual teacher, working with all native Spanish speakers. I was with their Charter Corps in New Haven, Connecticut. I LOVED the work that I did there. The school that I was in, it was a really wonderful, eye-opening experience. I went into Teach for America because I was – and continue to be – very angry at the state of education for poor and minority kids in our country. I went in angry and I came out angrier. You continued teaching, though, in North Carolina.

Yeah...the worst thing about Connecticut was the cold. We just

couldn't hang with the cold! All of our immediate family is in North Carolina, so every time we'd get a break, we'd drive back to North Carolina and it just felt like we never got a vacation because it was "back and forth, back and forth." So eventually, Tyler got a job down here [as an actuary], he moved back and I stayed to finish out my commitment with Teach for America. Once it was over, I came back, too.

And then you took a break when you had kids?

When I was teaching, I worked 60-80 hours a week, every week. And that was exhausting, but it was necessary. I loved "my kids" [at school]. But I also knew that I didn't want to sacrifice my kids at home [Isabel, 5, Solomon, 4, and Aeneas, 3] for my kids at school and I didn't want to shortchange my kids at school because of my kids at home. So I knew, at that point, that wasn't something that I wanted to continue doing. So, I had Isabel in October 2009, Solomon in October 2010, and Aeneas in November 2011. We were busy...VERY busy! (laughs) But if you're gonna go...go hard! And we have a dog! Seamus is a 90-pound Labradoodle that we got from a rescue when he was two. We live in Durham, in a house that backs up to the American Tobacco Trail, so we do a lot of cycling on the Tobacco Trail with the kids. When it's summer, we do a lot of swimming because our neighborhood has a pool. Our favorite thing is to just go walk in the woods, to hike, to be out in nature with the kids and let them run around and beat stuff with sticks. We like to be outdoors! I wasn't even sure I was even going to get married



True blue Carolina fans, the Barber-Lester family are properly geared up to take in a recent football game at their alma mater.

and now look at this! A house, a dog, kids...what?!?!?
(laughs)

And yet, with three kids under the age of five and a giant pooch at home, you decided to go back to work a few years back. What was the lure?

After staying home with my kids for three and a half years, I decided that that was no longer the best thing for me or my children, so I started teaching fourth grade part-time at a school in Durham. Then, coming out of that job, I got offered a position creating and directing an afterschool program through a 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant at an elementary school in Durham. That was a really good learning experience: I got to hire a staff, manage a staff, create a program, kind of built everything from the ground up. So, I learned a lot, but coming through that, there was still more exposure to the public school system, still more exposure to things that aren't working, still more frustration.

How did you handle that frustration?

I decided I need to learn more and I need to position myself to have a bigger impact. So in order to do that, I'm back in school [at UNC], going for a PhD in education. My research focus is Learning Sciences and Psychological Studies. I just started this past fall and it was fantastic! I love my program, I love the professors in my program. We're a very small cohort of people – only four of us in my year – and we all get

along really, really well.

So you're back on campus for the next couple of years!

Yeah! Hopefully, I'll be figuring out how to be the biggest advocate that I can be and make the biggest changes that I can to help facilitate some justice.

Are you working on any LGBTQ rights issues currently?

[I'm not working on anything] in particular right now, [but] I've been thrilled to death at the striking down of Amendment One and the fact that all of my LGBT friends can now get married and have their marriages recognized in North Carolina. That was a big thing for me. When it actually happened, I cried and I cried and I cried and I cried because it's been a really dark thing for North Carolina that we kind of had that mark on us, that we were not welcoming to our LGBTQ families, that their marriages were not recognized by us. For my friends or my family who are in relationships that were not recognized, that was a big deal. But for me, as a mother, it's important for me to know that when my kids grow up, they can be partnered with whomever they'd like to be partnered and that their relationships is the same as everybody else's relationship. For my children, it will be unfathomable to them that it was ever NOT like this. When they are grown up, they are not going to believe me when I try and tell them that this was ever NOT how it was.



Selfie-time for the happy couple in Burgos, Spain

Change takes time, but it has moved forward for the LGBTQ community. There are GSAs in some of the middle schools in Chapel Hill now. That's something that never would have happened even five years ago. I know! I think it will take longer in other places in North Carolina, obviously. When I went to the School of Science and Math [a public boarding school in Durham], it was really similar. If I hadn't gone there, God knows when I would have come to open acceptance of myself as a queer woman. We had a really active LGBTQ group on campus. What did we call it? (thinks, then brightens) Spectrum! If it hadn't been for that, if I had been stuck in Statesville for those last two years, it just wasn't going to happen. It was moving to a space where literally and metaphorically speaking, that was safe and supportive and it's

a life altering thing. The more kids we can get into spaces like that, the better it will be for them.

Looking back, what is the one thing you wish that you would have known when you were a student that you know now?

I think the me of now would tell the undergrad me -- who was really busy and sometimes stressed out at all the stuff that I was doing -- that as long as I was doing something meaningful, that it was going to be worth it. And that I should take advantage of that time in my life when I had the time and the energy to do it.

In Memorium: Dr. Melissa Exum



As the former Dean of Students, **Dr. Melissa Exum** was instrumental in the creation of the Safe Zone program and the formation of the LGBT Office (now the LGBTQ Center) in 2003.

She was a devoted advocate, administrator and educator who made an indelible impact. She served with style and grace... and will be missed by us all.

Our Resource Library

By Adrienne Gibilisco



PHOTO BY KAI EWING

The Resource Library (above) houses over 2,000 publications and offers space for reading, computer usage, and study.

Nothing gives us greater joy than when first-time visitors to the LGBTQ Center enter its common area and get their initial glimpse of our resource library. Watching their faces light up when they realize that this bounty of LGBTQ-related information is available to them reminds us of the importance of our existence on campus -- but we weren't always able to boast of such a treasure trove of tomes.

Currently, there are roughly 2,000 publications housed in our library, taking up nearly a dozen six-foot tall shelves that skirt the perimeter of the room. This impressive array started out as a modest stack of loaner books from a local organization back when the LGBTQ Center (then the LGBT Office) was still getting its footing on campus over a decade ago. "The books that made up most of our collection that we had back then were from the Triangle Community Works," recalls Center director **Terri Phoenix** of the library's humble beginnings. "We were holding those for them because they had no place to put them, so they loaned them to us to take care of. We still have those -- they never asked for them back and the organization itself doesn't exist anymore."

In addition to the inherited volumes, there were a few other shelves of books that had either been donated or purchased with the meager funding

available. As the collection began to grow, Phoenix's initial concern was that the books weren't organized. "We thought about using Library of Congress [distinctions] for categories, but there were some things about it that we didn't like and none of us were librarians so we didn't know how to use it," says Phoenix, who was the Center's graduate assistant at the time.

Instead, Phoenix devised a simple but orderly plan to track the books. "I came up with a basic categorization of [the types of books] we had, and then used the first three letters of the author's name. I had the work study students at the time go through and enter every single book that we had on an Excel spreadsheet so that we would have a record and we would be able to check books out and check them back in."

As the collection grew, this laborious but detailed undertaking proved a vital task in maintaining some semblance of order -- even though Phoenix would have preferred a more official manner of categorization. That would come later, but in those early years, the focus was on organization and tackling their biggest problem -- the minimal funds available to increase the collection. "There wasn't really a focus directed to buying the books. There wasn't a dedicated budget line or anything," Phoenix shrugs. "If there was money left over, then we would buy books."

Forced by finances to be sharp about their choices, they made certain books a priority. Although a vast amount of LGBTQ-themed fiction had been donated, Phoenix made it a point to privilege books that were non-fiction. “We would try to get books on intersections of identity, coming out – particularly around intersecting identities – and then books around transgender communities and intersex communities. We had none of those [then]. Another priority was videos that we use for trainings. We also put a priority on books that are not already available at the university in any of our other libraries. So if another library on campus has it, we probably aren’t going to order it.”

Over the years, a wish list was created and, once Phoenix became director, T took \$1,000 and made it an official “Library” budget line for both videos and books. This slow but steady accumulation of books (helped by the generosity of donors), saw the collection grow, but also intensified the dilemma of finding a more proper tracking methodology. Furthermore, there was a lack of awareness on campus that the Center’s library even existed.

One solution to this was in potentially linking the Center’s Library with the UNC Library system, a concept which had been a dream of Phoenix’s since early in T’s tenure as director. “I wanted to find a way that our library would be available to people who went on the general UNC Library page and searched for a book. The whole idea for this library was that this is where you come to get books that you can’t get anywhere else,” says Phoenix, “and

that’s why I wanted us linked in the main library – so people can [access them]. I made a few calls to find out what would [be needed] and found that it was way more than I could do on my own and way more than I could explain to somebody. So I have just been asking over the years, every person who volunteered at the Center that had anything to do

with library science, if they knew how that could happen.”

Moreover, the ideal candidate couldn’t be just anyone with a SILS background. The Center needed someone helming the library that would have a passion for books, as well as for LGBTQ-related subjects. Phoenix found that in graduate SILS student **Kai Ewing**.

Ewing’s odyssey had been a circuitous one, but was rooted in a great love for books. Indeed, the library had long been their haven, having been brought up with a great appreciation for reading by parents who would regularly borrow the weekly limit of 40



Equality Bear guards shelves at the LGBT Office, circa 2005. This early version of the resource library was a precursor to the current library’s mix of wellness resources, brochures and books.

books at their local library for young Ewing to plow through. This combination of escapism and passion for books stayed with Ewing as they got older, and the school library became their home away from home. “I thought a library was something special, so I went there as much as possible, even though my friends kinda smack-talked it,” laughs Ewing.

During their undergraduate years, the self-described overachiever was a double major in German and Economics, with a minor in International Studies. When Ewing took a Myers-Brigg test that determined their personality traits and skills would serve them best as a librarian (or “something in the military!”),

Ewing knew they had found their destiny. A die-hard Carolina basketball fan (“our family bleeds Carolina blue!”), Ewing was thrilled to enroll at UNC-CH when they learned the school offered one of the best ALA-accredited Master’s degree programs for Library Science in the country.

As Ewing settled in on campus, they found a welcoming community at the Center’s various programs. “I would just come to the Center and hang out because I loved everybody [there]. At this point, I thought, ‘I really want to be here. If I could work here, that would be the best.’”

Eager to become the glue that holds our library together, Ewing approached Phoenix with a perfect solution to both of their concerns. “I need to do a field experience in a library setting on a college campus and this would be perfect for my field experience,” said Ewing, adding, “and...I would love to help you get your library together.”

Phoenix was thrilled at the prospect and worked to learn the protocol for hiring someone in this position and to determine if the budget would allow for the hiring. It would be kismet having Ewing on board, as they brought a new perspective and seemed to have been born to the position.

Once the Center got the green light, Ewing wasted no time in tackling the project. Ewing quickly discovered countless flaws in the Center’s system. “I saw that the library didn’t have call numbers; I saw that subjects were assigned subjectively and sometimes inconsistently; and, I saw that there was a formal check-out procedure, but little was posted online and we couldn’t tell if any of the books were cataloged. [Furthermore,] it was really upsetting to me to know that there was no way for people to find this information except on the LGBTQ Center website, obtained by downloading a spreadsheet that had been made by student workers who are not library students and half the information was incorrect or missing – some of the authors and titles were way off. The checkout sheet was messy, too.”

With their work cut out for them, Ewing began by putting together a comprehensive da-



Ewing proudly poses by their perfectly arranged shelves

tabase of all the items in the library. “The most difficult part of creating the Access database,” Ewing recalls, “was getting the form set up to put new books in. I wanted to make it easy for everybody in the future dealing with the Access database, because they can be difficult. So I wanted to make it simple by making an outward facing form so everyone can just see what they needed to type, type it into the form, and it would plug it automatically into the catalog.”

Puzzled by the Access program, and not having ever taken any database classes, Ewing was determined to make it work, ultimately resorting to Googling it in order to learn the process. When they revealed the finalized form to the LGBTQ Center, the staff roared in approval. “It was very exciting. I was so happy everyone else shared in my glee!” Ewing grins.

Once the Access database was finally set up, Ewing and Phoenix decided that, although it wasn’t critically necessary for the project to move forward, it would be less confusing and allow our materials to appear more accessible when we would link up with the University catalog to have uniformity in the call numbers. Therefore, call numbers had to be assigned. The process of going through the entire database, adding and correcting records, and cataloging items has taken nearly a year of

part-time work to accomplish as of the end of the spring 2015 semester. The immensity of the task was a surprise to Ewing, but one that they tackled with a sense of purpose, focusing on the arduous task of assiduously going through the collection to weed out errors.

After many months of doggedly pursuing perfection, Ewing had the system up and running and books properly catalogued on the shelves, even taking some items out of circulation when necessary – and surprising Phoenix, who hadn’t even thought about the need for weeding out damaged outdated books. “I still don’t know if we even have a policy that we’re 100% on about that,” T says of the latter, “because there’s value in books even when the information isn’t up-to-date anymore. I mean, there’s historical value.”

Yet Ewing prevailed, as they were familiar with library protocol and interested in ensuring that the LGBTQ Center’s Resource Library would be as correctly catalogued and operating as any other library on the UNC campus. No stone was left uncovered in Ewing’s drive for perfection. They alphabetized existing subject categories for books not yet cataloged so they’d be in logical order, and added a new section for titles in the UNC catalog with Library of Congress call numbers. Ewing even went so far as to adjust every one of the shelves in the bookcases for uniformity and physically move all of the books into their correct place with categories (some new) neatly defined.

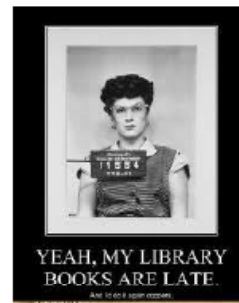
Ewing is proud of the variety of selections at the Center. “We have ‘Lesbian Interest,’ ‘Transgender Interest,’ ‘Bisexual Interest,’ et cetera, [but] it’s not just LGBT [on the shelves],” they note. “We also have ‘Politics,’ ‘Military’ and stuff like that. We even have ‘Fiction.’ I love that we have fiction that’s either LGBT-related or not. For example, we have Rita Mae Brown’s ‘Mrs. Murphy Mystery’ series. It’s not anything related to LGBT, but it’s fun and I’m sure people love it.”

There are certain books that people tend to favor, many of which wouldn’t be found in traditional libraries. “‘The Whole Lesbian Sex Book’ is a great

TO CHECK OUT BOOKS:



Please make your selection(s) and then see one of our staff members. You will need to provide your name, PID and phone number. Thanks!



(don’t let this be you!)

The Resource Library’s poster, advising of our simple check-out policy (and humorously warning against tardy returns).

example,” cites Ewing. “Pretty much anything related to coming out or coming to terms with your identity is really popular, like ‘My Gender Workbook’ by Kate Bornstein or ‘Gender Outlaws’ tend to be pretty popular. I love everything she puts out – she’s hilarious and so real in the way she writes and puts herself forward. I recently read ‘The Ethical Slut,’ which was a great book and is very popular. [However,] the books that tend to get borrowed the most are the ones that are geared more towards coming to terms with yourself, really. And I think that’s a good reason for us to be here and to make it visible so people know those resources are available.”

It’s for that reason that Ewing has purposefully added to Phoenix’s wish list. “We don’t have ‘Trans Bodies, Trans Selves,’ edited by Laura Erickson-Schroth. It’s a new book that just came out in 2014. That’s a really important one because it’s written by and for the trans* community, so it’s a very

unique resource. We need more trans* resources, more intersex resources and ANY resources for asexuality. There's not even a single book on asexuality in our resource library. There are not a terrible amount of books published on asexuality, but it's important to have what is out there represented in our collection."

While the Center also has videos, they are severely limited due to their enormous cost. "A DVD that we purchase the rights for can cost anywhere from \$300-500," notes Phoenix. "So we can't afford to replace that. We lose a lot of books that people check out and never return and since we are not an official library and we don't do check out through the main library, there's no way for us to put a hold on anybody's registration or anything like that [as a penalty]. So the videos that we buy are ones that we're going to use for screenings or trainings and we don't circulate those items."

Although finding the budget to afford additional books for the library remains a challenge, the greater dilemma is in finding a place to put the books as the shelves become fuller. "We are running out of space," sighs Phoenix, though T acknowledges that this is a relatively good 'problem' to have. "I'm not sure what to do about that, though, because we're not going to be moving anytime soon."

Whether a move is imminent or far off, the beauty of having a system that works well to track and loan books is one that will serve the Center in perpetuity. Ewing's extraordinary effort to ensure that Phoenix's vision for a well-organized library is realized has been a huge success. Now, people can search the catalog on the UNC page and find our books in the system, bringing more people to our resource center and allowing them the joy of finding this bounty of books. Ewing is humble about their accomplishment, however. "I think anybody with the drive and the caring about the cause and about actually trying to make sure that these items are physically represented for people who need them – who desperately need them – could do it because I came into this with very little cataloging experience."

Ewing has trained the staff and kept fastidious notes to ensure that whoever fills their position after Ewing's graduation this year will be able to maintain the system in the years to come. Phoenix can't stress enough how important this endeavor is to the people who use the Center. "There's actually research

that I have read that talks about how it's more likely that people who checked out LGBTQ books from a place like this, where it is affirming and welcoming and people know that they can be there and there's not going to be judgment [about] them purchasing or checking out these books [feel safer doing so and are more likely to do so. Whereas,] when they check out a book at one of the other libraries, they might run into another student that they know and feel like they have to explain the book or feel anxious about checking the book out," T says proudly.

What does the future hold for the LGBTQ Center Resource Library? Ewing envisions book sales to support the Center, and the inclusion of periodicals (*Curve*, a lesbian interest magazine, for example). They would also love to introduce a book club in which folks discuss publications in our library, to help drive more people to the Center. Phoenix, too, hopes to bring more folks to the Resource Library as it becomes a center for supporting academic pursuits for those who are studying issues surrounding sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. "If the Center gets used more and more because it is linked to the University Library system, it will help us achieve our goal of bringing visibility to it while providing resources that can't be provided anywhere else on campus. That would be perfect."



Our Award-Winning Staff

By **Adrianne Gibilisco**

Yet again, our staff earned prestige and kudos for their efforts in fostering diversity at Carolina:



Program assistant **Kim Brummell** kicked off her final semester at UNC with the distinction of becoming **Tarheel of the Month** in January. The award – nominated by students, staff, and faculty, and awarded by Student Affairs – recognizes UNC-CH students who successfully demonstrate navigation of the UNC experience through one of the four components of Excellence in Action (Dynamic Learning, Honor, Responsibility, and Community). Brummell won Tarheel of the Month for Dynamic Learning.

Director **Terri Phoenix** earned the **University Award for the Advancement of Women** for the work she has done in elevating the status of women on campus, particularly in improving campus policies affecting women (Title IX, for example). The award was presented to Phoenix by Chancellor **Carol L. Folt** at the Campus Y's Anne Queen Lounge, after a welcome speech by Carolina Women's Center director and OVC Assistant Vice Chancellor and Chief of Staff **Christi Hurt**.



In his first year as our assistant director, **Angel Collie**, has already earned two awards, both presented by the department of Student Affairs: the **Campus Collaborator Award** recognizes the work that Collie has done as an advisor to the Tunnel of Oppression team in creating a forum to engage students in an immersive experience that brings visibility to various forms of oppression; and, the **Diversity Award** also acknowledges both his work with Tunnel of Oppression and his ongoing efforts towards social justice, equity, and positive social change on campus and beyond. The awards were bestowed upon Collie by Associate Vice Chancellor **Bettina Shuford** during the Student Affairs End-of-Year celebration, held at Kenan Stadium's Blue Zone.

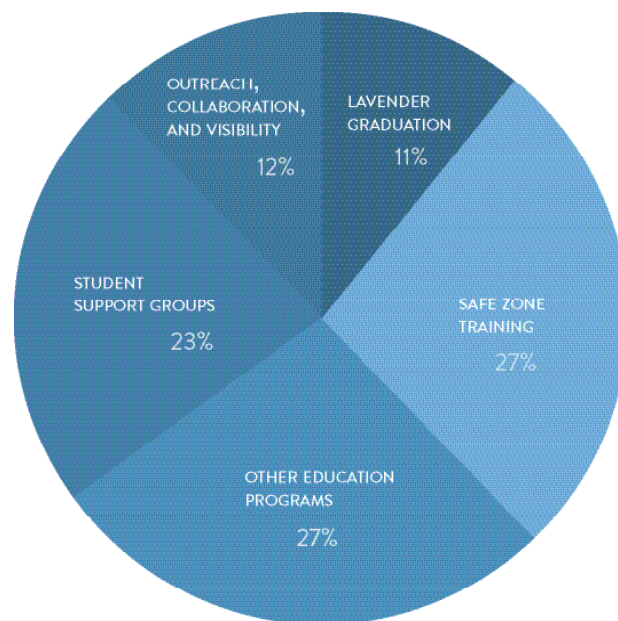
SUPPORT THE LGBTQ CENTER

Make a Donation

Our programming budget comes from private donations. The work of the LGBTQ Center to create a safe and inclusive campus environment would not be possible without our donors. Your generosity and support is greatly appreciated. The chart to the right represents the allocation of program funds by category. Your contributions of time, knowledge, money, and resources allow us to continue our efforts to ensure that all people at UNC-CH are treated equitably.

To make a donation to the LGBTQ Center, go to: www.lgbtq.unc.edu and select donate.

School/Unit/Program: Division of Student Affairs
Fund: LGBTQ Program Office (6250)



The **LGBTQ Center** at UNC works tirelessly to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for UNC-Chapel Hill community members of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. We do this by allocating our resources across three broad areas: educational programs, direct services and resources, and advocacy. Throughout the years, the demand for our popular Safe Zone trainings has grown, as has the number of students, faculty, and staff seeking to access our services...yet our budget hasn't. We are seeking support in able to expand our capacity to better serve the future leaders on our campus and in the community.

A donation of...

...\$5 provides the material resources for one individual going through our Safe Zone training.

...\$10 buys 20 promotional brochures for the Center.

...\$15 covers the cost of a book to add to our resource library.

...\$25 secures the space for our support groups to meet for one night.

...\$50 covers the publicity, planning, and implementation of an educational program on campus.

...\$75 supports the cost of a month of services from trained, skilled facilitators for support groups.

...\$100 enables 35 students, faculty, and staff members to get Safe Zone trained and be provided with visible Ally placards to display in their office or on their dorm room doors.



“Teamwork Makes the Dream Work!”