



Intersections

A Publication of the Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Awareness | Volume 1, Issue 3

THE HISTORY OF THE BEST SHOW ON EARTH!

PG. 8



NEXT STOP: COLUMBUS, OHIO





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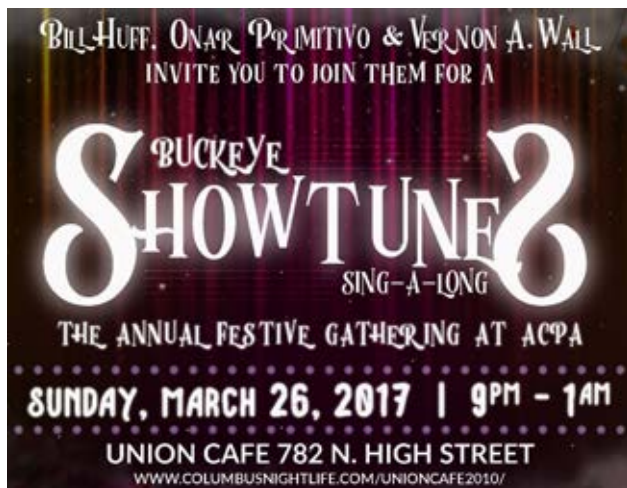
- A Narrative Reflection

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We spoke with three past performers to get the scoop on the history of the event and why they love to participate.



INTERSECTIONS is a quarterly online magazine produced by the CLGBTA. Articles as well as information may be submitted at any time. Please contact Dennis Hicks for more information dennis.hicks@gmail.com



[Come on out to the annual gathering! Click the ad for more details!](#)



THE THING ABOUT PRONOUNS

<http://shop.spreadshirt.com/CLGBTA>

The CLGBTA is excited to announce that they have created a line of merchandise that focus on the importance of pronouns. Purchase one of more items and begin the dialogue with colleagues and students with these eye catching designs.





FORWARD30

EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, AND NETWORKING: THE 30TH CAMPAIGN FOR THE CLGBTA

FORWARD: The Campaign for the CLGBTA is a fundraising campaign to increase awareness about the history and achievements of the CLGBTA and to raise money for the CLGBTA grant (which benefits colleges and universities' efforts to provide resources and support for LGBT communities).

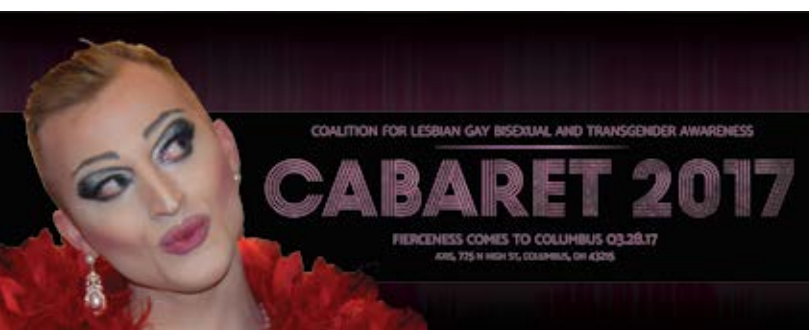
Our goal was that at least 500 donors across the lifespan of the campaign would donate a total of \$30,000. **The CLGBTA is excited to share that we have met our goal!**

Thank you to all who donated, shared the campaign, and supported the CLGBTA!

Read more at MyACPA.ORG

ATTEND EVENTS AND WIN TICKETS TO CABARET!

The GetOUT Columbus Passport Initiative is designed to connect you to the amazing programs that the CLGBTA hosts throughout Convention. It gives you the opportunity to interact with other members and the scholarship that drive the work we do with the LGBTQIA populations on our campuses. Members who participate in (4) CLGBTA sessions or events will be able to enter into a drawing for (2) seated tickets at the 19th Annual CLGBTA Cabaret happening on Tuesday, March 28th at 9:30 PM at Axis Nightclub.



Want tickets to Cabaret? They're only sold online.

[Get your tickets now!](#)

Sponsored Programs



Monday, March 27

Rupturing Silence: A One-Woman Show
(with the Coalition for Women's Identities)

8:15 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

The Greater Columbus Convention Center, Room B232

BACK IN THE CLOSET: Navigating the "Invisible" Latin@/x LGBTQ+ Community

9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

The Greater Columbus Convention Center, Room A114

Creating Black queer space in college: Implications for student affairs educators

12:45 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

The Greater Columbus Convention Center, Room C170

Tuesday, March 28

Queering Research: A Symposium on LGBTQ+ Research in Student Affairs

10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

The Greater Columbus Convention Center, Room A115

Understanding Queer International Students' Experience of Culture Shock

(with the Commission for Global Dimensions of Student Development)

3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Greater Columbus Convention Center, Room A121

Wednesday, March 29

Working In and Working Through: Challenging the Traditionally Heterogendered Institution

8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

The Greater Columbus Convention Center, Room B131

GOAL
\$3,200

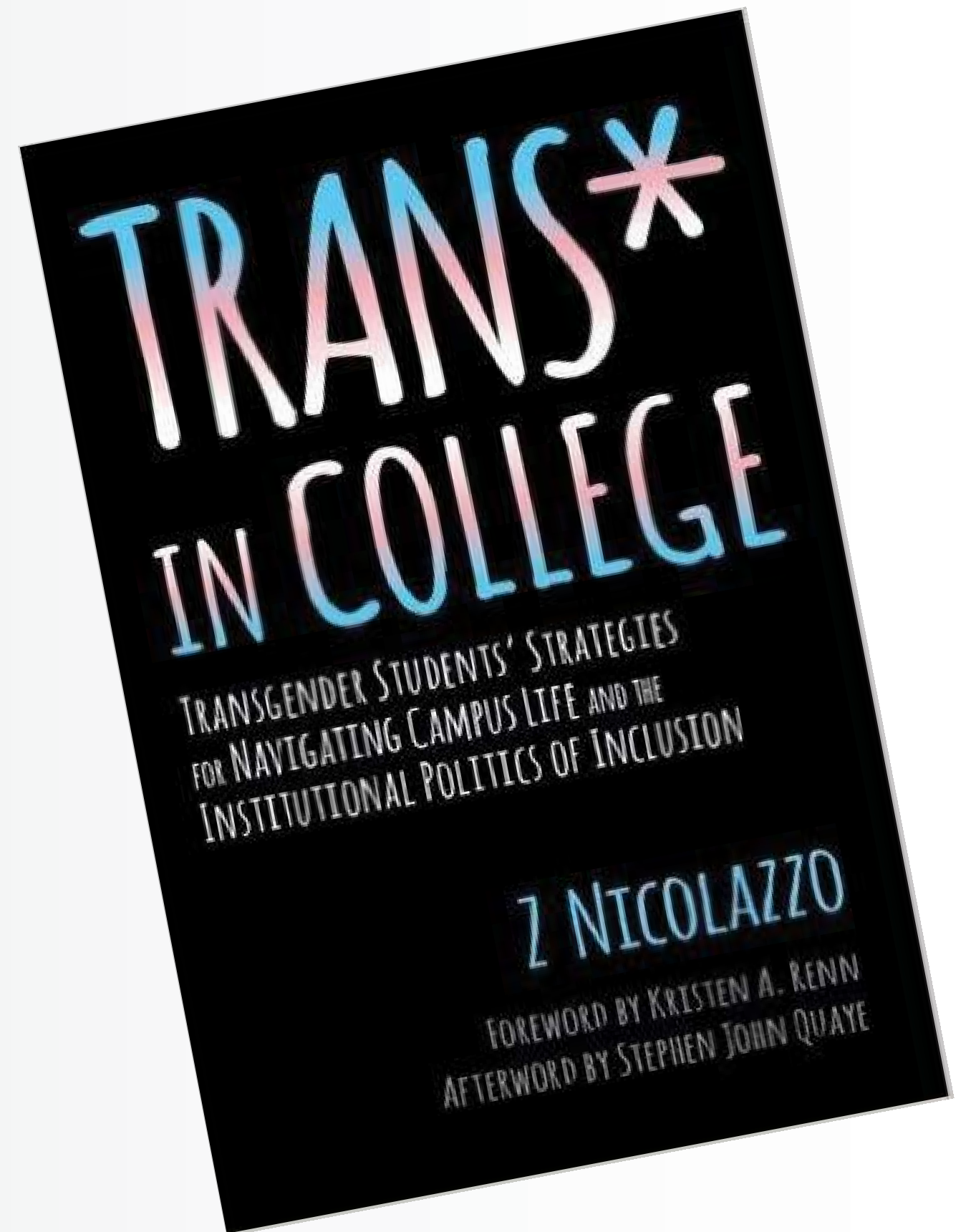
\$2,785

As part of our advocacy efforts surrounding Texas Senate Bill 6, ACPA is sending copies of Z Nicolazzo's book *Trans* in College* to each member of the Texas Senate and House. Our partner Stylus Publishing has very generously agreed to donate the first 31 copies.

Coalition for LGBT Awareness has donated \$500 (25 books!) to get us closer to the goal.

What can you give to help us reach our goals?

\$100 will deliver 5 books to the Texas Senate! Donations of any amount makes a difference and will be pooled with other donations!



Visit <http://www.myacpa.org> to donate today.



INCLUSIVITY AS EXCLUSIVITY

BY ACCIDENT

Submitted by Darby Ratliff, Graduate Assistant
Griff Center for Academic Engagement
Canisius College

Inclusivity is incredibly important on college campuses today, and it's become a means of ensuring that students who fall into the minority category feel that they're a part of their college campus. This, of course, has been a huge struggle for LGBTQ+ college students. A 2010 student through Campus Pride found that 70%, 76%, and 64% of students identifying as lesbian/gay, bisexual, and queer respectively were "significantly less likely than their allies to feel very comfortable or comfortable with the overall campus climate." This trend is exceptionally dangerous because feeling welcome at one's institution is a crucial part of retention, and so many of the measures taken to reduce these numbers have focused on being inclusive of gender and sexual diversity on college campuses. However, inclusivity comes with an inverse: exclusivity. A 2015 study noted a number of ways that the inclusive programming utilized to make LGBTQ+ students feel more welcome actually ostracized them more.

The study mentioned above highlighted the language surrounding LGBTQ+ students at institutions of higher education, and its results noted that colleges and universities "construct LGBTQ students as vulnerable, lonely, and seeking assistance, and positions the institutions as the key to LGBTQ students' educational and social successes." The same study warns against the language used when talking about safe spaces as well because it can imply that by saying that one space is "safe," others on the campus are not. Ironically, being inclusive to heterosexuality and the gender majorities is essential to making LGBTQ+ students feel welcome on campus. Chances are that LGBTQ+ community is familiar with the ins and outs of being a gender or sexual minority—they're

the ones with the agency to speak most familiarly about it, after all. Including them in the leadership of educational programs for heterosexual students— allies or otherwise—is a great means of assisting them to feel supported. Furthermore, avoiding this exclusivity can be achieved by making normative strives administratively as well. While many heterosexual students may not notice the appearance of gender-neutral housing or bathrooms on campus, LGBTQ+ students can celebrate them without having to necessarily out themselves. Moves like this—subtle in nature while also being active strides towards solidarity—allow students to avoid having to out themselves if the move is being made across the board. No connotations will be associated with living in a certain place or only using the one gender-neutral bathroom on campus if the whole institution sees these strides being made. We shouldn't be sending students down old corridors looking for handicapped restrooms that were convenient to change over; by not making it a fight to change things, we are being open to everyone without outing anyone.

Many of these problems of accidental exclusivity are worsened at Catholic or other religiously— affiliated institutions. It is very likely that LGBTQ+ students could fall in love with the campus enough to attend such a post-secondary school while still feeling alienated by the mission of an organization that either invalidates or refuses to validate their existences. A number of studies have been done to show that LGBTQ+ individuals have a very difficult time reconciling that identity with a religious or spiritual one based on the teachings of a church. For institutions with these affiliations and, by extensions, for the student affairs professionals who work there, it can be difficult to be able to provide resources for students without framing them as in need. "Love the sinner" is a phrase that has been tossed around within the Christian faith when viewing gender and sexual minorities, but, returning to the idea that if one space is emphasized as "safe," then others are not, allotting LGBTQ+ students one or two spaces that are theirs is toleration, not acceptance. Programming must be across the board as well in order to integrate these

two identities, and doing educational events to help students reconcile their religious and gender/sexual identities by encouraging development in both areas requires addressing two parts of an individual. It becomes, then, a balancing act of these two identities and how they must be reconciled as well as ensuring that heterosexual and cisgender students can be included as well so as not to ostracize the former group. However, it can be done, and it is our duty to help them do so.

So what does this all come down to? In my opinion, privilege and oppression are at the heart of the social structure that determines the included versus the excluded. No one wants to be accidentally othered by someone who is just trying to include them. Agency is incredibly important here, and standing in solidarity with these students is the best way to help them. Asking them what they need while also normalizing LGBTQ+ identities across campus in a way that does not necessarily draw attention to these students are the best strategies to be taken. The tide, I believe, is changing, and making as widespread of progress while we can is crucial. All spaces should be space. All identities should be welcomed, and the oppressive, heteronormative system that has crafted our society does not need to exist on college campuses.

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is a quarterly
online magazine
produced by
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Please contact
[Dennis Hicks](#) for
more information.

Magazine layout by Dennis Hicks



BY DENNIS M. HICKS

Director

Office of Student Engagement

North Shore Community College

Life is a Cabaret...

Who would have guessed that doing a drag show at a convention for higher education professionals would have become well-loved and received event? According to Tony Kearney, AKA Wild Cherry Sucret, the Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness - as it was known then - surely did not.

Kearney was a new member to the SCLGBTA and was friends with Vernon Wall who encouraged him to get involved in ACPA. Fast forward a bit to 1999 when ACPA was held in Atlanta and Jonathan Poullard was the chair of the standing committee. "Back then there was no "Big Gay Dance". We just had a small gathering with a bar. No one (Standing Committees) was doing fundraising except us and that was a 50/50 raffle," Kearney said.

The raffles were generating a modest amount of money but Poullard wanted something bigger and asked Kearney to consider putting together a drag show. "No one will want a drag show in a hotel," Kearney stated. It was a day and age when drag was hitting the mainstream and campuses across the nation were beginning to hold their own drag shows. But to have a professional conference hold a drag show was a bit trickier. Where, how, and who were the big questions that needed answers.

The first SCLGBTA Cabaret didn't take place in the convention hotel. The convention schedule had already been set. Never mind the fact that there was no precedent for this type of thing. The off-site venue selected was The Armory, a local gay bar in Atlanta that Kearney had connections with.

With the place selected, now the details came into play. Unlike recent conventions, there were no advertisements for this event - only word of mouth. To add more worry, Cabaret was pitted against larger events at the convention that people typically would go to. No one was sure how many people would be there. "We barely found people



to perform," Kearney added. They had 7 performers slated for the stage, two of which were professional drag performers.

As Wild Cherry Sucret and Coretta Scott Queen (Wall) were backstage preparing for the show, Kearney asked, "Vernon, do you hear that noise?" The two looked into the audience from backstage and saw that over 400 people had shown up! This proved to be a successful fundraiser by all means.

No one suspected the attendance numbers to be what they were but it certainly provided the encouragement for them to continue the effort each year. The SCLGBTA brought Cabaret to ACPA Atlanta next and increased their success with 500 people in attendance. Each year the numbers fluctuate based on the size of the venue but one thing has always remained true - Cabaret has become a favorite among ACPA Convention-goers.

Over the years, Cabaret has developed into a bona fide convention program and found its way into the convention guide as well as being hosted at the convention hotel for the first time in Tampa. These days the money raised supports The Paul Hart Fund which provides assistance to ACPA members who are affected by HIV/AIDS.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Kearney and Wall have something in common with Cher. They have retired from the stage multiple times with their most recent performance together being in Montreal last year. ACPA 2018 in Houston will be the 20th Anniversary of Cabaret and you can expect to see Wild Cherry and Coretta back on stage.
- Kearney as Wild Cherry Sucret has performed 15 times for the Coalition's Cabaret over the years usually to a Whitney Houston hit.
- Performers provide their own clothing and make up for the performance and generally have little to no experience doing drag.



WHAT A DRAG...

A Cabaret Q&A with Elliott DeVore

A narrative stylized interview, as told to Lauren Shackelford

CLGBTA Coordinator, Administration

CLGBTA caught up with the host of Montreal's Cabaret to get the scoop on his experiences...

Elliott uses he, him, his pronouns. He is a first-year doctoral student in the Department of Psychology, getting a Ph.D. in Counseling and Psychology at the University of Tennessee. His first involvement, was back in 2010 when he was the Next Gen Scholar for the Coalition for LGBT Awareness was a Standing Committee. Part of that experience included going to Cabaret, at the time when he was a junior undergraduate student, and he was amazed! Elliott thought it was cool that there were a big drag show and fundraiser for the Paul Hart foundation. He knew then that this was the field for him. He started performing in Cabaret when he was a graduate student at Iowa State University. Furthermore, his first job was as a Resident Director at the University of San Francisco, in which he started doing a lot of drag in the community and with the San Francisco's Gay Mans Chorus. Then it became more of a hobby, and last year he hosted in Montreal and said it was a thrilling experience.

When he first participated, he was taken aback by how big it was then. He grew up Queer in the South and was fed messages about not being out at work. With Cabaret, the experience was very breath-taking and affirming because queer bar culture was so visible and celebrated within a professional environment. He believes that is part of

the spirit of ACPA, one of celebration and one that strives for inclusion. In addition, Elliott guesses it has gotten bigger in recent years, because he remembers last year with Convention being in Montreal, and there was an outrageous number of people. Each year it surpasses his expectations, especially

last year being at an international location.

Who is Mary Lou Bottoms?

Elliott's alter-ego is Mary Lou Bottoms. The story of Mary Lou Bottoms began with Elliott's friend Chaz when they both were working at the University of San Francisco. Elliott was reinventing his drag persona with new found makeup skills. He wanted traditional Southern lady name. Coming from the South, he wanted to pay homage to his roots. Originally, he was thinking of the Soggy Bottom boys (O Brother Where Art Thou). In the South, it's common for women to have double names, like Mary Lou or Ashley Jo. Mary Lou Bottoms popped into his head, and it was set in stone. Additionally, Elliott loves old Broadway and sings live during all performances. He has done some burlesque like Peggy Lee, like old vintage Broadway jazz singer (draws a lot of inspiration from that era and those types' singers).

The rewards and experiences of a Cabaret host...

Elliott recognized the people who had taken him to his first Cabaret experience as an undergraduate and he felt he wanted to use this experience to talk about how inspirational the event was and how inspirational CLGBTA was in his own growth and development. Elliott found it inspiring to pay testimony to what the organization was to him and how it helped him develop. For Elliott, it was more than a drag show, it is a community celebration! From connecting with all of the performers backstage, listening to their stories and their journeys in drag; it's interesting. Interesting because there can be a lot of shame within the Queer community for men who do drag. They

can be scandalized or it can be a turn-off. With that said, it was very cool for Elliott, to process those narratives and experiences with people who are breaking gender norms and expectations as well as breaking taboos.

Advice for new performers/folk new to drag...

Elliott believes that you should pick a song that you listen to when you have a strong emotion. Or think of a moment in your life that was very tumultuous, and if a song comes to mind for that experience or triumph or hurdle, perform that song. Elliott feels that you are going to feel most confident, and most connected with the lyrics or the composition/style. With that said, you must feel one with the song, and really embody it and its lyrics. Something fun! In essence, your drag should be an extension of your personality and form of creativity and self-expression.

Describe Cabaret in three words...

Pure. Authentic. Joy



WHAT A DRAG...

A Cabaret Q&A with Onar Primitivo

*A narrative stylized interview, as told to
Lauren Shackelford
CLGBTA Coordinator, Administration*

...If you've gone to Cabaret in the last few years you've undoubtedly have seen Miss Lotus. She's the fierce, high energy alter ego of Onar Primitivo and we spent a little time getting to know more about this star performer....

Onar uses he/him/his pronouns. He has been a long time member of ACPA/Standing Committee. He currently works at the University of California - Merced as the Coordinator of Social Justice Initiatives. Onar's first Cabaret was in Vegas, other folk know him as a dancer from the Big Gay Dance (the CLGBTA Social now known as the Soirée). As a child, he was a natural performer and often was the male lead in a lot of shows -- so transitioning was very natural, it was just a matter of putting on the heels and makeup. Onar started doing drag before drag became big. He was learning the basics like putting on heels and but there were no make-up tutorials or any help putting on lashes. He would have described it as remedial drag (or drag 99, it wasn't even dragged 101).

During Vegas, he signed on to do tickets and was notified that he was needed to help do makeup. He was hesitant because he felt he could barely do his own makeup. Since then he has helped for multiple years. Onar also talked about being good friends with Bill (Angio Plasty) and how he is excited to host with him this year. Onar has also hosted with the Queens of Castro, a non-profit organization that hosts drag shows, their biggest show is "High School is Not a Drag". All the money raised (silent auction/tips) there goes towards high school

scholarships. From then on, he believed drag was in him all that time.

Thoughts on Cabaret's growth and success...

Beyond it being a drag show, Onar believes that it is so much more. Onar found his home in ACPA, and more specifically Cabaret. Cabaret solidified that this was his home- as a young brown-queer person. The empowerment as an audience member and knowing your tips are being donated to the Paul Hart Foundation creates a good place for all. Cabaret has evolved and expanded over the years. He also believes that we need to give it up for people who put on makeup and heels -- it takes a lot for someone to do that.

Who is Lotus Macchiato?

Lotus Macchiato - Lotus for being proud to be a part of the API community, and the last name came from Italy. There was a point in time where he had a caramel macchiato every day (no talking to him before 11 AM). And like many great divas, people just shorten it to Lotus.

The rewards and experiences of a Cabaret host...

This year co-hosting brings a unique experience for Onar. Trying to emulate the co-hosting with folk who have done it in the past (Tony/Vernon). Houston will be the 10th year of drag and he'll be ramping up for that. Also, this year Onar plans on doing some outreach for new queens, and allowing them to add their name to the Cabaret experience. This will be his first time in Columbus and during a time where Cabaret returns back to an off-site experience. He feels that he may have gotten too comfortable with on-site. But being on stage again will bring some apprehension but excitement. Co-hosting will give a very different experience as well; Bill (Angio) is hilarious.

Advice for new performers/folk new to drag...

Be comfortable with makeup and helping others do makeup. He had other sisters like Mark, Elliott, and Dennis helping out. But that is the community that he loves, and the community that he saw when he was watching the show, and amongst the performers, and the volunteers. And then there was the opportunity to be backstage as a performer, he saw that continuity of community and support for each other. And who knew 5 years later that he would still be doing it.

He believes that you are in good company! (On and off stage). You will still have the butterflies and once the music goes and the audience starts clapping. The audience will acknowledge the bravery, the talent, that appreciation. A majority of folk know about being present, and sending the message around gender identity and going beyond the binary. We are seeing those performances more so. Being intentional about capturing those moments backstage. It's a community of good people -- borrowing makeup, lashes, it's an amazing sense of community.

Describe Cabaret in three words...

Community. Empowerment. Expression of love.



HIGHLIGHTS OF MY QUEER STUDENT AFFAIRS JOURNEY: A NARRATIVE REFLECTION

Submitted by Jo Campbell, Ph.D.

She/her/hers

Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Executive Director of University Housing
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

I was asked to join ACPA's Coalition for LGBT Awareness (CLGBTA) as the Senior Practitioner in Residence about two years ago. This role had only been in existence for a year with Gretchen Metzelaars from Ohio State University as the inaugural Senior Practitioner. As part of my role, I was asked to write an article of broad interest to CLGBTA members. In 2015, I was the keynote speaker at Lavender Graduation at Bowling Green State University and in preparing for that event, I did a lot of reflection on my queer student affairs journey.

This article is an expansion of what I have experienced and learned in my journey. First, a bit of my history.

I grew up in the rural South in the 1960s and early 1970s with no awareness of LGBTQ+ people or issues. As a senior in college in 1978, I met a woman who came out to me as a lesbian (we'll call her Melissa). Melissa took me to my first gay bar; I recall thinking this was like any other bar, except that only women were there. As I learned more about LGBTQ+ issues, everything seemed hidden. Bars were small, hole-in-the-wall places and you had to be with someone who had been there before to get in. It seemed the community was focused on gay issues and separately lesbians were creating their own communities. Bisexual and trans folks were not part of the conversation yet.

I entered a master's program in college student personnel immediately after my undergraduate degree. I fell for another woman in the program soon after beginning my studies. Suddenly, what was going on

in the LGBTQ+ community was intensely relevant in my life. As I transitioned from a master's student to employment in housing and residence life in the early 1980s, no one was talking about LGBTQ+ issues on the campuses I was on. In 1986, I contacted Mary McGhee who was the chair of the LGB (T was added in 1998) Task Force for ACPA at the time. Because the ACPA conference was going to be in Chicago in 1987 (a joint conference with NASPA) and I worked in Chicago, I was hopeful I could get involved with the Task Force. I offered to assist with local arrangements and Mary was enthusiastic about getting me involved. I worked to find free housing (among my friends in Chicago) for those who needed financial support and provided local resource information about Chicago's LGB community.

Although I had a number of formal roles with ACPA's Standing Committee for LGBT Awareness (now the Coalition), in the late 80s and early 90s, I was the keeper of "The List." Our group maintained our own membership list that was not shared with the International Office (IO) because many members feared being "outed" by simply being on the list. I remember having a hallway conversation with the ACPA president in the early 90s about moving our list to the IO; as a group, we had decided we were ready to join with other affinity groups maintained by ACPA, but ACPA's president was concerned it still was not a safe decision. My home campus's chancellor shared a similar concern about our campus employee LGBT group; even in the early 1990s most campuses were not safe places for LGBTQ+ people to be out.

Once my role as the keeper of the list was no longer needed, I began doing more LGB advocacy work with the housing professional association. I remember being at an ACUHO-I (Association of College and University Housing Officers-International) conference in a meeting of the LGB group and the group's current leader asked for someone to step up to be chair for the next two years, then move on to the governing body for two years after that representing LGB issues on the board. I was the only one who wrote my name on the chalkboard, so I became the new chair. It was a bit overwhelming to me once I transitioned from

the LGB committee chair to the executive board of the professional organization. This feeling was in part because the members of the board all seemed to know one another and because the meetings were run very formally compared to the LGB Committee. It was a very different world, but a great learning experience for me. I had the pleasure of doing a program with the great Chuck Rhodes at ACUHO-I in 2005 on the history of the LGBT movement within ACUHO-I.

There were a number of people who approached us after the program to share what it had meant to them to have people who were out "back in the day."

I went back to work with ACPA's CLGBTA after being elected as its chair for 1999-2001. Under the previous chair, Jonathan Poullard, the group had added the T for transgender and hosted the first Cabaret at the 1998 conference. The CLGBTA was striving to be more inclusive and adding transgender to the name was a major advancement for the Coalition. Hosting the Cabaret, our annual conference drag show, was another opportunity for us to expand ACPA members' knowledge of queer culture. Imagine my surprise when the co-hosts for the Cabaret invited me to the stage to introduce me as the chair-elect. I found this terrifying—we were in one of the biggest bars I had ever seen and there was a sea of hundreds of ACPA (and other) faces in the audience. Given the co-hosts, Coretta Scott Queen and Wild Cherry Sucret, were already taller than me, and now add their heels to the mix, I felt very diminutive standing between them both in terms of stature and personality. It certainly solidified in my mind that performing is not in my future.

As the chair of the CLGBTA, I pushed to be as inclusive as possible. There was great debate about whether or not an ally could hold a formal position on the directorate body and I firmly believed the roles should be open to anyone, and that attitude did carry the day with an out ally as part of our leadership team



(thank you Jessica Pettitt!). We also wanted to do more than just have the T added to our name, so we invited the well-known researcher, Dr. Sue Rankin, to come and facilitate training on trans inclusion within the Coalition during our summer meeting. She did a great session with us and we agreed to make sure that we sponsored trans program proposals or did some of those programs ourselves at convention. Our intention was to have programs at convention that would bring trans issues to light and let trans folks know that they would be welcome as part of the CLGBTA.

When I presented on trans housing policies at the 2001 ACPA conference, people seemed eager to learn more about the issues. I found the same to be true when I co-presented on gender-inclusive housing policies and practices at a regional student affairs conference in 2013. When I moderated a panel of LGBTQ+ senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) at the ACPA 2015 conference, someone came up to me to thank me for the 2001 session I did on trans housing; it had made a big impact on his making change on his campus. We often do not get this feedback; I think continuing to do this work is essential because people are inspired to push the advocacy agenda forward (even if we do not know it at the time).

Another value I thought was of critical importance during my time as chair was coordinating with the other identity-based affinity groups. The Task Force for Disability wanted to become a standing committee and it was coming to a vote during APCA's annual

worried we may become targets for harassment and even violence. We assured him we understood there may be risks, but we felt having the committee would provide a formal mechanism to address LGB issues. We were successful in 1991 and worked on a number of policy issues related to HIV/AIDS resources and lesbian wellness issues, domestic partner benefits, and establishing an office for GLBT concerns with full-time staff (created in 1995). Many thanks to Dave Barnett who was the original director of that office!

When the chancellor's committee was established, I was co-chairing the chancellor's committee on women and was able to have open discussions about including lesbian and bisexual women's issues through a lesbian wellness conference co-sponsored with community organizations and creation of a subgroup to look at the issues related to lesbians and bisexual women. At the time, many lesbian or bisexual women were out only to a very limited number of others on campus. I distinctly remember a full professor with tenure who gave me a big hug after our meeting to set up the lesbian wellness conference and thanking me for being brave enough to be "out" when she did not feel able to be. I recall wondering about this since she had tenure protection and I was an "at will" employee.

In 1992, I was elected as co-chair of the chancellor's committee on LGB (T added soon after) issues at UIC and did two stints as chair until 1996. I partnered with great faculty, staff, and student members and we were able to continue to push for LGB issues and work in collaboration with the other identity-based chancellor's groups on campus climate issues in particular. We were successful in getting domestic partner benefits in 1993. There was debate among our committee members about whether to push for benefits for heterosexual couples who were not legally married; my point of view has always been to be more inclusive and build allies, which is the direction we chose.

HIV and AIDS has a huge impact on the LGBT community and on me. I had lunch at ACPA in the early 1990s with a conference friend I had known for several years and realized he looked ill. He said he was fine, just getting over pneumonia. I later discovered he had been living with AIDS and died before the next conference. There was so much fear and misinformation around HIV/AIDS that

business meeting at the conference. Since all ACPA members are eligible to vote, I strongly encouraged all of our members to attend the meeting and vote in favor of the recognition of the standing committee for disability. I had not anticipated a dramatic entrance, but most members of the CLGBTA had just concluded an open meeting when they filed in *en masse* after the start of the business meeting, but before the vote. I was really excited when the vote passed in support of what is now the Coalition for (Dis)Ability, reinforcing the importance of coalitional and intersectional work.

Mentorship has always been important to me. I have a 30-year mentor/friend relationship with someone I met when she was a 19-year old college student who was struggling to come out as a lesbian to her family. Gisela Vega's coming out process was influenced by her Latina heritage and the importance of her family in her life. She was taking an RA position on campus and the family was struggling to allow her to move away from home. I remember trying to be supportive and realizing I did not know nearly enough about the Latina lesbian community. I learned about a Latina lesbian community organization that hosted dances, so I took my colleague to one of their events. I was a horrible salsa dancer, but my hope was that the connections she could make would help in her coming out process. When she followed me as chair of the CLGBTA, I was excited to welcome my colleague and our first Latina chair. Over time, her family accepted her sexual orientation and supported her student affairs career, including heading up a university LGBT office. She has become an exceptional student affairs professional and just became Dr. Vega!

In my housing world, I pushed the boundaries on living with my domestic partner on campus as part of my live-in role. I was successful in 1983 in terms of policy, but the woman I was involved with rejected the idea of "living in a fish bowl" on campus, so my girlfriend and I did not take advantage of this change; my goal was to pay it forward for the next folks who may want the live-in option for their partner.

I also worked with other staff and faculty at my home institution, the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), to form a group of LGB folks seeking official recognition as a chancellor's committee. We had a meeting with the chancellor who said he was supportive, but had concerns for our safety; he

people who had or were suspected of having it were ostracized, and so many kept this information to themselves, even within ACPA. There were so many gay men (and others) who died; it was a heart-wrenching time. Some friends lost more people in their lives than they had left. The Coalition hosted an AIDS Memorial for several years at the annual conference to both mourn the loss of colleagues and friends and to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS. When we lost one of our directorate members, Paul Hart, to AIDS, the Coalition used seed money that Paul bequeathed to the Coalition to launch the Paul Hart Fund to provide scholarships for people living with HIV/AIDS to attend the annual conference. At the 1992 annual convention in San Francisco, the Coalition hosted the Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt and made an ACPA panel to remember colleagues and students lost to AIDS. The Names Project Quilt was a conference-wide event and served to highlight the devastation the disease caused among the LGBTQ+ and communities of color in particular.

I went back to school full-time for my Ph.D. in 2012. As part of my dissertation research, I surveyed senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) and asked demographic questions about race/ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation. A gay SSAO and I sat down at ACPA in 2012 and could identify only 12 LGBTQ+ SSAOs. I wanted to include as many of them as possible in my research. I was amazed and excited that of the 441 usable surveys I analyzed from SSAOs, 50 people identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (none identified as trans), over 11%. Finally, we have some data on LGBQ SSAOs (although not trans SSAOs, yet)! Why is there so much resistance to adding gender identity beyond the binary and sexual orientation to the demographic questions we ask on our admission and employment applications in higher education? From the Common Application for undergraduate admissions to the data we collect about students, staff, and faculty at our home campuses, I feel strongly if we do not ask about gender and sexual orientation identities, we will never have the evidence to support the LGBTQ+ services and programs that are needed. As with all demographic questions, I believe a *prefer not to answer* option should be one of the choices. We must all continue to push on broader demographic questions in our professional organizations and on our campuses to make these groups visible.

As I was finishing my doctorate, I started a national job search. I was amazed at the number of institutions that had no staff person, office, or faculty/staff presence around LGBTQ+ issues. Most places seemed to have an LGBTQ+ student organization, but it was unclear how much support these groups were receiving. I have many LGBTQ+ items on my resume, including leadership positions in national student affairs organizations, so I did wonder if I was excluded from consideration at some places when I clearly met the requirements for the position, but was never contacted. Many institutions did not cover sexual orientation or gender identity and expression in their nondiscrimination statements. This was a wake-up call for me that there is still so much work to be done around these issues.

I am grateful that the Supreme Court decision about same-sex marriage in June 2015 meant my legal wedding in California in 2008 to Ellen Broido finally became recognized in Ohio where I lived until recently. I am also thankful that I have worked in places where faculty, staff, and students have accepted me as a woman married to another woman. I love that students on many of our campuses today are able to have discussions around sexual orientation and gender identity and expression and bring all of who they are to the campus. Some people have characterized my actions being out early in my career in the 1980s and 1990s as brave. I never thought of it as brave; I just wanted to live my life in the open and I did not think the closet was for me. I realize for some people being fully out is not a choice they feel able to make given their identities and situations. I encourage everyone who feels able to bring all of themselves to their campus. In these uncertain political times, I believe the more we continue the discussion, the more we will be able to build allies and keep moving forward.

