

STUDENT AFFAIRS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

THE ADVISORY BOARD COMPANY

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November 30, 2007

Ms. Ramona Hicks
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Dear Mona:

Thank you for your project request. As we discussed, we have conducted research supporting LGBTQI students on Vanderbilt's campus. Enclosed, please find a Custom Research brief detailing our findings and a list of contacts at peer universities who can provide you with additional information on this topic.

During the course of research, we searched the following resources to identify pertinent information:

- ✓ Advisory Board's internal and online (www.advisory.com) research libraries
- ✓ Factiva™, a Dow Jones and Reuters company
- ✓ OCLC First Search
- ✓ The Chronicle of Higher Education
- ✓ Internet, via search engines and multiple websites, including

Based on leads generated from the above listed sources and our initial conversation, we placed calls to experts and LGBT resource center directors at universities around the country to learn about the most important policies and services for supporting LGBTQI students.

Through our research, we identified four key areas necessary for creating an open and welcoming environment for LGBTQI students on your campus. These major areas are:

- Hardwiring University Policy
- Creating Top Down Organizational Commitment
- Increasing LGBTQI Visibility on Campus
- Supporting LGBTQI Students with Resources and Services

Within each of these areas, we profile basic steps to implement as well as spotlighting innovative tactics from frontline institutions.

Mona, we hope this information proves useful to you. If we can be of any further assistance on this topic, please do not hesitate to contact us directly at 202-266-6214 (Liz), 202-266-6357 (Kathryn), or via e-mail at robertsk@advisory.com.

With best wishes,

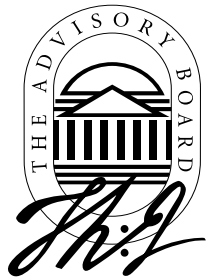
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STUDENT AFFAIRS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Supporting LGBT Students on the University Campus

Custom Research Brief • November 30, 2007



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ASSOCIATE**
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**THE ADVISORY BOARD COMPANY
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

I. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The findings detailed in this report were drawn from literature and interviews with LGBT center professionals at the following institutions:

Institution	Location	Undergraduate Students	Campus Climate Index Score*	LGBT Highlights
University A Highly selective private research university	Southeast Large city	7,000	4.5/5	President's commission on LGBT concerns
University B Flagship state research university	Southeast Medium city	25,000	3	SAFE zone training
University C Selective private research university	Southeast Large urban city	7,000	NA	Strong relationship with Office of Multicultural Affairs
University D Flagship state research university	Northeast Small city	40,000	5	Network of allied faculty and staff
University E Highly selective public research university	Southeast Small city	15,000	3	Strong alumni group that funds student organizations and scholarships
University F Selective private research university	Northeast Medium city	13,000	5	Large resource center space Lecture series
University G Selective private research university	Northeast Large urban city	20,000	4	Large resource center staff 40 Peer Educators Transgender housing policy
University H Highly selective private research university	Northeast Small city	5,000	4.5	Large, centrally located resource center space Strong staff training program

*The LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index is an online self-assessment and outreach tool managed by Campus Pride, a non-profit organization dedicated to developing student leadership and creating a safe environment for LGBT students on college campuses. Universities that choose to fill out the survey of more than 50 questions—covering Academic Life, Policies & Practice, Campus Safety, Housing & Residence Life, Counseling & Health Services, and Recruitment & Retention—receive a “Report Card” and a score based on the services they offer to LGBT students. For more information, see <http://www.campusclimateindex.org>

II. INTRODUCTION

A day in the life:

Imagine yourself as the first transgender student at your university. Having grappled with the difficult personal decision to transition, you must now deal with the logistics of your identity change. You need to change your name and gender designation with the university, so you go to the registrar and explain your situation. You are met with red tape, ignorance, even prejudice. After embarrassing and exhausting conversations with the registrar, you manage to change your records. But the battle has just begun: you face the same obstacles at the housing office, the health center, the counseling center. Every step of the way, you, the student, are forced to educate university staff about your identity. Would you persist? Give up? Transfer?

In speaking with LGBT service professionals, we heard many stories like the one above. If this situation has not yet happened on your campus, then be certain it will in the next few years. Students are “transitioning” at a younger age, and universities are struggling to catch up with policies and services to support this population. The lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community presents unique challenges to the university infrastructure: this population is fluid, heterogeneous, and often reluctant to self-disclose.

Despite these challenges, universities that value the diversity of their students have nothing to gain from overlooking the needs of the LGBT community, and potentially much to lose. With new web-based survey tools, students and faculty have access to detailed information regarding the campus climate at institutions across the country. Universities that are slow to change risk alienating a community that may represent as much as ten percent of the population. In an age where universities are competing for the brightest students and faculty, this is a risk no competitive institution can afford to take.

The good news is there are concrete steps the university can take to create an LGBT-friendly campus. We have grouped these steps in four categories, beginning with top level policies and organizational commitment, then delving deeper into issues of visibility and support services. Within these broader categories, we have divided tactics into three groups: essential steps to make an immediate impact, next steps for moving forward, and finally a glimpse of the most innovative practices from the “front lines” of the most LGBT-friendly campuses across the nation.

III. DEVELOP STRONG FOUNDATION WITH POLICY

“Students should not be penalized for being who they are.”

- Advisory Board interview

Experts warn that the LGBT community is wary of institutions that talk about diversity but fail to commit on paper. The first step to creating a LGBT-friendly campus climate? Implement university-wide policies to ensure equal treatment for all LGBT students, faculty, and staff.

Essential First Step

- 1) Nondiscrimination policy that includes **sexual orientation** and **gender identity and expression**
- 2) Publicized function for reporting hate crimes: include a link on the LGBT center and Student Affairs websites.
- 3) Transgender housing policy
- 4) Policy for students to change their name and gender designation with the university registrar

What it looks like:

“If I am an LGBT student, the last place I want to be an educator is in my room.”

- Advisory Board interview

At minimum, residence life staff must consider the needs of transgender students on a **case-by-case** basis. Options include housing transgender student in a room with a private bathroom or in an apartment/suite style living situation. Special accommodations for transgender students should be the same cost as housing for other students.

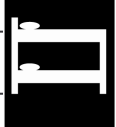
Next Steps

- 1) Explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity and expression in the university’s diversity statement. Including LGBT as part of the broad diversity mission provides a way to answer critics who question the value of serving the LGBT population.
- 2) Extend equal partner benefits to students, faculty, and staff, including
 - ✓ Health and life insurance
 - ✓ Internal university benefits: housing, parking, and recreation center access
- 3) Incorporate LGBT questions on housing forms.

What it looks like:

- 1) Allow students to self identify as transgender M-F/F-M on housing forms
- 2) Ask if students would be open to having an LGBT or transgender roommate
- 3) Ask if students would prefer an LGBT-friendly roommate

Tactic #1 combats the de-facto discrimination transgender people face every day on forms that ask them to identify as male or female. Tactics #2 & #3 allow for compatible roommate pairings without forcing LGBT individuals to “come out” on housing forms.



Innovations from the Front Lines

President's Commission on LGBT Concerns

In 1992, a harassment incident and weeks of protests from the LGBT community spurred the president of **University A** to form a task force to assess and improve the campus climate for LGBT people. In 1995, the committee became a permanent presidential commission, with an operating budget from the university's Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. The commission now oversees the Office of LGBT Life and sponsors the annual Pride Banquet for LGBT students and faculty. At this event, the commission also recognizes outstanding undergraduate and graduate academic work in gay/lesbian studies.

The presidential commission signals the importance of LGBT issues at University A, and also alleviates the burden of the director of the LGBT center as sole advocate. Located in the Southeast, University A boasts a top rating (4.5/5 stars) on the Campus Climate Index.

IV. SEND MESSAGE TOP-DOWN WITH ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

"There is no way we would have made the top 100 [most LGBT-friendly colleges] seven years ago...we had good policy and looked good on paper but the actual climate was pretty poor. People often attribute the change to me, but I could have done all the same work under a different president and we wouldn't be where we are today. Her showing support changed everything. The people who weren't on board previously just came on board...they felt like this is where the university is going and I'm either with it or I'm not...Having someone high up in the administration who is willing to put themselves out there is critical."

-Advisory Board interview

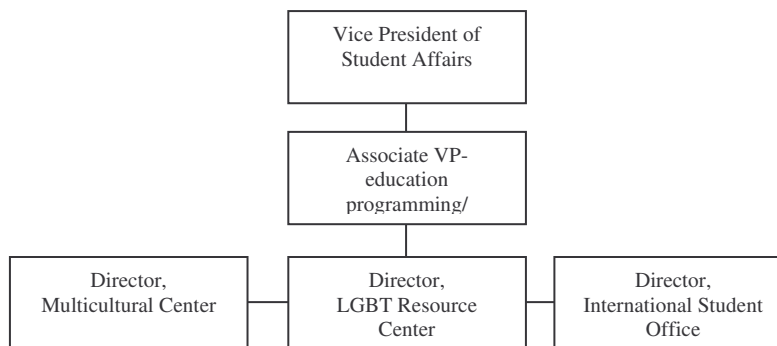


With key policies in place, it is essential for senior level administrators to set the example for faculty and staff with words and funds.

Essential First Step

- 1) Hire a full time staff person to be in charge of LGBT support, outreach, and education. This dedicated staff person, usually the LGBT center director, fulfills three main objectives:
 - a. Demonstrates university commitment to LGBT issues
 - b. Assures that someone on the student affairs staff is advocating for LGBT students
 - c. Provides visibility for the LGBT community within the administration

The LGBT center director often acts as ombudsperson for LGBT students to other student service offices, maintaining an informal network of supportive staff members across the university. To facilitate this network and encourage cross-programming, the LGBT center director should meet frequently with directors of other student service offices. The most important relationships are with the counseling center, residence life, and multicultural center. One common reporting structure found in our research is listed below.



- 2) Operationalize senior level commitment. Senior administrators, including the University President, Provost, and Vice President for Student Affairs should attend LGBT student events or faculty luncheons, mention sexual orientation as part of diversity in speeches, and generally set the example of valuing LGBT concerns and contributions to the university community.

Next Steps

- 1) Create a network of LGBT-friendly staff members in all student-facing offices, especially
 - ✓ Registrar
 - ✓ Housing
 - ✓ Counseling center
 - ✓ Student health

- 2) Sponsor LGBT events
 - ✓ Lavender graduation
 - ✓ Brown bag faculty lunches
 - ✓ Allied training
- 3) Include LGBT information in admissions materials describing diversity (See Appendix).

Innovations from the Front Lines

Recruiting LGBT Students through Campus Pride

“A lot of campuses have out faculty and staff, out students, but they haven’t come out nationally. Campus Pride and the Index are about the campus ‘coming out’, walking out the closet door and saying, ‘We have gay students, we have programs and services, we have out faculty and staff, we’re a great place for you to be here and we’re coming out for you. That’s the idea behind a recruitment process.”

-founder of Campus Pride, Advisory Board interview

This fall, two dozen colleges are participating in **Campus Pride**’s Admissions Fair, an event that allows students to interact with universities that “value lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and ally people.” Targeting recruitment efforts at the LGBT population is something many LGBT professionals hope to achieve moving forward, but the practice is uncommon except at the most progressive universities.

V. INCREASING VISIBILITY, BUSINESS AS USUAL

"[Bringing the LGBT center] to the forefront and normalize[ing] it, it doesn't make people feel that when they walk through the door they are going to be gay. Its just part of the campus life and they are serving all of their students. A lot of the staff members here are straight. We don't ask people when they walk in the door, do you have your gay card...[but] if you start marginalizing it, it's going to be seen that way."

-Advisory Board interview

One LGBT center director at a public university in the Southeast observed that after the first year of his center's existence, students at the university assumed the LGBT center had always been part of campus life. Student memories are short, and making LGBT issues a normal part of the conversation about diversity goes a long way toward changing campus climate.

Essential First Steps

- 1) Provide SAFE training to faculty, staff, and student organizations, especially
 - ✓ Residence life staff
 - ✓ Campus safety
 - ✓ Athletic department
 - ✓ Counseling centers
 - ✓ Fraternities and Sororities



SAFE trained staff and faculty members place identifying stickers on their office doors as a signal to LGBT students.

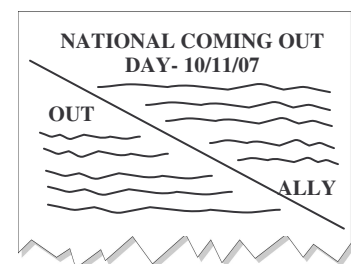
- 2) Distribute and display LGBT resource materials throughout campus
 - ✓ Career center
 - ✓ Counseling center
 - ✓ Student health
 - ✓ Admissions

Next Steps

- 1) Invite LGBT center director to serve on a variety of university committees. The director at **University B** is active on a student health committee, while the director at **University F** serves on a committee examining life skills for student athletes. This practice normalizes the presence of an LGBT advocate in meetings regarding the general student population. It also ensures that the needs of LGBT students are addressed outside of the LGBT center.
- 2) Incorporate LGBT training into regular staff development. For example, **University H** is working with their human resources department on an LGBT continuing education module.

Innovations from the Front Lines

- ✓ Post a list of "Out and Proud"/ "Allied" faculty and staff on LGBT center website or in the college newspaper. This public display makes a strong statement to the university community and identifies role models and supporters for LGBT students.



What it looks like:

University F's "Ally Development Program"

LGBT undergraduate student volunteers conduct small group workshops, sharing their stories and discussing the stereotypes and messages LGBT people are confronted with every day. To bring the message home, program leaders pass out a quick survey to the group:

How accepting of LGBT people are you?
1 2 3 4 5

How accepting are your peers?
1 2 3 4 5

Tabulating the results visualizes a dramatic point: participants always perceive their peers as less accepting than they are. Participants realize that their perceptions affect their willingness to speak out about injustice and intolerance.

The program is extremely popular at University F, with many Greek student groups and staff requesting training.

VI. SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH RESOURCES AND SERVICES

“Why do we rely on this student population to provide that level of services and programs and visibility, when it should be an institutional commitment?”

-Advisory Board interview

Policy and words are not enough to create a safe and supportive environment for LGBT students. It is essential to reach out to students on a day-to-day level with a strong LGBT resource center that offers staff ally training, educational programming, opportunities for student leadership, and a safe place for students to hang out and be themselves.

Essential First Steps

- 1) Invest in an LGBT resource center. Supplement a small staff with graduate interns and undergraduate work study students or volunteers.
- 2) Create support groups for students who are coming out or questioning their sexual orientation. Offer support groups through the counseling center as well as in the LGBT center. Different students feel comfortable being “out” in different spaces.
- 3) Build a strong LGBT center website. A website provides information to questioning or closeted students, as well as prospective students. Include:
 - ✓ Information about the “Coming Out” process
 - ✓ means of reporting homophobia or hate crimes
 - ✓ information about student groups

Resource Center Checklist

- ✓ A full time director
- ✓ A centralized space, ideally in the student union or near other student service offices, like Multicultural Affairs or International Student Office
- ✓ Space for students to study, socialize, and meet in groups
- ✓ Weekly support groups for “coming out” students, transgender students, graduate students, international students, students of color, etc.

Strong Sites

<http://www.princeton.edu/lgbt>
<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lgbtc>
<http://www.uga.edu/lgbtcenter>

Next Steps

- 1) Convert existing single stall restrooms to gender-neutral. Ensure access to gender-neutral restrooms in residence halls, academic buildings, and recreation facilities. Incorporate gender-neutral restrooms in new constructions. Post a list of gender neutral restrooms on the LGBT website.
- 2) Create an LGBT housing option. Many universities have academically-themed housing that is LGBT-friendly, such as a “Social Justice” or “Gender and Sexuality Studies” house. Neutrally-named theme houses allow students to participate even if they are not “out” to parents or friends.

The T word: a cautionary tale from “Red State U”



Last year, the LGBT center at **University C** wanted to make 2 single stall bathrooms in their building gender neutral. The director emailed his students letting them know this new service was available. One person on the email list got excited and forwarded it to a local LGBT newspaper. The Associated Press picked up the story and made it seem like the university was creating “transgender bathrooms”. This attention sparked a national backlash, leading to hate mail forcing the Provost to meet with state legislators.

The moral of this story: LGBT center professionals in conservative states toe the line between supporting their students and triggering hot-button political debate. Directors at Southeastern LGBT centers advise new colleagues to avoid activism and focus on education. Also, in the early years, be cautious about the materials you include in the LGBT center. Even popular TV series like “The L Word” may raise eyebrows.

- 3) Offer LGBT-themed programming outside of the LGBT center, in venues such as academic departments, the multicultural center, or the career center. In our interviews, experts stressed that the LGBT center has a stigma and is likely to attract only the most “out” students.

Innovations from the Front Lines

Reaching Students before Matriculation

In addition to strong programs for matriculating students, **University H** works hard to make sure LGBT students feel welcome before they arrive on campus. The Prospective Students link on their LGBT center homepage provides information about student groups and university initiatives, as well as stories from current students about academic and social life at the university.

In addition, **University H** is revising its entering students housing forms to include the university’s expansive Nondiscrimination policy and encourage students to volunteer information about themselves to assist in placement, such as “I am a transgender student and would prefer a lockable bathroom” or “I would prefer a LGBT-friendly roommate.” A task force on Transgender issues is working with Residence Life staff to identify a set of rooms or suites in each residential college as potential spaces to house transgender students, going beyond the conventional practice of assigning transgender students to single rooms.

VII. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND APPENDIX

The National Consortium of Directors of LGBT Resources in Higher Education

<http://www.lgbtcampus.org>

A professional association for LGBT center directors, the Consortium works to achieve equity for all students, faculty, staff, and administrators in higher education environments nationally. Through the Consortium, new LGBT resource directors have the opportunity to network with experienced colleagues around the country.

Campus Pride

<http://www.campuspride.org>

This nonprofit organization for student leaders and campus organizations is dedicated to fostering a safe learning environment on college campuses. Campus Pride administers the LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index, a tool that allows universities and colleges to assess their LGBT service offering and reach out to LGBT students through the Campus Pride website. Campus Pride also hosts LGBT college admissions fairs.

Appendix: LGBT in Admissions Materials

The below flier is included in packets sent to all students accepted to University C.



Since 1987, the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) has served [REDACTED] and the Greater [REDACTED] area by promoting the rich cultural resources of the [REDACTED] Community and preparing students for the unique challenges of living in a more ethnically-diverse world. The office provides ethnic minority and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender students with the academic, social and personal support and advocacy services that facilitate their adjustment to the University. Throughout the year, OMA provides and co-sponsors speakers, programs, and workshops for various cultural celebrations for the campus community, such as the Multi-Ethnic Student Orientation, the Diversity Convocation, and the Annual Pot-Luck Thanksgiving Dinner.

Cultural Student Organizations

African-American Congress of [REDACTED]
 Asian-American Students United (AASU)
 Celtic Society
 Indian Association of [REDACTED]
 Japanese Association of [REDACTED]
 Latin American Student Association (LASA)
 Men of Color
 Middle Eastern Student Association (MESA)
 MOSAIC (LGBT Student Organization)
 Multicultural Council
 Muslim Education and Cultural Committee for Awareness (MECCA)
 National Organization of Minority Architecture Students (NOMAS)
 National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE)
 Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE)
 Students Organized Against Racism (SOAR)
 [REDACTED] African Student Association [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] Chinese Student and Scholars Association [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] Chinese Student Association [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] Vietnamese Association [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] cultural student organizations take on the responsibility of promoting cultural and social awareness in the campus community throughout the year, and especially during our cultural weeks: African Diaspora Week, Asian-American Awareness Week, Black Arts Festival, Celtic Week, India Week, Islamic Awareness Week, Latin American Week, Martin Luther King, Jr. Week for Peace, and [REDACTED] Myths and Legends.

Every year, different groups across campus invite prominent figures in the world to discuss his or her experiences with the Tulane University and [REDACTED] communities. Speakers in the past have

included comedian Margaret Cho, former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, musician Wynton Marsalis, nobel laureate Toni Morrison and Afghan-American writer Tanim Ansary.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Life provides resources and support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members of the [REDACTED] Community. We work to create a safe and supportive academic environment while advocating for the needs and concerns of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students and employees.

Religious Student Organizations and Centers

Baptist Collegiate Ministry
 Campus Crusade for Christ
 Catholic Center
 Chabad House
 Chi Alpha
 Episcopal Center - Chapel of the Holy Spirit
 Intersarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF)
 Lutheran Campus Ministry (ELCA)
 Muslim Student Association
 [REDACTED] Hillel Center
 Presbyterian Campus Fellowship
 United Methodist Campus Center

The religious organizations at [REDACTED] exist to offer students the opportunity to continue life as a spiritual person while on campus through worship, community and more. They also serve to increase religious awareness and to offer religious counseling for students who request it.

Professional Services Note

The Advisory Board has worked to ensure the accuracy of the information it provides to its members. This project relies on data obtained from many sources, however, and the Advisory Board cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information or its analysis in all cases. Further, the Advisory Board is not engaged in rendering clinical, legal, accounting, or other professional services. Its projects should not be construed as professional advice on any particular set of facts or circumstances. Especially with respect to matters that involve clinical practice and direct patient treatment, members are advised to consult with their medical staffs and senior management, or other appropriate professionals, prior to implementing any changes based on this project. Neither the Advisory Board Company nor its programs are responsible for any claims or losses that may arise from any errors or omissions in their projects, whether caused by the Advisory Board Company or its sources. 1-P83RV

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STUDENT AFFAIRS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Supporting LGBT Students on the University Campus

Networking Contacts • November 30, 2007

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Shane is co-founder of Campus Pride, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to developing LGBT student leadership and fostering a safe environment for LGBT students on college campuses. Campus Pride administers the LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index and conducts college admissions fairs for prospective LGBT students. Shane is also the author of [The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students](#).

Debbie Bazarsky

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bazarsky@princeton.edu

University H

Princeton is known for its LGBT-friendly policies, strong LGBT center, and supportive administration. Debbie is a leader among LGBT center directors and well connected with her colleagues at other front-line universities. Princeton has extensive staff training on LGBT issues in place and is currently examining options for housing transgender students. Debbie is happy to network with Vanderbilt about LGBT services, and has a deep understanding of difficult campus climate issues.

Allison Subasic

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University Park, PA 16802
(814) 863-1248
afs11@sa.psu.edu

University D

Penn State is ranked among the “Best of the Best Top 20 Campuses” in [The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students](#). Allison is experienced in the field and recommends that LGBT center leaders at Vanderbilt join National Consortium of Directors of LGBT Resources in Higher Education, where they will have access to peer support and resources.

Michael Shutt, PhD

Assistant Dean of Students for LGBT Resource Center
University of Georgia
124 Memorial Hall
Athens, GA 30602
(706) 542-4077
mshutt@uga.edu

University B

The University of Georgia is a large flagship state institution with a strong LGBT center. Michael is eager to network with LGBT center directors in the Southeast, citing that universities in this region face different challenges than their counterparts in the Northeast and West Coast.

Todd Smith

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Kimmel Center for University Life
60 Washington Square South, Suite 602
New York, NY 10012
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University G

NYU has a large LGBT center staff, including an Assistant Director, a Program Administrator, two half-time Graduate Assistants, five undergraduate student workers, and 40 Peer Educators. Todd was generous in offering his support and experience to Vanderbilt.

Adrea Jaehnig

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Syracuse, NY 13244
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University F

Syracuse is a large private university in Western New York State that formed a committee to examine campus climate issues after a series of anti-gay incidents in the late 1990's. Based on the changes made, Syracuse recently scored a 5/5 star rating on the Campus Climate Index. Adrea partners extensively with academic departments interested in LGBT issues, and has introduced a lecture series and staff training program to the university.