Dear Advocates,

We hope this newsletter finds you doing well and we hoped you enjoyed the quietness of fall break. As you know, the Division of Student Affairs Diversity Committee had spent a great amount of time discussing the future direction for the Diversity Advocates program last year and evaluating the work that the committee does.

We have appreciated all of the input that you have provided the committee through our formal survey and informal conversation. We are currently still working on restructuring the program and are hoping to have more information out to you early next semester.

Thank you for your continued support!

Division of Student Affairs Diversity Committee

Upcoming Event for National Disability Awareness Month

**Journey into Dyslexia**

Tuesday, October 23rd
4:00-6:00pm
AMU 227
Free with light refreshments provided

In this HBO documentary, a series of interviews with students and adults with dyslexia are conducted, providing insight into the personal perspective of living with a learning difference. The film explores the emotional effects dyslexia has on an individual, along with how society’s expectations of intelligence affect a person’s ability to fully participate and be accepted into a variety of systems, especially the education system. The film confronts stereotypes, and explores issues of normalcy.

We encourage the entire Marquette community to attend this unique opportunity to educate ourselves on dyslexia, and learn the tools to understand the experiences many of our students have both in and outside of the classroom.

Sponsored by Intercultural Engagement/Office of Student Development, MARQ Your Path and the Office of Disability Services.

For more information contact
Meghan.schifalacqua@mu.edu
John.janulis@marquette.edu

Don’t forget to check your “listing” to ensure that the information we have for you as a Diversity Advocate is correct.

http://www.marquette.edu/dsa/diversitycommittee/diversityadvocates/find-advocate.shtml
Interview with Susannah Bartlow
Director of the Gender and Sexuality Resource Center

Can you provide some share with us some information regarding your academic and professional background?
I’ve worked in nonprofit and higher education for over ten years; most recently, I was the founding Director of a Women’s Center that ran a full range of gender-based programs at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. I have a Ph.D. in English with a focus on womanist and feminist history and African American women’s literature. I am involved with the Anti-Racism/Anti-White Supremacy Working Group of the National Women’s Studies Association and work in higher education in solidarity with gender justice and community organizing outside of academia. I have a research project (on hold) that uses an interdisciplinary approach to read narratives depicting inter-racial collaboration on civil rights issues (e.g. The Help).

What motivated you to come to MU and accept the director position?
I was looking for a gender-based or intersectional context (not simply work focused around a “woman” identity) and professional challenges beyond the gender-based violence work that had occupied much of my time at Dickinson. I was also looking to relocate to a larger, more urban setting.

What services/resources are provided by the GSRC?
Right now, the Center is in a discernment year, so the primary service is to listen carefully and document the hopes and concerns of all Marquette community members. This information will be shared with the inaugural Advisory Board and used to develop strategic priorities for the Center.
Apart from needs assessment, the center in 2012-2013 offers:
- Lounge and meeting space in AMU 425 (contact gsrc@mu.edu)
- Books and other resources in AMU 425 (stop by 8:30am - 4:30pm)
- Consultation on gender and sexuality issues (contact susannah.bartlow@mu.edu)
- Course support and development (contact susannah.bartlow@mu.edu)
- Programs and events (follow @MarquetteGSRC on Twitter or Facebook)

What short and long term goals do you have for the GSRC?
The short-term goals for the center are to conduct a University needs assessment and to provide support to faculty through curriculum consulting and faculty research presentations. I am also looking to connect and collaborate with students through programming and outreach surrounding topics of gender and sexuality and build relationships with other offices that work closely with students.

The long-term goals for the Center will be established by the Advisory Board using an existing charter written by the Gender Task Force and in consultation with GSRC staff, Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion William Welburn, and the entire Marquette community.

How can staff, students, and faculty utilize and get involved with the GSRC?
- Stay connected on Twitter & Facebook
- Join in on events and programs you see announced there.
- Participate in needs assessment: tell us what you want or need.
- Come have meetings here or stop by to hang out, study, or take a break.
- Check out the growing book collection or connect with Center staff when you have questions or requests for lectures, resources, or support/safe space.

Join us on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/groups/73713359952/
Diversity Toolbox

The Coming Out Star - An activity to help students better understand lived experiences of individuals coming out.
Submitted by JJ Janulis

Sometimes it is difficult to find activities that help students understand and relate to the lived experiences that many in the LGBTQ community face. This activity can be a great opportunity for students to start to understand the lived experiences that many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning students face when coming out. The activity is best facilitated when the group of students is familiar with one another and there is plenty of time to process the activity afterwards.

Prior to the activity, you will need to create several 5-point stars on different colored paper. You should use red, orange, blue, and purple paper. These colors will represent different experiences during the activity. Participants are each given a star with the following words on each point: housing, class, family, friends, Milwaukee. Each student should receive one star.

In starting the activity, tell each student to imagine that the star represents their world. Next, give the following prompts:

- On the point labeled friends, write the name of someone who is very close to you, someone you care about care about more than anyone else, who you have confided in and have known for a long time.
- On the point labeled family, write the name of a family member who you can always go to for advice and guidance, who you can count on and who you can talk to about things you are struggling with.
- On the point labeled housing, write down your address or residence hall where you live. Write down a few positive adjectives that describe this space (e.g. safety, comfort, community).
- On the point labeled class, write down your favorite class, a class where you have a lot of friends, where you admire the professor, where you are interested in the course material.
- On the point labeled Milwaukee, write down your favorite hangout in Milwaukee. This can be a place where you like to have fun, a place where you feel comfortable, a place that you hang out with friends.

Once students have written in their stars, tell the students that every one of them is now coming out as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. If a student already identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, instruct the student to imagine coming out as a different identity in the LGBT spectrum.

For the complete activity, contact John.Janulis@marquett.edu

In processing this activity, it is important to highlight that LGBT students receive varied responses to coming out and being out. Some students might find support from a lot of sources while others might not be as fortunate. All of the stars have been folded or ripped in some way and this reflects the experiences of many in the LGBTQ community. None of the stars are perfectly intact. Many of us face different forms of prejudice, discrimination, and isolation due to our identity.

As this activity might invoke very personal and emotional responses, it is important to make sure that students understand the support resources on campus as well as in Milwaukee. Further, it is important to facilitate this activity with a lot of time to process. Processing should be done both silently and as a large group. Ask students to reflect and share how they felt during the activity, what emotions or triggers were present and to think about ways in which they can act to support somebody who might be coming out of the closet.

This activity was adapted from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor and can be accessed on the LGBT Architect website at: http://architect.lgbtcampus.org/. The LGBT Architect is part of the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals and contains documentation for campus practitioners working with LGBTQ student populations.
Eggnog, Politics, and Tire Chips
Written by: Stacie Dooley

As I consider how we talk with (or more accurately, talk at) one another about difficult issues, I think the problem may lie in our methods and mindset. As a diversity educator, I reflect often on the differences between discussion, debate, and dialogue. Understanding the impact of the methods we choose to employ when having difficult conversations can have a significant effect on the quality and outcome of those conversations.

Let’s start with discussion. As I think about “discussions” I’ve had, it seems that everyone is a bonafide expert in the topic they’re spouting off about, they may have one or two anecdotes that “prove” their theories, and nobody leaves any more enlightened or persuaded to examine a different point of view than when they began the conversation. In my family, these “discussions” occur most frequently around the holidays, typically after one too many dips in the eggnog. Uncle Blameitontheunions and Grandma Rightallthetime pick a fight with Nephew What’s wrongwithredistribution and Aunt Whycan’tweallgetalong; everyone is agitated, and the holiday is ruined until we punish ourselves all over again next year because we fool ourselves into thinking, “This will be the year they see it my way!” Eventually, we don’t talk about difficult issues at all because everyone’s “too sensitive” or “too stubborn” to see “reason,” reason being defined differently by each person in the room. Discussions deal with generalities and what “society needs,” but rarely takes into account the personal experiences of individuals. Discussions are often about saying the “intellectual” thing or being right.

While discussion can certainly be a contentious mode of conversation, it often pales in intensity to debate. In the national arena, we get to see political debates about every three to four years, depending on primaries, and we want our candidate to win, no matter the cost. We rally around that person, putting signs in our yards and stickers on our cars to proclaim our team affiliation. Debate is about winning. In debate we have no intention of trying to persuade the other person to see things our way – we are deeply entrenched in our positions, and if we’re listening to the other person at all it is to find flaws in their argument and present our own counterargument. Debate is combative and divisive – it’s about who’s right and who’s wrong, about winners and losers.

Which brings us to dialogue. When we hear that word, we might think of some kind of peace circle, burning incense, sitting on the floor with our legs crossed, everybody’s happy, everybody’s free (thanks, Dave Matthews). Maybe. In reality, dialogue is probably the messiest, most challenging, yet ultimately most rewarding and productive of the three methods of conversation examined here. Because when we’re in dialogue, we are called to actually listen to one another. Dialogue accepts the truth that there are multiple truths, that human lives and experiences are diverse, messy, and can’t be wrapped up in simple sound bytes and ideologies because life is complicated, terribly unfair, and there is no one right answer to anything. Rather than assuming there is one right answer, dialogue gives room to explore the many pieces of the solution that each of us carries in our perspective and experience. It is about learning what each person brings to the conversation, and admitting that others’ thinking can improve our own. Rather than searching for flaws in other people’s positions, dialogue seeks to find the strengths and consider how they add to the solution.

So if dialogue is so great, why don’t we do this more often? One reason may be that dialogue takes time. It requires work, patience, and tenacity. It can be irritating. In a recent PTO meeting I attended, there was a simple proposal to replace the tire chips on the playground of my daughter’s school. It appeared to be a fairly straightforward item, because everybody hates the tire chips. Then one person floats an idea about saving our money to apply for grants that require matching funds for a bigger, better play space – a challenge to the group to think bigger, longer-term. What might’ve taken two minutes ended up taking twenty. It was an exasperating, time-intensive conversation on a work and school night, but ultimately we ended in a better place, planning for both our short- and long-term visions. And that was just about tire chips (you should’ve heard the Harvest Dance face-painting debate)! No wonder we don’t take the time to explore more complicated topics like race, gender, sexuality, class, religion, equality. It’s difficult, uncomfortable, emotional (if you’re doing it right), and it takes a long time.

I can’t help but think, however, that if we engaged in more dialogue, truly listened to one another, and spent our time expanding our worldview rather than honing our arguments, we would be far less polarized. Dialogue isn’t just about the big issues – it’s about the small ones too. It’s about taking time to hear other people’s stories, being vulnerable enough to share yours, and valuing opinions that may differ from your own. So ask yourself, where and with whom do you engage in discussions and debates in your life? How would the quality of those conversations change if you applied the rules of dialogue? How would those relationships change? So try it! The going might be rough, but I hope worth it in the end.

UPCOMING EVENTS ON CAMPUS

Coming Out as an Ally for LGBTQ students
*Thursday, October 25, 12-1pm, Center for Intercultural Engagement*
A panel of students will share their stories of how they became allies for students who identify as LGBTQ.
For more information, contact Intercultural Engagement at intercultural@marquette.edu.

Intercultural Leadership Council
*Tuesday, November 6, 12-1pm, Center for Intercultural Engagement*
Members and leaders in student organizations will discuss how to manage inter and intra-group conflict.
For more information, contact Intercultural Engagement at intercultural@marquette.edu.

McNair Scholars Colloquia
*Thursday, November 8, 12-1pm, Office of Student Educational Services Suite (407 Alumni Memorial Union)*
Two McNair Scholars will present their research projects and research interests. For more information, contact Intercultural Engagement at intercultural@marquette.edu.

Conversations for Change
*Thursday, November 8, 6-8pm, Lunda Room-Alumni Memorial Union*
The Division of Student Affairs Diversity Committee is sponsoring Conversations for Change, an opportunity for Marquette Students to share their thoughts and ideas on how to make the Marquette campus a more supportive and inclusive campus. For more information, contact the Division of Student Affairs Diversity Committee at diversitycommittee@marquette.edu.

Dance through the Decades
*Friday, November 9, Time and Location tbd.*
Join the Black Student Council as it recognizes its 25th Anniversary and Intercultural Engagement as it celebrates its 40th Anniversary. Dances and music reflective of certain decades will be reflected throughout the night. For more information, contact Intercultural Engagement at intercultural@marquette.edu.

An Evening and Performance with Michael Jacobs, Cherokee Recording Artist
*Tuesday, November 13, 6-8pm, Henke Lounge-Alumni Memorial Union*
Michael Jacobs is an award-winning Cherokee contemporary recording artist whose music is a mixture of Native American, roots rock, pop, and folk. His songs address human issues: peace, justice, suffering, the environment, relationships, personal responsibility, and wholeness. For more information, contact Intercultural Engagement at intercultural@marquette.edu.

Reel Talk Film Series: Unnatural Causes Documentary
*Thursday, November 15, 6-8pm, Alumni Memorial Union 252*
This semester’s Reel Talk Film Series features the documentary Unnatural Causes. Unnatural Causes examines inequities in health care and access to health resources in underrepresented racial and ethnic social groups. For more information, contact Intercultural Engagement at intercultural@marquette.edu.