

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION NEWSLETTER

From the NGSO D&I Committee

Inside the Issue

HISTORY & DEFINITIONS

We briefly explain the history of pride & helpful definitions for folks looking to learn more.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

We discuss how the reader can be an ally every day with a few simple tips.

RECOMMENDED READS

We provide a list of relevant articles and resources the LGBTQIA+ STEM community



WELCOME

In this issue, we discuss the LGBTQIA+ community and provide steps that NGP faculty and students could take to improve their allyship. Readers are referred to our resources list at the end of the newsletter for more Information!

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

LGBTQIA+ individuals in STEM are more likely to be their authentic selves when they perceive their environment as welcoming and supportive (Figure 1). So let's make it that way!

REPRESENTATION BUILDS CONFIDENCE

"It wasn't until I was 22 in my first internship post-grad did I meet another openly queer scientist. **This interaction changed my life in many ways, but importantly it helped me feel comfortable being who I am openly and discussing my sexuality in a way that normalizes it.** Only in retrospect can I see how foundational it was to have a mentor in science. Even just by being their self they showed me the importance of having people in positions of power hold minority status."

- NGP student

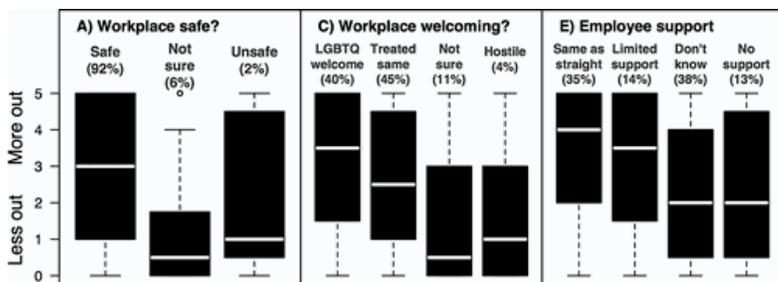


Figure 1: Taken from Yoder & Mattheis, 2016. In a study on Queer individuals In STEM, participants' openness to colleagues varied based upon their perceptions of the safety, welcoming climate, and employers' support for LGBTQ needs. [Find the study here!](#)

THE HISTORY OF PRIDE

LGBTQIA+ Pride, a movement known by the general public for its fill of colorful parades and street parties, is much more than a celebration. Following civil unrest at New York City's Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street, a group of LGBTQIA+ activists convened to establish "Christopher Street Liberation Day," which has since evolved into the modern Pride parades experienced worldwide every June.

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THE HISTORY OF PRIDE

The name "Pride" was originally adopted to promote both equity and visibility of the LGBTQIA+ community, as well as to defiantly reject the societal shame directed at this community before the early 1970s. Yearly Pride celebrations remain to be a source of joy and freedom where members of the LGBTQIA+ community celebrate their identity, remember the history of the movement, and create a welcoming space for people new to the community.

MYTHBUSTERS

- We know that gender isn't a binary... *Neither is sex!* This [opinion article](#) explains it well.
- Gender nonconforming individuals *can* classify themselves as gay or lesbian. (see "Helpful Definitions")
- Anyone in a relationship with a gender nonconforming person *can still be heterosexual*
- People who are bisexual or pansexual *are not automatically attracted to everyone.*

HIS EXPERIENCE:



"I know what it feels like to be the only queer person in an entire and very large department. It can get lonely. To gauge whether the institution and location are a good fit for you as an LGBTQ+ person, request to meet or speak with someone at an office (or person) that handles diversity, equity, and inclusion. It may be best to hold conversations about sexual orientation with people not connected to the search committee or hiring process. Doing so risks triggering implicit and explicit bias in interviewers. This highlights a difficult truth - there are still people scattered throughout academia who are not supportive of LGBTQ+ people. Negative beliefs about LGBTQ+ people, whether conscious or unconscious, live on in academia because they still exist in our culture. **Heteronormativity is embedded into all our institutions, even the most liberal of places. The best strategy is to connect with as many people as you can.**"

- Dr. Leo Taylor, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion leader & evolutionary biologist @OSU

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS:

- *Homosexual:* When a person experiences sexual attraction to the same or similar gender. This term is offensive to some, who prefer the terms "gay" or "lesbian."
- *Heterosexual:* When a person experiences sexual attraction to a gender different from their own. Also known as "straight."
- *Bisexual:* When a person experiences sexual attraction to more than one gender.
- *Pansexual:* When a person experiences sexual attraction to a person regardless of their gender.

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Graphic 1: The most recent version of the pride progress flag, originally designed by Daniel Quasar in 2018 and updated by Valentino Vecchietti in 2021. [Click here for more!](#)

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Allyship is a composite of daily decisions. Therefore, identifying situations in which visible allyship can be enhanced is critical to an

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HELPFUL DEFINITIONS:

- *Asexual*: When a person does not experience sexual attraction to any gender, but may experience romantic attraction.
- *Aromantic*: When a person does not experience romantic attraction but may experience sexual attraction.
- *Demisexual*: When a person is asexual until certain conditions are met, such as a deep emotional connection with another person.
- *Queer*: An umbrella term for people that are not exclusively heterosexual. It was previously a slur that the LGBTQIA+ community has reclaimed as an umbrella term for all its members.

RECOMMENDED READS & RESOURCES

The following resources were used when constructing this newsletter and are recommended to further the reader's education on LGBTQIA+ individuals in STEM.

Yoder, J.B. & Mattheis, A. (2016). Queer In STEM: - Workplace experiences reported in a national survey of LGBTQA individuals in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers. *Journal of homosexuality*, 63(1), 1-27.

Miller, R. A., & Downey, M. (2020). Examining the STEM Climate for Queer Students with Disabilities. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*, 33(2), 169-181.

Shadel, J.D. (2019). The Scientists Fighting to Make the Future of STEM more Queer. *Them*.

Langin, K. (2019). Now I know I'm not alone' Study Highlights challenges LGBTQ working In STEM Face. *Science Careers*.

Cech, E. A., & Pham, M. V. (2017). Queer in STEM organizations: Workplace disadvantages for LGBT employees in STEM related federal agencies. *Social Sciences*, 6(1), 12.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

inclusive and healthy lab culture. Here are few functional ways to improve your allyship with the LGBTQIA+ community every day, both within and outside of the lab. *Frequently applying these practices will foster a more inclusive environment.*

1. **Improve the language you use** in presentations, writing, and everyday conversation.
 - i. Use "person" or "people" rather than "men" or "women."
 - ii. Use neutral honorifics such as "folks" rather than "ladies & gentleman."
 - iii. Use "partners" or "significant others" rather than "husbands" or "wives"
2. Politely correct colleagues/peers when they make hetero- or cis-normative assumptions.
3. Use fill-in-the-blank options under "Sexual Orientation" or "Gender Identity" when writing surveys. **Speak out when you see improper/outdated terms for gender on registration forms!**
4. Introduce yourself with your pronouns and **use pronouns** in your email signature and Zoom name.
5. Include the most updated progress flag in your office space decor (see Graphic 1).
6. **Ensure that students know the ombudspeople for their program.**
 - i. NGP's are Dr. Ruth Barrientos and Dr. Liz Kirby.

FOLLOW ON TWITTER:

@LGBTSTEM
 @QueersInSTEM
 @TheSTEMvillage
 @QueerInNeuro
 @LGBTQstemCast

WATCH ON YOUTUBE:

Dr. Leo Taylor's talks for the CFAES Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

CONTACT US

Have feedback or suggestions? Reach out!

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