Rainbow SIGnals is published once a semester by the Rainbow Specific Interest Group (SIG) of NAFSA: Association of International Educators. The Rainbow SIG is comprised of diverse NAFSAns whose goals are to combat homophobia, heterosexism and transphobia within NAFSA, to counsel international students and study abroad students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered, and to support gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered professionals in international education.

Inside This Issue:

:: Page One ::
- Interview with our New Co-Chair
- Anonymous Women’s Perspective on Being “Out” in the Education Field in Spain

:: Page Two ::
- Summary of Rainbow SIG Activities
- Did you know? Featuring Zhou Dan

:: Page Three ::
- Coming Out Across Borders (DVD)

:: Page Four ::
- Rainbow SIG Advisory Committee Members
- Photos Taken During NAFSA’s 2007 National Conference’s Rainbow SIG’s Reception

For any questions, comments and/or concerns contact Rainbow SIG Co-Chairs:

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Join us in Toronto, Canada!! During the CIEE Conference in Toronto, the NAFSA Rainbow SIG will hold a brief meeting on Wednesday, November 14, 5:00-6:00pm in the Fairmont Royal York - Algonquin Room.

Interview with our New Co-Chair
Submitted by: Thomas Lavenir (James Madison University)

Peter Kerrigan enjoys writing, reading, theatre, dance/ballet, and the movies. He also takes pleasure in a good cardio work-out and yoga. When I interviewed him he was also quick in adding that “of course, I love to travel” but what really lead him to his current professional position and to be involved with the Rainbow SIG?

As an undergraduate at German and as a result first time with a faculty-lead Bloc and the Soviet Union. on the Pan Am plane (I comment) from Frankfurt use German for the first next to me. Learning the purpose.” He returned to abroad: taking a summer GDR and then studying Germany. “It was an amaz-

Political Science major, but be incomplete without also language: German. He took double major in Political.

Bates College Peter studied traveled to Germany for the program through the Eastern He recalls distinctly “sitting am dating myself with that to (West) Berlin and having to time with the passenger sitting language finally had a tangible Germany for his Junior Year language course in Weimar, for a year in Marburg, West ing year.” He was initially a realized that his studies would majoring in his newly found enough credits in Germany to Science and German when he returned to Bates for his senior year. A few years later he completed his M.A. in Political Science at the Freie Universität in Berlin financing his studies by teaching English. Peter worked as a marketing consultant and Vice President of Membership Development and Services for The Forum on Education Abroad before joining the DAAD in August 2006.

Anonymous Woman’s Perspective on Being “Out” in the Education Field in Spain
Submitted by: Eero Jesurun (CIEE Madrid)

The following interview was conducted with a British national who has been teaching in primary education in Spain for the past 9 years. Her experience reflects that of a lesbian who is trying to find a balance between her private life and public role in education.

Rainbow SIG Newsletter Reporter: What are the challenges of being an “out” professional in primary education in Spain?

British Teacher: In Britain my colleagues would not know so much about me as a gay woman. I do not know who knows here in Spain. Col- leagues do not ask and I do not publicize it. Being a teacher, I do not want my students to find out. I don’t have a problem with the legal and moral side of being gay. For instance, I cannot get fired at my organization for being gay. However, I am concerned about the cruelty of children. If you are different, some students can get critical of you, start a wave of rumors, etc. I don’t want my private life to be discussed at school. My professional role is that of a teacher, and not to be a friend of the students. When I had a girlfriend, I was nervous to be seen walking on the streets with her in the downtown center. I would never hold hands because I was nervous about the criticism I would get once I was back at my work place.

There are many individual teachers who are more open about sexuality issues albeit as an education institution we are not. This has to do with the pres-

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued on page 3)
Greetings, Rainbow SIG Members!

We wanted to give you a quick update on our projects and remind you of some upcoming deadlines/events.

Rainbow SIG @ CIEE Toronto - Attending CIEE’s annual conference in Toronto? Please join us for an informal members’ meeting Wednesday, November 14, 5:00-6:00 pm in the Fairmont Royal York - Algonquin Room. We’ll be updating you on our current projects and discussing plans for NAFA 08. All are welcome!

Committee Updates -
• Website Project: Scott Van Der Meid and Pete Johnson continue to work with GoAbroad.com on a new website design to be introduced in the spring. Paul Geis is working on developing a template for country-specific pages for the top 10 overseas destinations based on the Open Doors survey. Paul and Bill Skaggs are developing a new navigation plan to help the different groups visiting the SIG website better access to all of the rich information available to them. More details and template pages will be discussed at the meeting held in Toronto at the CIEE Conference.
• Scholarship Project: Setting up scholarships for GLBT students (Kevin Coyne). No news to report this month.

NAFSA 2008 - Michael Ulrich and Mark Lenhart continue to explore DC venues for our 2008 reception. We know of two LGBT-related sessions that were proposed for the conference. With both NAFA and the SIG celebrating anniversaries, the 2008 NAFA Conference in Washington, DC will be a big one! Please let us know if any of your SIG-related session proposals have been accepted. Also, any suggestions as to how we can positively maximize our presence and visibility at the conference would be appreciated. We will send you updates about the conference.

SIG mission & by-laws - Jan Kieling and Kevin Morrison reviewed the “governance” section of our website and discovered that it is not up-to-date, so revisions were made (thanks, Kathy Sideli!). In addition, they identified the following areas of our Mission Statement that could use some revision:
• Explicit recognition of the educational mission of the SIG (as opposed to counseling) both in terms of students and professionals in the field
• Recognition of the importance of the social network that is created through the SIG, perhaps in combination with the notion of providing support to GLBT professionals in the field.

Jan and Kevin will come up with a draft of revisions to the mission and will circulate it to the subcommittee - Scott King, Kathy Sideli, Peggy Pusch, and Peter Kerrigan - for feedback and refine it before submitting it for discussion among the advisory board.

Membership/Facebook -
• Susan Carty and Daniel Soto have updated our listserv with new members’ names (many thanks!). As a reminder, if you would like to post messages to the entire list, you can write RAINBOW@LISTSERV.INDIANA.EDU. There are 28 new additions to the listserv!
• We’ve also created a Facebook group, where Scott Van Der Meid has posted photos of our Minneapolis reception. If you’d like to join this group, simply log onto Facebook and search for NAFSA Rainbow SIG. 31 members have already joined this group.

As always, we’d welcome your questions or comments.

Warm greetings from Washington and NYC respectively,

Mark Lenhart & Peter Kerrigan

Did you know? Featuring Zhou Dan

Permission granted to reprint Zhou Dan’s profile from “Equality Forum” with the GLBT History Month site URL: www.glbtHistoryMonth.com

The absence of legal protection and the threat of social isolation keep most Chinese GLBT individuals in the closet.

GLBT activist, attorney and champion of GLBT rights in China, Zhou Dan writes articles on Chinese gay and lesbian websites. In 2003, he established the Shanghai Hotline for Sexual Minorities. In 2006, he taught China’s first graduate class on homosexuality at Fudan University in Shanghai. As a lawyer, Zhou fights for the GLBT community and people living with HIV/AIDS. He successfully lobbied the Ministry of Health not to bar HIV-positive people from government jobs. Zhou founded and currently serves as Executive Director of Yu Dan, the first Chinese organization promoting the recognition and acceptance of gay rights throughout mainland China.

In 2005, Zhou was profiled in TIME Magazine as China’s gay pioneer. In 2006, Equality Forum named Zhou the recipient of the “11th Annual International Role Model Award.”
Being “out” in Spain

(Continued from Page 1)

ence of some religious fundamentalists (parents, students, teachers, etc.). Also, there is a Catholic priest at my school who teaches a very different version about human evolution. When students try to question sexuality issues, I try not to be moralistic or find myself wanting to “indoctrinate” my own beliefs. For example, one of my students asked why Sir Francis Drake was wearing an earring on a classroom wall picture. Another student yelled out: “He is gay!” I did intervene and explained that a man wearing an earring did not necessarily mean he was gay.

I often wonder about children at my school who have gay parents. It is not discussed in the workplace albeit I do hear rumors of parents who get divorced because a spouse is gay. Overall, I would say I have to find a balance between my sexual orientation and how this translates into my teaching profession. The presence of bible study at my institution makes me more careful in making sexuality a public education matter.

Being an “out” gay person is a bit of a misnomer. Why? The spectrum of gay people is very wide just as there is a very wide spectrum of different straight people. Not all gay people want gay marriage and not all gays want to adopt children. In the work place, I become more concerned with the individual person and I try not to get bothered so much with the label they carry in public. I do wonder sometimes whether I should come out to students, especially those who exhibit different behavior. I wonder if should act as a role model of what it is like to being different and create a certain self-confidence for a child who is potentially gay. Sometimes, I think, that in the education profession we do need to be more open about such issues.

Rainbow SIG Newsletter Reporter: Is there a cultural difference between Spain and the UK as far as being an “out” professional?

British Teacher: In Spain, people tend to be very coy about who is gay or not in public positions. Everybody seems to know rumors about gay affairs, but the media does not press this issue any further. It insinuates everything else, but does not come out and state anything about sexual orientation. In the British press, however, there is more direct mention about sexuality and sexual behavior of people. I guess in Spain you don’t mention it publicly as it would come accross as a bit of a social shock. The Spanish attitude is more “Live and let live” and do not bother them about it. That is, you can do anything you want in the bedroom but do not talk about it at school. In broader terms, Spain is less of a nanny state than Britain. In the UK, the Prime Minister acts more like a school headmaster. Therefore, as a British teacher and a gay woman in Spain, I also feel culturally that I should behave myself.

I do not think that the gay marriage law and the surrounding debate in Spain has made that much of a social impact in the workplace. Gay marriage is simply not discussed. Also the use of the word gay has cultural connotations. For example, in Britain, many students will use the word gay if something is a bad situation while also questioning the teacher’s authority. With my experience in Madrid, it is rare to hear students yell maricón out loud albeit it does happen. There seems to be more respect for authority and teachers here in Spain.
The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is the German national agency for the support of international academic cooperation. They offer programs and funding for students, faculty, researchers and others in higher education, provide financial support to over 50,000 individuals per year. They also represent the German higher education system abroad, promote Germany as an academic and research destination, and help build ties between institutions around the world.

Peter Kerrigan is the Deputy Director of the DAAD office in New York where he is responsible for marketing German higher education and DAAD scholarship opportunities and programs to the U.S. and Canada. “It seemed like a logical fit: a combination of my experience with international education, marketing and Germany.” Through his involvement in international education, and as a result of attending his first NAFSA conference which took place in Vancouver “I discovered the [Rainbow SIG] business meeting in the conference program of the national conference. I attended the meeting looking for like-minded professionals. I met a number of people there with whom I am friends to this day. It was a very welcoming environment.” Since that time Peter has been involved with the Rainbow SIG in several capacities and as of May 30, 2007 became our new Rainbow SIG Co-Chair along with Mark Lenhart.

Rainbow SIG Advisory Committee Members:


* Amy Bartnick-Blume (Butler University), * Mark Beirn (Tulane University), * David W. Brannonn(University of Washington), * Erin Burt (University of California, Berkeley), * Melissa Chambers (Arcadia university), * Kevin Coyne (International Students House - United Kingdom), * Terry Crouch (Rotary International), * Paul Geis (Bentley College), * Steve Jacques (The University of Hawai‘i System), * Bo Keppel (Retired), * Jan Kieling (University of California, Berkeley), * Kim Killingsworth (Cornell University), * Scott King (The University of Iowa) * Alan Lawrie (Monash University- Australia), * Michael Mahan (University of Massachusetts, Boston), * Louis M. Meucci (Shaw University), * Kevin Morrison (Meredith College), * Tony Ogden (Penn State), * Bradley Rink (CIEE - South Africa), * Duane Rohovit (University of Minnesota), * Kathleen Sideli (Indiana University), * Greg Slatcher (University of Melbourne - Australia), * J Scott Van Der Meid (Brandeis University), * Kevin A. Zajac (Saint Joseph’s University)

A Few Photos taken during NAFSA’s 2007’s National Conference’s Rainbow SIG’s Reception

Did you know that our webpage features a list of books that have been recommended by members of the Rainbow SIG which identify sources of information on cultural, lifestyle and legal information…? Well... don’t waste any more time and check it out! http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay

Rainbow Listserv

Do you want to subscribe yourself to the Rainbow SIG e-mail listserv? Complete the online form found here: http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/sig.htm

Once you do so and are subscribed, to send an e-mail to all of the subscribed members, use the following e-mail address: rainbow@listserv.indiana.edu