

Rainbow SIG Newsletter

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In Memoriam

Kevin Schieffer and Robert Mashburn

Kevin worked for NAFSA at two different times during the '80's: as special assistant to the Executive Director and as Director of the Education for International Development Program. He was awarded NAFSA's the Marita Houlihan award for excellence posthumously. During his career, Kevin worked in a number of managerial and executive posts in the field of international education for the Hariri Foundation, World Learning, and the Pakistan Project. He died of AIDS in 1992 at the age of 37.

Robert also worked for NAFSA as director of the Education for International Development Program. In Washington, he worked for AMIDEAST, the Embassy of Thailand, and most recently as Director of the International Institute at the USDA Graduate School. He was chairman of NAFSA's Committee on Ethics for the past three years. Prior to coming to Washington, Robert was a Peace Corps volunteer in Korea and a technical language trainer in Saudi Arabia. Robert died of AIDS this spring at the age of 44.

Both men held MA degrees from the School for International Training and Doctorates in Education from Columbia Teachers College.

They will be greatly missed.

Psychosocial Implications of AIDS (Best of Region VIII)

by Mark D. Seaman, Consultant and HIV/AIDS Awareness Educator

We took a very different approach in preparing this Best of Region VIII Session for the 1995 National NAFSA Conference in New Orleans. We designed the session around three separate sessions that I organized for Region VIII's 1994 conference in Philadelphia. Both in Philadelphia and in New Orleans, the panels were comprised of HIV/AIDS specialists: educators, clinicians, and People With AIDS (PWAs). Furthermore, none of the panelists had ever been affiliated with NAFSA.

Our goal from the outset was four-fold: (1) provide important, basic information about HIV transmission and prevention, (2) describe the transition from HIV to AIDS on a clinical level, (3) offer insight into the emotional trauma involved with AIDS, and (4) explore various approaches of discussing related issues with students.

Although this was a huge amount of ground to cover in a relatively short amount of time, the audience left with new, useful information as well as a new perspective on what it is like to actually live with AIDS.

Given the time constraints, we knew we had to get the audience to focus on the issue immediately. We accomplished this with a brief hand-shaking exercise which, at first, appeared to be an ice-breaker. We used the exercise to effectively illustrate the incredulous rate at which HIV can and is being transmitted in this country.

With the audience shocked into reality, we moved into a brief explanation of HIV and AIDS. Then, through guided imagery, each individual experienced some of the feelings associated with the process of facing the diagnosis of AIDS.

I led them through a continuum of losses, including personal possessions, recreational activities, physical attributes, personal privacy, significant friends and loved ones and finally their own sense of self. This was a very powerful exercise which cut through the abstract idea of "AIDS" and went straight to the hearts of everyone in the room. We spent some time discussing what feelings were stirred during the exercise and then listened to a personal account from a PWA.

The final part of the session was directed towards the practical use of all the information that was shared during the session. We suggested certain responses to specific issues and questions that may arise in dealing with both study abroad and international students.

We received an overwhelmingly positive response from all attendees. Since then, we've also been invited to repeat and expand upon the session in several other Regions. It's really rewarding to see people taking a real interest in such an important issue. If you

were unable to attend the session in New Orleans, an audio recording is available from Professional Programs, Inc. You can reach them at (805) 255-7774.

Resources for International Students on Homosexuality: Advising of Gay and Lesbian Students

by Peter Voeller, International Student Advisor, University of Washington

The session was well received by the approximately 30 people in attendance. My panel consisted of Scott Quint, Associate Dean and Director of the International Student Office at Northeastern University in Boston; J. Castanera, an Intercultural Programmer and international student at Northeastern involved in gay and lesbian rights; and Willfred Labiosa, a Ph.D candidate in the Counseling Department at Northeastern and an international student who works in the ISO and counseling center and also with a program of counseling for teenagers coming out.

I put together a video with an introduction by Jane Power, an advisor, instructor and student, working on her Master's Degree in Counseling at the University of Washington. She talked about the issue of invisibility as it affects international students in areas of language and sexual orientation. Following Jane's introduction, were some clips from the Stonewall video made in New York last summer with voices of international pride and pain. The last part of the video was filmed at POCAAN (People of Color Against AIDS Network), a community outreach project in Seattle which started out their work in response to the AIDS epidemic, but then branched out to providing services to gay, lesbian and bisexual people of color in the black, latino, Native American and Asian communities in the city.

The session was taped and I was happy with the quality of the recording, if someone would be interested in having a copy for their files. The video recorded fine onto the tape, maybe even better than in the workshop.

One of the conclusions that the students from POCAAN came to was that it would have been very helpful for them to have known of the resources for gay and lesbian students in their communities when the first entered the country. All of them stated that there was no mention of gays or lesbians in their programs or in their classes, so they assumed it was not a comfortable environment for them to "come out" in. Once they found the resources available at POCAAN, they were able to find the community of support that they were looking for.

The students advised teachers and advisors to be open to all students from all backgrounds and not to make any assumptions of heterosexuality. Once a student confides his or her sexual orientation, nonjudgement and confidentiality are mandatory.

(One of the students from an Arab country spoke on the video but would not be filmed because he feared persecution upon return.) There was a suggestion that there be more cooperation between the community groups that exist and the international student offices, that they work together to increase awareness.

One of the more successful programs dealing with the issue of gays and lesbians in the international student population is the one at Northeastern University. Scott Quint said in his introduction that their president offers them a lot of support to do an extensive cross cultural campaign to alert people of issues of concern to the gay, lesbian and bisexual community.

Another program which has some outreach to the non-gay international student population on the topic: Homosexuality, A U.S. Perspective for international students, is the Intensive English program at the University of Oregon. Pat Bryan, with support from the office of the dean of students and the counseling center, has put together a very nice information brochure aimed at the general international student population, which is made available at their orientation. We have her permission to adapt this brochure to our own programs. If you'd like a copy of the brochure or of my 14-page handout, please contact me by E-Mail at psv@u.washington.edu or phone 206/543-6242.

In my conclusion, I addressed the heterosexual advisors, for whom this presentation and video was designed. I encouraged those who might have bought the cassette tape that they were the ones who needed to be aware of the resources in their communities available to this population. It is my hope that in the future workshops, we will see more of these advisors in the audience. I brought 100 handouts, 70 of which were taken from a chair outside the door of my room. Maybe in the future, people who feel a stigma about going to a presentation with GAY or LESBIAN in the title will be less threatened.

At the end, I also spoke of my vision that we are in a time of great social change and it is humanity's first real chance to actually move forward, rather than go back. In the past, when civilizations reached our current point of diversity and acceptance and the chance to evolve to a plane of higher understanding presented itself, they always retreated in fear and ignorance. If we really are serious about the idea of a global community, then we need to face our fears now and through education and understanding move forward for once.

Heterosexism and Homophobia Issues for the International Educator

by Scott E. King, Director, Office of International Student and Scholar Services, Old Dominion University, Virginia

For the second year, the Lesbian SIG sponsored a pre-conference workshop on issues related to homophobia and heterosexism in international education. This year, 16 participants attended this all day presentation, which was led by Scott King of Old Dominion University and Scott Quint of Northeastern University.

As the topic is one with broad applications, the workshop was a busy day which was not always able to work on the small details of creating a positive, supportive environment within international education. The agenda included a discussion of how homophobia and heterosexism manifests itself in both everyday lives and more specifically in international education issues, legal and cultural barriers in other countries to safety and inclusiveness, and case studies of actual problems which have been encountered. Role playing which taught how we look at stereotypes of sexual orientation, and a gallery of the ways discrimination affects individuals were included in the day's events. As the workshop participants were about equally divided between those who work with international students and those whose responsibility is in the area of U.S. students abroad, the dialogue was varied and extremely inclusive of NAFSA's concerns.

One of the most exciting aspects of the workshop was the diversity of the participants. In addition to varied professional responsibilities, we had representation of schools from throughout the U.S., from institutions with a range of enrollment and educational missions, and participants included several individuals who do not work on a university campus. Many new ideas and resources were identified by those attending the workshop.

Individuals who are interested in more information about the workshop can Contact:

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Cultural Considerations in HIV Prevention and AIDS Education

by Scott B. Quint, Director, International Student Office, Northeastern University

How does AIDS impact upon the deforestation of Uganda? How do notions of gender roles in Brazil and Mexico influence the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS education campaigns? What country has no known cases of AIDS but sponsors an extensive program aimed at HIV/AIDS prevention? Why?

These were some of the questions addressed at this session on cross-cultural perspectives on HIV/AIDS education. Statistics and projections from the World Health

Organization are sobering indications that the AIDS pandemic will not abate in the near future. AIDS education and prevention programs have been cited as the most effective means to combat the HIV virus at the present time. Yet their effectiveness is diminished when the role of culture both of the educator and the audience is not meaningfully taken into consideration.

Film vignettes of culturally inappropriate interventions were compared to those that offered a more culturally sensitive dynamic. Two sets of video clips gave insight into some of the influences that might be prevalent in the Hispanic and Filipino/Polynesian cultures when offering AIDS education. Through discussion, the impact of gender roles, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, religion, values, attitudes, and beliefs were contrasted among these numerous other cultures. The cultural context of the message, audience, educator, medium, and mode of information must be taken into consideration in order to conduct effective educational programming.

The goal of this session was both to educate and empower. The important role of the international educator is underscored by a recent study that found 65% of students had experienced sexual intercourse before entering college, with virtually no condom usage or other safer sex measures taken. Those attending hopefully gained a broader and deeper understanding of the AIDS crisis and the cultural role that international educators and community leaders can play in effective and culturally appropriate AIDS education and prevention campaigns.

Coalition of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Student Groups

by Daniel Watts

QUEERCAMPUS is a list devoted to organizing and networking among the l/g/b campus communities world-wide. It will be a means to foster communication in an inexpensive manner between l/g/b activists, student leaders, organizations and individuals committed to making all campuses more l/g/b-friendly.

QUEERCAMPUS is not intended to be a general discussion mailing list, although topics of interest to campus organizers are certainly welcome.

As a guide (and only a guide), this list could be used to address to the following:

- confronting and reducing homo-phobia, harassment and violence
- removing ROTC from campuses
- implementing non-discrimination statements as university policy
- announcement of conferences or items of interest to campus leaders
- creating l/g/b/recognized student groups

- discuss campus issues in relation to Stonewall 25 and Creating Change 7

The purpose of this list is to allow all students, regardless of sexual orientation, a safe and comfortable learning environment to grow and become citizens and leaders of the world. This list is the discussion on how to best go about this.

To join the QUEERCAMPUS mailing list send a message to:

MAJORDOMO@vector.casti.com
with a one line message
'subscribe QUEERCAMPUS'

Online Censorship Against Lesbigay World Wide Web Pages

by Chris Kryzan

This message is intended to alert everyone to impending censorship on the World Wide Web, against gay, lesbian, bisexual and sexually-related topics, in the form of a product called SurfWatch.

Background

SurfWatch is a product just introduced by SurfWatch Software, Inc., of Los Altos, California. They describe the product as: "...a breakthrough software product that helps you deal with the flood of sexually explicit material on the Internet. By helping you to be responsible for blocking what is being received at any individual computer, children and others using your computer have less chance of accidentally or deliberately being exposed to unwanted material."

What SurfWatch blocks

SurfWatch includes a database of newsgroups, ftp and gopher sites, and WWW pages, that contain what the company views as objectionable contents. The company says its goal is "to block sexually explicit material, particularly pictures and explicit text. With that in mind we used a combination of proprietary software, together with input from educators and parents, to determine what we would block."

The goal has some merits, in that it allows parents to prevent their children from viewing sexually explicit material or conversations, and provides capabilities similar to the parental controls on AOL, and the censorship they may impose on their children's television viewing.

Ask the Editor

(Actually from the June 13 issue of the Advocate, but hey, I'll answer questions if you send them to me.)

Question:

I've been out as an undergraduate, and now that I'm planning to go to business school, I don't want to go back into the closet. Is there any information available about which, if any, business schools have reasonably open attitudes towards gay students?

Answer:

If you're able to get into one of the top schools, you'll probably be fairly comfortable. A 1995 study conducted by Jason P. Lorber, an MBA student at Stanford University's graduate school of business, has found that the best business schools also tend to be the most welcoming to gay and lesbian students. Top business schools' brochures generally quote their nondiscrimination policies and often mention their gay and lesbian students groups. The brochures of two top schools even include a profile of an out gay student.

Of the 22 MBA programs in Lorber's study, "more than half offer domestic partner benefits for both students and professors," he reports. "Thirteen of the schools have gay student organizations, five employ openly lesbian or gay professors, and all but one have policies specifically banning discrimination based on sexual orientation."

Harvard and Stanford (graded A) and Yale (A-minus) fare best, followed by the University of Michigan and New York University (B-plus) and the Wharton School at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Southern California, all of which received D ratings.

A summary of Lorber's report will be published in Sharon Silverstein and Annette Friskopp's *Straight Jobs, Gay Lives* (Simon & Schuster), scheduled for release this fall. For more information on the study, call Lorber at 415/323-6232, or E-Mail him at jplorber@aol.com