

University Committee on GLBT Issues
Brown Bag Lunch
March 7, 2003

Present: A. Bauer, R. Buerlein, C. Burnside, W. Fahey, M. Moon, B. Munjas, S. Watstein
Excused Absence: J. D. Benson

Agenda items included consideration of Dr. McDavis' request that we submit a proposal to be established as a formal standing committee; an update on the Siegel Center matter; an update on progress to date with regards to the development of a training module on LGBT sensitivity issues for Human Resources staff; an update on progress to date with regards to the development of a module for the VCU Police; discussion of state-wide networking; consideration of a request from ROSMY; update on the development of the GLBT Website; mention of the "Laramie Project"; report on recent incidents at Virginia Tech; and review of scheduled BBLs for the rest of the semester.

Dr. McDavis' request

Burnside and Watstein shared details about Dr. McDavis' suggestion that we submit a proposal to be established as a formal standing committee. Supporting rationale was noted: legitimize the work of the group to date; build on the rich history of the group; raise the visibility of the group and GLBT issues; improve the status of GLBT in the University; and better position the group to identify and address employment-related needs of the VCU GLBT community. We debated the pros and cons of being legitimate and official, being in the bureaucratic loop as opposed to out of it, and considered the varied role and function of standing committees in the University. The benefits to VCU were also identified - - underscores VCU's commitment to diversity; helps VCU's reputation; and potential impact on recruitment and retention. Options were considered: request establishment as a formal standing committee reporting to the Provost; request establishment as a formal subcommittee of the University Committee on Equity and Diversity; continue operating as is.

Everyone agreed that we are legitimate, and noted that we have the paperwork, including letters of appointment, to support this.

The group endorsed moving forward with a proposal to Dr. McDavis; the chairs will draft a proposal for discussion at the March 21 BBL. Note that it was also suggested that we prepare a Web mock up of what our standing committee page would look like. It was also suggested that we consider obtaining supporting letters from Deans.

Siegel Center

With regards to M. Moon's request to T. Deihl, Associate Director, VCU Recreational Studies (that same-sex partners of faculty members be permitted to purchase memberships for the recreational facilities), Moon told the group that she'd emailed T. Deihl that week (having not heard from him since her initial inquiry on December 10, 2002). She noted that he was immediately in touch and informed her that the matter had been referred forward for consideration, (a fact he'd previously told Burnside, in response to Burnside and Watstein's memo on this matter dated December 16, 2002),

but that the previous two meetings of this group had been snowed out. The group is now scheduled to meet on May 24, 2003, and the matter will be considered then.

Training module on LGBT sensitivity issues for Human Resources staff

Fillmore and Watstein reported on their progress to date developing a module for HR staff on LGBT issues. Session components are shaping up - - an opening icebreaker exercise; definitions of terms; discussion of cultural programming; discussion of heterosexism, homophobia and internalized oppression; a small group exercise on stereotypes; and case studies. The primary focus of this discussion was on HR's midstream request that we consider expanding training scope to encompass class and race. Concern was expressed about covering race and class as well as LGBT related issues (cultural programming, stereotypes, heterosexism, homophobia etc.) equally in a three-hour session. We were asked to reassure HR that the training would touch on class and race because these are active and continuing concerns and issues in the LGBT community. There was consensus that broadening the scope as proposed would shortchange all areas and compromise the quality of the session. Additionally, concern was expressed that, while we are comfortable developing LGBT sensitivity training, class and race are not our areas of expertise. Fillmore and Watstein will prepare a memo to HR and share it with the group at its March 21 meeting.

Module for the VCU Police

Burnside reported that he is working with Sgt. Walker on this module. Marianne Miller will work with Burnside on this.

State-wide networking

Moon reported that she has some question as to the status of this initiative. The group reviewed its vision for this - - that representatives from GLBT groups at the six doctorals in the Commonwealth gather for a daylong meeting (or day and a half) to explore common issues, concerns, etc. Burnside reminded the group of Dr. Trani's strong sentiment that such collaboration was the path to progress insofar as GLBT benefits etc. are concerned. He noted that Dr. Trani believes that nothing will work unless we work collaboratively. There were no concerns expressed about this approach. Burnside offered to work with Bradford and Moon on this initiative.

Watstein made the suggestion that the meeting be held in conjunction with an upcoming town hall meeting to discuss Lambda Legal's historic lawsuit challenging the sodomy laws and the possible impact on Virginia's Crimes Against Nature law. The Richmond Town Hall meeting is Thursday, April 10, from 7pm - 9pm. Members present expressed concern about bundling the two (logistics, timing, appeal or draw for our peers etc.).

Request from ROSMY

A request from ROSMY as to whether the group was interested in hosting invited suppers was shared. Burnside noted that he'd spoken to ROSMY that day and that they were doing well. Several members have already committed to hosting, including Moon (April 26); members agreed they were not interested in hosting.

GLBT Website

Watstein reported that she'd heard from D. Benson about the status of the GLBT Website - - it is still under construction. An important question is still unresolved - - where will the site "live." It was noted that the status of the group would determine this outcome.

“The Laramie Project”

An announcement was made about the upcoming performance of “The Laramie Project,” and the March 14 benefit for ROSMY.

Virginia Tech Discrimination

Informed members briefed the group on recent discriminatory actions on the part of Virginia Tech’s Board of Visitors under the leadership of Rector John G. Rocovich, Jr. Members of the Virginia Tech community have asked that details as to what’s going on there be shared with allies statewide and elsewhere, as the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors meets in March and broad support is needed. Bottom line: Virginia Tech has rescinded an offer to a new dean’s lesbian partner. Emails from various sources on this matter and the ensuing controversy have been shared with the group.

Additional Announcements

An overview of Social Justice Day, March 27, was provided by Buerlein.

Schedule

Brown Bag Lunch meetings have been scheduled for the balance of the spring semester, from 12 noon – 1:30, in the James Branch Cabell Library:

March 21

April 18

May 16

University Committee on GLBT Issues
Brown Bag Lunch
March 21, 2003

Present: J. Altman, J. D. Benson, J. Bradford, R. Buerlein, C. Burnside, D. Fillmore, D. Getty, M. Moon, B. Munjas, S. Watstein, A. Wilder
Excused Absence: A. Bauer, W. Fahey

Agenda items included consideration of a draft proposal to Dr. McDavis and numerous updates - - progress to date on the development of a training module on LGBT sensitivity issues for Human Resources staff, our Web site; Siegel Center matters; state-wide networking; development of a training module for the VCU Police; briefing on recent VA Tech initiatives; announcement about Social Justice Day; and "Laramie Project" reminder.

Acronym and Name Change:

It was noted that our minutes and other documents alternatively refer to us as LGBT or GLBT. In order to be consistent, and despite the fact that it might be confusing to our local situation, our acronym and name is now officially changed to **LGBT**. One member did not agree to this change.

Dr. McDavis' request

"Not as assertive as it could be" was the unanimous refrain in response to the draft memo to Dr. McDavis proposing our establishment as a formal standing committee. There was some discussion about our current status - - whether or not we were formal or informal, legitimate or illegitimate, etc. It was suggested that perhaps we are "ad hoc." There was also discussion as to what the strongest reporting position might be for us - - President, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Associate Vice Provost for Diversity, EEO/AA Services, Senior Vice President Finance and Administration. There was consensus that reporting to the Provost was the most advantageous (politically, strategically, etc.) position.

Watstein will make minor tweaks to the proposal and send it to Moon and Bradford for an assertive reframe. The revised proposal will be sent to the group one more time before it is submitted with attachments to Dr. McDavis.

Training module on LGBT sensitivity issues for Human Resources staff

Fillmore and Watstein shared the text of an email they intend to send to C. Burke, Human Resources. Echoing feedback provided in response to the draft proposal, members felt that the email could also be more assertive. The importance of formalizing ourselves by the language we use was stressed. It was also suggested that the email be tightened up, by, for example, deleting text on session components. There was some discussion as to the use of the word "homophobia" in the training and in public presence (documents etc.) in general. We were reminded that this is a term that makes some people uncomfortable. The email will be copied to L. Harber, who had originally asked us to meet with Burke et al to explore the development of this module. Fillmore will revise; Moon will review and confirm that the text is more assertive.

GLBT Website

Benson reported that the site is still under construction, and asked the group for guidance as to where the site would be on the Web. Handouts were reviewed to show possible placement options, including, for example the Provost's page, <http://www.vcu.edu/provost/>, Provost's committees, <http://www.vcu.edu/provost/committees.html> . Benson expressed concern about the need to drill down several levels to get to specific committee information. Benson also asked for feedback on the look and feel of various sites. There was strong feeling that our site should have the same format, look and feel as other "like" committee sites. Benson will continue to work on the site and will demo it at our April meeting.

Siegel Center

No updates.

State-wide networking

Moon reported that she and Bradford have been working on this. Feedback was solicited on several points - - who should be invited (public and/or private institutions, how many representatives per institution, faculty and/or staff, etc.); event format (one day meeting [6-8 hours], 1 1/2 days, speaker and/or discussion etc.); location (on or off campus); date. It was decided that the event should be one day, and include speakers, opportunities for networking, and time to strategize and plan for the future. Two to three speakers were suggested, including a representative from Equality Virginia (<http://www.equalityvirginia.org/>), someone from the Human Resources Campaign (<http://www.hrc.org/>), and an attorney from GLAAD (<http://www.glaad.org/>) or a local attorney involved in civil rights. It was further decided that the event should be held on campus before the end of June. May 31 was selected as a tentative date. Moon and Bradford were given a strong endorsement to move forward on this. They will be in touch with peer groups from other Virginia institutions and check in as to interest, availability etc. Persons who have contacts at other institutions were asked to forward those names and email addresses to Moon.

Module for the VCU Police

Burnside reported that a date has not yet been set for the spring training; the week of May 19 is targeted. Altman and Miller will work with Burnside on this initiative. Sgt. Walker is our VCU Police contact and is helping put this together.

Virginia Tech Discrimination

With regards to VaTech's recent decisions to relax its antidiscrimination clause - - http://216.239.51.100/cobrand_univ?q=cache:YgpFsujK6HkJ:www.technews.vt.edu/Clip/s/ChronicleArticles/03_13_03.htm+admissions+and+affirmative+action+site:www.technews.vt.edu&hl=en&ie=UTF-8

Bradford noted that she'd spoken to Bob Hollsworth, Director, Center for Public Policy, about whether or not there was anything here for VCU faculty et al to be alarmed about. Bradford reported that Hollsworth indicated there was nothing for us to be alarmed about. Note that VaTech's university rector has called a special meeting of the Board of Visitors for the purpose of considering policy implications of the recent board actions. The meeting will occur Sunday, April 6 at 2 p.m.

(At our March 7 meeting we discussed recent discriminatory actions on the part of Virginia Tech's Board of Visitors (an offer to a new dean's lesbian partner was rescinded. We did not discuss this matter at the March 21 meeting.)

“The Laramie Project”

An announcement was made about the “The Laramie Project,” which runs through March 28.

Additional Announcements

An overview of Social Justice Day, Thursday, March 27, was provided by Buerlein. This year's theme is "Building a Vibrant & Just Community." Most of the events take place from 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM at the Commonwealth Ballrooms at the Commons.

Schedule Reminder

Brown Bag Lunch meetings have been scheduled for the balance of the spring semester, from 12 noon – 1:30, in the James Branch Cabell Library:

April 18

May 16

University Committee on LGBT¹ Issues
Brown Bag Lunch
April 18, 2003

Present: J. Altman, A. Bauer, C. Burnside, W. Fahey, D. Fillmore, M. A. Miller, S. Peterson, S. Watstein
Excused Absence: M. Moon

Agenda items included discussion of the draft memo to Dr. McDavis proposing our establishment as a formal University-wide committee; consideration of news re: Siegel Center issues; review of progress to date on the May 31 state-wide networking meeting; update on training for Human Resources staff; update on module for the VCU Police.

Memo to Dr. McDavis (SBW for MM)

Thanks to Martha Moon for putting a more assertive spin on our memo, and for considerable polish. (You rock, Martha!) Several additional suggestions were made; Watstein will incorporate and the memo will be sent to Dr. McDavis no later than Monday, April 21, 2003 with a copy to the group. (Note: it will probably be sent later this week - - sorry folks!)

Siegel Center (CB)

Chris reported that he'd heard from Allison Wilder (HPER, School of Education) as regards the group's petition to the Siegel Center to extend benefits to partners of GLBT faculty. Initial contact was via email, with a request to call - - Wilder felt the matter would be best explained over the phone, not in an email. Note: officially, we are still awaiting a response, as is Martha.

Wilder reported that the Recreation Sports Advisory Committee had met that week (presumably sometime between April 14-18), and had a "tense" discussion of the proposal. Apparently, powers that be have spoken to VCU's Office of General Counsel and received feedback as to what's legal and what's illegal in the Commonwealth. Council apparently also advised that the Committee toe the line - - hence, no benefits will be extended to non-married partners. This extends or applies to non-married straight partners as well. It was noted that the Committee polled several of our Virginia *sisters* - - JMU, UVA and VaTech. Apparently only JMU extends such benefits to gay spouses. VaTech does extend benefits to partners if there is a joint mortgage, which broadens the scope of eligible persons somewhat. It was stressed to Chris that the focus of the Center is on serving the students, i.e. they are less responsive to (or attuned to) the needs of faculty and staff. Towards this end, it was decided that we should work this to our advantage - - and identify a gay or lesbian student couple (graduate or undergraduate) who would be willing to press this issue. Our challenge is now to find students; it was suggested that we contact the SMSA and go from there. They meet at 10:00 on Wednesdays. Chris will pursue this once we have heard officially from the Advisory Committee.

One note - - to date neither we, nor Martha, have received a written response to our petitions for partner eligibility for benefits. We agreed that having a written response in

¹ See Minutes from March 21, 2003 if you think we are still going under the name/acronym, GLBT!

hand is important, in terms of giving us something concrete to respond to, to use, etc. Chris will follow through on this and request a response. We will then be positioned to fashion a more formal response. Bauer and Fahey volunteered to work on this next response with Chris.

A second note - - Chris reported that Wilder had also informed him that the Committee might be open to a proposal that a separate and new membership category be created. We considered the pros and cons of this, and will probably pursue this tack once we have heard from the Committee.

Bauer reminded us that the Domestic Partner Registry form is a standard legal form these days, and something we might use to our advantage, climate and course of action depending. She agreed to send or link us to a copy of the form.

May 31 State-wide Networking Meeting (SBW for MM)

Martha has requested the Student Commons Commonwealth or Capitol Ballroom for our one-day conference on Saturday May 31; the meeting will run from 8:30 - 4:30. Confirmed speakers are from the LGBT committee of AAUP (Ruth Flower) and Equality Virginia (Dyana mason). Speakers will do a brief presentation about the landscape for LGBT civil rights both nationally and locally. Martha had also contacted Lambda Legal; they will not be able to participate. University representatives will highlight any issues they are confronting at their campuses. They will also discuss the status of domestic partner benefits (or lack thereof) at their institutions, and speak to how the conservative laws in the Commonwealth affect our work as front-line faculty, and as scholars and researchers.

The day shapes up as follows: morning of presentations, lunch, open questions and discussions with the speakers present to share with other participants.

Martha would like committee members to send her names of contact persons at the various state universities that they may know in order to invite them. Allison has agreed to send out an invitation on the national LGBT faculty list of which she is a member. No other ideas for publicity surfaced.

The group was very enthusiastic about progress to date on this initiative and fully endorsed work to date. Things are shaping up nicely and we all dutifully marked our calendars, PDAs or whatever! Thumbs up MM!

MM: the group decided not to limit attendance; we'd previously discussed limiting it to 2-3 per university. One suggestion - - we should send a courtesy invitation to both Dr. McDavis and Dr. Trani. It is possible that one of them might want to address the participants as well. We noted that the impetus for this initiative was in fact by way of both senior administrators.

URL's

<http://www.equalityvirginia.org/>

<http://www.aaup.org>

HR Training (DF)

Dorothy shared with the group that an email had been sent (April 15) to Cathleen Burke (and copied to L. Harber) from she and SBW re: LGBT sensitivity training. The email

draft distributed to the group on March 21 had been revised as per the group's suggestions. Dorothy will forward to the group.

VCU Police Training (CB)

Chris has spoken with Sgt. Walker. Training is scheduled for May 22, 2003. J. Altman, D. Benson, C. Burnside, M. A. Miller are working on this. Allison suggested looking at a training model from Outfront Minnesota - - real life scenarios are used in this model.

URLs

<http://www.outfrontminnesota.org/>

GLBT Website development

D. Benson was absent; no update. We believe the question of our status is holding up further development, however, i.e. where we are positioned organizationally will impact our location on the Web etc. Sarah will follow up with David.

University Committee on LGBT² Issues
Brown Bag Lunch
May 16, 2003

Present: J. Altman, R. Buehler, C. Burnside, W. Fahey, D. Fillmore, M. A. Miller, M. Moon, B. Munjas, S. Watstein

Agenda items included discussion of the letter to Dr. McDavis proposing our establishment as a formal University-wide committee; consideration of news re: Siegel Center issues; review of progress to date on the May 31 state-wide networking meeting; update on training for Human Resources staff; update on module for the VCU Police; consideration of passing the baton and the group's summer meeting schedule; and the Web pages.

Memo to Dr. McDavis (SBW)

Watstein reported that the group's proposal to be officially recognized as a University-wide committee had been hand delivered to Dr. McDavis on May 5, 2003.

Siegel Center (CB)

Chris reported that formal response to the group's petition to the Siegel Center to extend benefits to partners of GLBT faculty had been received. The response was negative, and the group reviewed the letter and agreed that the matter should be brought to the attention of those attending the May 31 Summit. We decided to hold off writing a letter of response, expressing our disappointment, until after the Summit. Watstein will bring copies of the letter to the Summit.

Watstein also noted that Dr. McDavis had spoken to this issue, and referenced an email from the Provost (May 6, 2003) in which he states "Without commenting on the handling of your request, let me remind you that this and other requests would receive a better (and perhaps faster) hearing if your organization/committee were formally recognized within the University community. I encourage you to take the necessary steps to try to become formally recognized as an organization/committee at VCU."

Contacting *The Chronicle of Higher Education* was also considered; Watstein agreed to make initial inquiries.

May 31 State-wide Networking Meeting (MM)

Moon provided details as to Summit publicity to date, Summit location (the VCU Community Center), time (9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.) participants (VCU representation and others), speakers (Martin Snyder from AAUP and Dyana Mason from Equality Virginia), organization (structure of the morning and afternoon sessions), and logistics (parking, food, use of flip charts etc.). Enthusiasm about this initiative remains high.

HR Training (DF)

Dorothy updated the group as to the latest meeting with Cathleen Burke and Karen Fields re: the email sent (April 15) to Cathleen Burke (and copied to L. Harber) from her and SBW re: LGBT sensitivity training. Training is now back on track, conceptually, with LGBT issues front and center; target training dates are the last two weeks in October.

² See Minutes from March 21, 2003 if you forgot we are no longer GLBT!

Approximately 15 people from Human Resources will attend two different sessions. A training outline has been developed, and has met with approval from Human Resources; Dorothy and Sarah are working on case studies now. The sessions will start with a case study, include a discussion of cultural programming, a small group exercise, and another set of case studies, and conclude with reflections. The discussion of cultural programming will include consideration of heterosexism and homophobia.

VCU Police Training (CB)

Chris reminded the group that training is scheduled for May 22, 2003 from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon. J. Altman, D. Benson, C. Burnside, M. A. Miller are working on this. Chris has been working with SMSA in an effort to get students involved; no progress on this aspect to date.

GLBT Website development

D. Benson was absent; no update. Watstein noted that the group's status ultimately determines where its Web site will reside. Benson has communicated with Kelly Roach who handles the Provost's Web site; she points out that we need Dr. McDavis' permission to attach to his Web site. Benson reported (email dated May 7, 2003) that he is working on a mock up for us to review, but that progress is hampered by the fact that he doesn't have access to the template and is left to try and recreate it.

Passing the Baton

Chris and Sarah noted the importance of passing the baton (group vitality, opportunities for leadership, etc.) and also noted that the Co-Chair role might evolve very differently if indeed the group is formally constituted as a University-wide Committee as is currently proposed. We decided to "hold" on further discussion of this until we have word back as to the group's future status.

Summer Meetings

We got as far as scheduling the June 6, 2003 Brown Bag Lunch.

University Committee on LGBT³ Issues
Brown Bag Lunch
June 6, 2003

Present: C. Andrews, J. Altman, A. Bauer, D. Benson, J. Bradford, M. Brown, R. Buehler, C. Burnside, D. Fillmore, M. A. Miller, B. Munjas, S. Watstein
Excused Absences: W. Fahey, M. Moon

Agenda items included discussion of the May 31 Summit, continued discussion of our proposal to Dr. McDavis; continued discussion of the Siegel Center matter; recap of May 22 training for the VCU Police; and discussion of our Web site. We also discussed new projects, the fall Welcome Reception, and our next meeting.

May 31 State-wide Networking Meeting

Several members present reported on the Summit - - J. Altman, D. Benson, J. Bradford, D. Fillmore, and S. Watstein. Interest in continued coalition building (both intra-campus - - with student groups etc. and inter-campus, with our Commonwealth GLBT colleagues) was high. Dyana Mason's model for prioritizing projects and approaching and working through issues was discussed; however many members noted that they had not had ample chance to review Summit notes in advance of the group's meeting. The group decided to discuss the model in more detail at our July meeting. We also decided to consider approaching one or two of our front-burner issues, such as Siegel Center membership, through this approach. The group expressed appreciation to M. Moon and others for taking notes and promptly synthesizing these notes for the Committee.

Several discussion threads came up during the reports of the Summit. Most notable is interest in working with students to further empower ourselves and strengthen the GLBT position within the University in general. Specific mention was made by A. Bauer of USSA's LGBT Student Empowerment Project and by J. Bradford of NGLTF's Creating Change conference, which is in Miami this year and which, includes a track on advocacy. A question was raised as to whether any VCU students would be attending; apparently scholarships are available.

Memo to Dr. McDavis

On May 30, an email was sent by Co-Chair Burnside to the group noting that our proposal to be officially recognized as a University-wide committee had been rejected as written by Dr. Trani. Our proposal and its demise were reviewed in detail at the Summit. We discussed the pros and cons of alternative scenarios proposed by Dr. McDavis: being constituted as an association, similar to the Black Educators' Association; being set up as an official subcommittee of the Equity and Diversity Committee; and continuing as an illegitimate group. It was agreed that above all we need a strategic plan for our group. It was also agreed that we should work on more than one approach simultaneously, that there was value in pursuing visibility through a variety of means. C. Burnside and S. Watstein will send a short memo for the record to Dr. Trani noting our disappointment in the outcome of this request. The letter will be copied to Dr. McDavis and S. A. Messmer.

Siegel Center

³ See Minutes from March 21, 2003 if you forgot we are no longer GLBT!

In light of the fact that the group's petition to the Siegel Center to extend benefits to partners of GLBT faculty has been turned down, we decided to move to higher ground - - and raise the issue of partner membership (heterosexual and homosexual) in general. The importance of campus allies was acknowledged, and we discussed how to recruit such allies. Two other action steps were supported - - first, M. Miller and her husband will attempt to join, without their marriage certificate. Second, J. Bradford and C. Burnside agreed to meet with S. Boling privately to ascertain her personal feelings about the issue. Finally, the group agreed to frame this problem within the context of the model Dyana Mason presented at the Summit; we will outline this at the July meeting.

The matter was brought to the attention of those attending the May 31 Summit. C. Burnside and S. Watstein had decided to hold off writing a letter of response, expressing the group's disappointment, until after the Summit. They will now proceed to write this letter.

Contacting *The Chronicle of Higher Education* has not yet been done. (Perhaps we should table until we frame the problem as proposed at our July meeting?); S. Watstein had agreed to make initial inquiries.

VCU Police Training

C. Burnside reported that training for a group of VCU Police Supervisors/Administrators took place on May 22, 2003 from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon. J. Altman, D. Benson, C. Burnside, and M. A. Miller represented the group, along with one student from SMSA. C. Burnside characterized the group as "tame" and noted that many appeared to have heard this "schtick" before. It was noted that Security could also benefit from such a session, and the difficulties of working with this population were acknowledged.

HR Training

This was not on the agenda, but D. Fillmore and S. Watstein noted that training is scheduled for October and fielded questions about session orientation, i.e. had the LGBT emphasis been diluted, as had been seemingly suggested by Human Resources' C. Burke. D. Fillmore and S. Watstein reported that the LGBT emphasis was alive and well. They are working on case studies now.

GLBT Website development

Considerable discussion of our Web site included consideration of University Web politics (University funded resources etc.) and guidelines, site placement, and group affiliation (which at VCU determines site placement). Our site remains under construction, courtesy of D. Benson. Given Dr. Trani's rejection of our proposal, and our ongoing up-in-the-air status, D. Benson has dropped the idea of fitting our site into the template of the Provost's office. He will continue to work on mock-ups of the site. J. Altman agreed to contact her department re hosting the site. Logical VCU "hosts," given the group's *raison d'être*, are Counseling and Social Work.

New Projects

Several ideas were raised: a VCU GLBT resource center (In light of the education component of our mission etc.), further research on VCU student demographics (how many LGBT students are there anyway?), ways to foster closer alliance between Safe

Zone and our group, and development of a GLBT alumni network. Thanks to J. Altman for many of these fine suggestions!

J. Bradford noted work L. Safford has done to date on the development of sexual minority resource centers. J. Bradford also offered to provide friendly space for such a center, and noted that in fact the Survey Lab has such a de facto center on site now. Bradford also offered to help with the VCU profile survey. The hour was late and the group agreed to table more in depth discussion of these suggestions for future directions until its July meeting. Note that J. Altman, A. Bauer, J. Bradford, L. Safford, and S. Watstein may meet (or confer electronically) to discuss resource center possibilities.

Announcements

S. Watstein noted that Equality Virginia is planning a press conference for the day that the Supreme Court decision on the sodomy law is returned. The event is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. on the day of the decision at the Belltower in Capital Square.

Check out www.equalityvirginia.org

C. Burnside noted that he has a show in the fall, September 5 and 6, and 12 and 13, at the Grace Street Theatre.

July Meeting

The next meeting will be Friday July 18, 2003. Discussion will include consideration of the Mason model; discussion of new projects; discussion of the Welcome Reception.

MINUTES – October 17, 2003

University Committee on Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Issues

Attending – Jan Altman, Randi Buerlein, Chris Burnside, Marianne Miller, Martha Moon, Barbara Munjas, Tracey Van Enan

RESPONSE TO DR. TRANI

- CB read parts of Sarah/Chris response to Dr. Trani's decision and Dr. Trani's letter back. Discussion centered around whether the committee should remain independent or take Dr. Trani's suggestion that we pursue the same organizational status that the Black Education Association holds at VCU and that we should pursue subcommittee status with the Committee on Equity and Diversity.
- Comments included:
 - “Sensitivity of the times” was not a positive reason for rejecting our proposal.
 - Who decides what constitutes bad press?
 - His response/decision seemed to be about invisibility which is the very reason we sought the more formal status so we wouldn't be INVISIBLE.
 - If we don't follow his suggestion we can still create change from the outside, but we might be able to create more change by working from the inside.
 - There are dangers to being outside the system. You can lose your power.
- Martha suggested that we meet informally with Velma about the history of our beginnings with “formal status”-“Informal status” in mind. Maybe we are/were formal already.
- Consensus was that we take Dr. Trani's advise and respond to him. It was noted that we can be visible in other ways.

WELCOME RECEPTION

- It was decided that the Welcome Reception will be held Tuesday November 11, 5:30 – 7:30 . The following duties were taken on:
 - Martha will talk to McKenna about door prizes & flowers.
 - Jan will organize food & committee will contribute food.
 - Martha will create flyer and send out to us so we can email them out AND copy and post.
 - Chris will look for space and book it.
 - Chris & Randi will do set up before the event.
 - Randi will provide plates, cups, napkins, & plastic ware.
- Students, faculty, staff, & allies will be invited to the Reception.

- Chris & Sarah will ask either Dr. McDavis OR Dr. Trani to speak.
- Also we should extend an invitation to Micah McCreary.

COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

- Chris & Sarah have agreed to take on Co-Chairs roles again but have announced that this is their last year in that role.
- Everyone else should be thinking about the possibilities.

MICAH MCCREARY

- Sarah & Chris will attend Strategic Planning Meeting called by BEA on Oct 21st
- Invitation to attend was extended by Micah McCreary, the Vice Provost for Diversity

HR SENSITIVITY TRAINING

- Dorothy & Sarah will be presenting two 3 hour modules on Oct 21 & 28 as a part of HR Sensitivity Training.
- Human Resources is mandated to attend.

WEBSITE

- Website issue was tabled until we find out where we might end up in the VCU Organizational scheme of things.
- We wish David Benson a speedy recovery.

SMSA

- Committee agreed that we should extend out to SMSA. Chris will get SMSA President's email to Martha.
- We should make sure we invite them to the Reception as well

NEXT MEETING

- The next meeting is Friday November 21st at noon.