



NEWS ABOUT THE
DIVERSITY MOVEMENT AT
WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

Fall 2012 vol. 11 no. 1

diversity! WORKS!



As we begin to settle into the rhythm of the 2012 academic year, we should feel confident we are part of one of the finest institutions in the region, if not this nation.

Weber State University consistently is referenced across the country for not only being a good financial investment for students but also for its quality students, alumni and faculty who contribute significantly in many areas. The contributions are due largely to the consistency in which we pay rigorous attention to our mission and vision. WSU is known for its forward-thinking educational programs that foster enlightenment and growth among students.

Inspired by our core values, the WSU Office of the Assistant to the President for Diversity, its planning team and allies are set to present the 14th Annual Diversity Conference Oct. 4-5. This year's theme highlights the issues, challenges and concerns faced by members of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community. Faced with marginalization and reports of emotional and physical abuse (in some cases resulting in suicide) throughout our community, the committee was compelled to convey to our citizens that WSU remains an open, supportive, accessible and safe environment for *all* of our learners. Our goal is not to promote any one agenda, rather it is to educate and foster awareness and meaningful dialogue throughout our community both on and off campus.

I invite all of you to extend this opportunity to your students and colleagues. All events are free, and the public is welcome.

Forrest Crawford,
Assistant to the President For Diversity

Honesty, Kindness Improve Living, Learning



Just a little more than one year ago, CNN news anchor **Don Lemon** published *Transparent*, his memoir that discusses homophobia, racism and "colorism," a term used to describe prejudice based on skin tone. At the same time he revealed to the

New York Times that he was gay.

Although he worried about being shunned, Lemon found that coming out as a gay man has improved his life. "It helps so much personally," he told *Entertainment Weekly*. "Whatever negatives it may have on my career has been far supplanted by what personal autonomy I've gained and confidence it has built. I think any time you're true to yourself and open up, it can only help you."

"I think if I had seen more people like me who are out and proud, it wouldn't have taken me 45 years to say it, to walk in the truth." - Don Lemon

Now Lemon will share his story with a Weber State University audience as the keynote speaker at the 14th Annual Diversity Conference. His presentation is scheduled Oct. 5 at 8:30 a.m. in the Shepherd Union Ballrooms.

This year's theme, "Changing the Conversation," is designed to explore real and potential change in attitudes and behavior. Each session will tackle difficult conversations about diversity, particularly sexual orientation and identity. The conference seeks to promote open-mindedness and celebrate diversity

and inclusivity within the university and the community.

The annual two-day conference begins with an opening session at WSU Davis, Oct. 4 at 6:30 p.m. **David Parker**, the associate director



of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Center for Community of Caring Institute at the University of Utah, will share his message of caring, respect, responsibility, trust and family.

Parker is the author of a 32-book series for children, *The Best Me I Can Be*. He is also a nationally known educator, motivator and entertainer who has dedicated his career to creating an enriched and safe school climate for learning.

At the Diversity Conference he will focus on being an ally — someone who supports equal civil rights and challenges homophobia — and will discuss how allies are critical to changing the conversation in reference to members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (LGBTQ) community.

A true ally will stop allowing negative comments from family and friends or accepting uninformed opinions as "fact," he said.

"Stop thinking that the only actions to change or improve a situation have to be large and difficult to do," he advised. "Each of us can take every opportunity to shine a light on a positive way of interacting."

Positive interaction creates a community that truly values diversity and is inclusive, equitable and honest.

Lemon told the *New York Times*, "I think if I had seen more people like me who are out and proud, it wouldn't have taken me 45 years to say it, to walk in the truth."

Allison Barlow Hess
University Communications

WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

14TH ANNUAL DIVERSITY CONFERENCE



CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

OCTOBER 4 & 5, 2012

All Events are Free and Open to the Public

THURSDAY, OCT. 4 - WSU DAVIS CAMPUS

6-6:30 p.m.: Opening Reception

6:30-8 p.m. Dr. David Parker,
"Shining a Light: An Allies Perspective"

Brief Remarks: Don Lemon, CNN News

FRIDAY, OCT. 5 - WSU OGDEN CAMPUS, SHEPHERD UNION BALLROOMS

8:30-9:20 a.m.
Conference Keynote-
Don Lemon, CNN News

Concurrent Panel Sessions and Presentations

9:30-10:20 a.m.
Beyond the Division: Religion, Sexual
Identity & Business Part I
Deconstructing Gender
Coming Out: A Conversation

10:30-11:20 a.m.
Beyond the Division: Religion, Sexual
Identity & Business Part II
Sexuality, Racism and Oppression
LGBT Youth in Crisis: Homelessness with
Operation Shine America

11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.
LGBTQ Legal Issues: A Discussion
QPR Training
Town Hall Meeting

12:30-1:20 p.m. Closing keynote
Dr. William Bradshaw "Our LGBTQ
Friends and Family Members: Replacing
Misinformation With Love and
Understanding"

weber.edu/DiversityOffice/conference.html

Diversity Events

OCTOBER

- Oct. 1** **Sessions on the Ledge: Stop the Hate: Domestic Violence Calling**
10 a.m.-2 p.m. (Collecting old cell phones for women's shelter)
Shepherd Union Ledge
- Oct. 2** **Sessions on the Ledge: Poetry Slam Against Violence**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge
- Oct. 8** **Domestic Violence Awareness: Behind Cultural Doors**
11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m. Shepherd Union Room 232
- Oct. 9** **Sessions on the Ledge: Drum Line**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge
- Oct. 11** **National Coming Out Day**
10:30-11:45 a.m. Shepherd Union Room 232
- Oct. 16** **Sessions on the Ledge: Mariachi Band**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge
- Oct. 22** **Sessions on the Ledge: Stop the Hate: Domestic Violence Calling**
10 a.m.-2 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge
International Domestic Violence Issues, A Presentation
12:30 p.m. Shepherd Union Room 232
- Oct. 23** **Sessions on the Ledge: International Drummers**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge
- Oct. 25** **Domestic Violence Education & Self-Defense Class**
10:30-11:45 a.m. Shepherd Union Room 232
- Oct. 29** **Domestic Violence Awareness: Mindy Chamberlin's Story of Survival**
11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m. Shepherd Union Room 232
- Oct. 30** **Sessions on the Ledge: Thriller**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 6** **Sessions on the Ledge: Eagle Dancers**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge
- Nov. 8** **After the Elections: Getting Back to Democracy**
10:30-11:45 a.m. Shepherd Union Room 232
Viewing of "Split: A Divided America," with facilitated discussion
Shepherd Union Room 232

- Nov. 9** **Transgender 101 Workshop**
1:30-3:30 p.m. Shepherd Union Room 232
- Nov. 13** **Sessions on the Ledge: Student Talent**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge
- Nov. 14** **Strange Like Me Workshop**
3-5 p.m. Location TBD
- Nov. 15** **Women and Business: A Diversity Discussion**
10:30-11:45 a.m. Shepherd Union Room 232
- Nov. 16** **Transgender 201 Workshop**
1-4 p.m. Shepherd Union Room 232
- Nov. 20** **Sessions on the Ledge: Student Talent**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge
- Nov. 27** **Sessions on the Ledge: Identity Performance**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge

DECEMBER

- Dec. 3** **STI Education & Awareness for World HIV/AIDS Day**
8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. (Education and free rapid HIV/AIDS testing)
- Dec. 4** **Sessions on the Ledge: Holiday Sing-a-Long**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge
- Dec. 6** **The Angry Crayon Box: A Children's Diversity Workshop**
noon-1 p.m. Shepherd Union Room 232

JANUARY

- Jan. 18** **Gospel Music Festival**
Val A. Browning Center Austad Auditorium
- Jan. 21** **MLK Munch and March with the Ogden NAACP Chapter**
Marshall White Center

FEBRUARY

National African American Month
Observed

MARCH

National Women's History Month
Observed

APRIL

April 4 **MLK Memorial and Annual American Indian Symposium**

LGBTQ: CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

What if you were described as scandalous, immoral, promiscuous, perverted, dangerous, or a destroyer of families? Would you flinch? Would you break down? Would you feel unsafe, unwelcome? Absolutely.

That is why **Mindy Chamberlin** works hard to educate people about the LGBTQ community – a community that she is proud to be part of and involved in as a homosexual. “We must get rid of rumors and false beliefs,” she said.

Or change the conversation, if you will.

“We aren’t just ‘gay,’” explained Chamberlin, the vice president for diversity and unity for the Weber State University Student Association. “We are humans with passions and dreams and hopes. We are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, leaders, teachers, soldiers and students. We must show people the true content of our character.”

WSU’s 2012 14th annual Diversity Conference, with the theme of “LGBTQ: Changing the Conversation,” will promote open-mindedness, celebrate inclusiveness, and offer the opportunity to engage in those sometimes difficult conversations about sexual orientation and identity. Educational in nature, the conference encourages attendees to think critically and take part in the marketplace of ideas.

“Sometimes the easiest questions to answer are the hardest to ask,” said **Adrienne Gillespie**, coordinator for WSU’s Center for Diversity & Unity and professor of women’s studies. “But if we can be open to having a conversation with a positive intent, we can create bridges, we can work together, we can

live together, even if our value systems are different.”

Gillespie says she realizes change happens incrementally and often slowly, but she is confident that change is coming.

“The LGBTQ conversation is different now than it was just a few years ago,

students on college campuses nationwide who have committed suicide.”

Gillespie further explained some of the common fears LGBTQ students have, including being taunted, hurt and ostracized. “Creating a safe environment for these students can be powerful to them,”

Lawrence Helmbrecht-LaPointe, counseling psychologist at WSU’s Counseling and Psychological Services Center, offers the following tips for **creating an inclusive environment**:

1. Use inclusive language. For example, refer to students collectively as having partners versus husbands or wives.
2. Assume students and others in the university community are in a variety of committed relationships, not limited to heterosexual. Use discussion examples that include all relationships.
3. Be deliberate in setting boundaries for an inclusive environment, which leaves no room for homophobic, sexist or racist bias, language or action.

when it wasn’t always openly discussed,” she said. “It can be heard on the national level. It’s about rights, responsibility and access. It’s about religion and business. And for some, changing the conversation is simply having the courage to have one.”

Creating an Inclusive Environment

Unfortunately, one conversation often heard in the LGBTQ community is about bullying. College campuses today are becoming ever more aware of this topic and are working to foster environments that are more welcoming.

“It can be scary being in college,” Chamberlin said. “Because of bullying and discrimination, you hear about LGBTQ

she said. “Students who are connected and engaged do better, they complete their educations, and we need to give them the pieces to reach their potential.”

Amy Hendricks
University Communications

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Send submissions and comments to mailcode 4025, email ahess@weber.edu, or call ext. 7948.

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Changing

the

Conversation

Could

Save

Lives

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Many young people in America suffer because of their sexual orientation. They are kicked out of their homes, bullied and viewed through the eyes of prejudice.

“In 2009, we discovered that 40 percent of homeless youth are LGBT,” said **Cai Noble**, who is the founding director of Operation Shine America, a national organization that raises awareness of homeless youth. “We walked across America for nine months and created Shine, where people come together to provide resources and help.”

Noble is one of a number of presenters scheduled during Friday’s breakout sessions. The speakers will explore the consequence of prejudice and discuss how caring individuals who recognize warning signs can literally save lives.

“LGBTQ individuals, particularly youth, are at especially high risk for suicide,”

“LGBTQ individuals, particularly youth, are at especially high risk for suicide”

Dianna Abel, director, Counseling and Psychological Services

said **Dianna Abel**, director of Weber State University’s Counseling and Psychological Services Center. “Ninety percent of people in suicidal crisis will give some kind of warning, so friends and family members who are aware can recognize the signs and take action to help save a life.”

A critical conversation for an LGBTQ youth is the coming-out conversation.

RC Callahan works as WSU’s Training and Development advisor. While pursuing his Master of Education at WSU, he

researched the LGB student experience of coming out at a public university. Callahan will share some of his research, as well as his own life experiences.

“The process of revealing one’s sexual orientation involves risk for lesbian, gay, and bisexual university students,” Callahan explained. “For these students, academic experiences are altered by the simple act of living authentically. I plan to share personal quotes from the LGB students in my study in order to guide the conversation on how we, as educators, can create inclusive learning environments.”

Joining Callahan will be members of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). A national nonprofit organization, PFLAG celebrates diversity and strives for a world that embraces all people, no matter their sexual orientation or sexual identity.

Friday’s sessions will also discuss the biology of sexuality, the effects of the coming-out process on the family, and the legal rights of LGBTQ members.

Every session of the annual, two-day event is designed to change the conversation: to promote open-mindedness and celebrate diversity and inclusivity within the university and the community.

Kelsy Peterson
University Communications

WSU RESOURCES	
LGBT Resources	801-626-7243 weber.edu/diversity/lgbt.html
Center for Diversity & Unity	801-626-7243 www.weber.edu/diversity
Counseling & Psychological Services Center - Ogden & WSU Davis	801-626-6406 weber.edu/CounselingCenter
Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity	801-626-6239 weber.edu/aaeo
Police	801-626-8925 wsupolice.com
Wildcat Gay-Straight Alliance	facebook.com/wildcat.gsa

COMMUNITY RESOURCES	
OUTreach Resource Center	801-686-4528 ogdenoutreach.org
Utah Pride Center	801-539-8800 utahpridecenter.org/index.php
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays	ogdenpflag.org
Equality Utah	801-355-3479 equalityutah.org
The LGBTQ-Affirmative Psychotherapist Guild of Utah	lgbtqtherapists.com
Northern Utah Coalition	801-393-4153 northernutahcoalition.com