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 45 percent of homeless youth are LGBT,” said Cai Noble, who is the founding director of Operation Shane America, a national organization that raises awareness of homeless youth. “We walked across America for nine months and created Shane, 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,” said Dianna Abel, director, Counseling and Psychological Services Office of the Assistant to the President for Diversity, its planning committee was compelled to convey awareness and meaningful dialogue about the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) community. Faced with marginalization and discrimination, many young people in America are at especially high risk for suicide.”

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. Kelsey Peterson, University Communications

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

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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

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.

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"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.

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Changing the Conversation

Diversity Conference

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Thursdays, Oct. 4 & 5, 2012

Weber State University

14th Annual Diversity Conference

Diversity Events

OCTOBER

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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: 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

Domestic Violence Education & Self-Defense Class 10:30–11:45 a.m. Shepherd Union Room 232

Domestic Violence Awareness: Mindy Chamberlin’s Story of Survival 11:30 a.m.–12:20 p.m. Shepherd Union Room 232

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NOVEMBER

Nov. 6 Sessions on the Ledge: Eagle Dancers noon–1 p.m. Shepherd Union Ledge

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Nov. 14 Strange Like Me Workshop 3 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–10:30 p.m. (Education and free rapid HIV/AIDS testing)

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Dec. 6 The Anxious 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 March 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

Lawrence Helmreich-HaPointe, 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 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 2012-14 annual Diversity Conference, with the theme of “LGBT: Changing the Conversation,” will promote open-mindedness, celebrate inclusivity, and offer the opportunity to engage in those sometimes difficult conversations about sexual orientation and identity. Educationally 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, 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.”

Diversity Works! is published by the Office of University Communications. We welcome story ideas and feedback from faculty, staff and all of our readers. Send submissions and comments to mailcode 4025, email shes@weber.edu, or call ext. 7948.

Editor: Alison Barlow Hess Designer: Emily Caraballo

weber.edu/DiversityOffice/conference.html
**LGBTQ: 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”

**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 Sexuality, Race, and Oppression

11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m. Shepherd Union Room 232

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Newly appointed Counseling and Psychological Services Center Coordinator RC Callahan works as WSU’s Training and Development advisor. While pursuing his Master of Education at WSU, he researched the LGBTQ 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 LGBTQ 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 Parent, 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.

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WSU RESOURCES
- 801-626-7243
- weber.edu/diversity
- iden@weber.edu

COMMUNITY RESOURCES
- OUTreach Resource Center
  - 801-626-4528
  - outreachresourcecenter@weber.edu

- Utah Pride Center
  - 801-539-8800
  - pride@utahpridecenter.org

- Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
  - 801-355-3479
  - info@pflag.org

- Equality Utah
  - 801-355-3479
  - info@utahpridecenter.org

- The LGBTQ-Affirmative Psychotherapist Guild of Utah
  - 801-393-4153

- Northern Utah Coalition
  - 801-393-4153
  - northernutahcoalition.com

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NEWS ABOUT THE DIVERSITY MOVEMENT AT WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

Fri, Oct 5, 2012

Fall 2012 vol. 11 no. 1

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Honesty, Kindness Improve Living, Learning

Just a little more than one year ago, CNN 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.”

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