

## Rally: Awareness activities continue all week

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"We're here to support people coming out," said Chicora Martin, director of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Educational and Support Services Program.

Tara Allred, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Issues Coordinator for the ASUO Women's Center, snapped Polaroid pictures of people walking through the closet door.

Current political and religious climates make it important for the queer community to come out now, Allred said.

"Bigotry and hatred won't stop

until people realize that they know someone in the LGBTQ community and that they're just like everyone else," she said.

Several events, such as a dance and social, will continue through the week.

The events are an opportunity to celebrate being gay, Messerli said.

Messerli, who had no support network when she came out as a freshman, said she hopes to provide support for other people coming out.

"The more people who come out as queer or as allies, the safer and more welcoming it feels," Martin said.

People can be allies of the LGBTQ community by being supportive and

addressing homophobia and discrimination, Martin said.

Student services such as the Women's Center and UO Cultural Forum, came to support the event.

This is the 11th year celebrating National Coming Out Day at the University, Martin said.

Oct. 11 was commemorated as National Coming Out Day after half a million people marched in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 11, 1987, to support lesbian and gay rights.

Contact the crime, health and safety reporter at [kgagnon@dailyemerald.com](mailto:kgagnon@dailyemerald.com)

## Harassment: Campus has support centers

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Crockett, a pre-business administration major, is one of those students.

"There's a lot of resources. You can find any department and report it," he said. "You can go to Oregon Hall, the EMU, the DPS — all over campus."

Gary Welander, one of the WOU professors who was accused of sexual harassment, said that the policy would help teachers who had been wrongfully accused.

"I think what's important is to ensure that a process is followed, and it wasn't followed in any way in (my) case," said Welander.

His accuser settled with the state for \$65,000.

According to an article in the

Statesman Journal in Salem, Welander claimed he had ended a long-term relationship with his accuser in December 2003.

Students disagreed on whether mandatory reporting of relationships protects the school or is an invasion of privacy.

Crockett said he felt the consensual relationship policy is flawed.

"It's their private life, and they shouldn't have to expose that information ... it's none of the University's business to infringe on that," he said.

Nici Grigg, a Japanese major, said that the statute fails to take severity of the offense into account.

"It depends on how serious the situation is, of course," she said.

"If it's something serious, then yeah, it should be reported. But if it's just something trivial, then no, it doesn't need to be reported."

Saunders said requiring professors to report student relationships was not a privacy issue but a legal one.

"The campus is vulnerable and responsible if there is a case of sexual harassment. If a consensual relationship goes bad and one member feels the other member is harassing them and sues the university system, we are responsible for that," Saunders said.

Contact the higher education reporter at [kbrown@dailyemerald.com](mailto:kbrown@dailyemerald.com)

## Online site helps heterosexual allies support gay rights

One University graduate student, motivated by a desire for equal rights, spreads support on the Web

BY BRITNI MCCLENAHAN  
NEWS REPORTER

University graduate student Jason Harlacher, who is heterosexual, said he felt awkward at gay pride parades but wanted to do something to show his support. His solution: [www.straightsupport.org](http://www.straightsupport.org).

"I started the Web site after finding belief in God," Harlacher said. "I wanted to take action so people would treat people better. With believing in Christ, the next step you want to take is to live your life by his teaching, to love your neighbor and not judge others, to treat others with love and respect. The Web site is a manifestation of that."

Harlacher's site is a place for people to hold forums and read material promoting equality, tolerance and peace. Originally dedicated as an outlet for the heterosexual community to show support for gay rights, the Web site sells "Equality" wristbands for \$2 to benefit AIDS research. The site is now dedicated to promoting equality regardless of race, religion, sexuality, gender or nationality.

Students who want to show support for gay rights can find opportunities with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Alliance; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-

gender Educational and Support Services Program; ASUO Women's Center; and OUTLAWS: Lesbian and Gay Law Students Association.

Tara Allred, LGBTQ Issues Coordinator at the Women's Center, works with other groups on campus to educate and train students on how they can help show support for the LGBTQ community.

"There's so much bigotry on campus," Allred said. "Sometimes it's as simple as saying, 'I'm not okay with that' when you hear someone calling another person a fag."

Allred, a senior women's and gender studies major, said Queer Ally Coalition training, a session put on by the LGBTESSP, is a great place to start.

"It's a two- to three-hour training session to teach people about the queer community as a culture," Allred said. "It's important to tell people about the incredible moments in history that are defining the community and changing policies. There's nothing more supportive than seeing the straight community at a gay event."

Contact the people, culture, faith reporter at [bmcclehan@dailyemerald.com](mailto:bmcclehan@dailyemerald.com)

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