

Network Support

Rachael Parker is a trans woman who speaks from experience when describing the value of an employee group for sexual minorities.

During her seven-year tenure as a design engineer at Intel, she has experienced what it is like to transition from male to female on the job. Although the process required a steep learning curve for both employer and employee, Parker quickly found she could rely on the support network provided by Intel Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender Employees.

Parker continues as a member of the Portland chapter, which was Intel's original queer employee group formed nearly a decade ago. After expanding to other sites, the company officially chartered the faction in 1995, with the directive of making sexual minority employees feel accepted and part of the Intel community.

Rather than focus on championing change in corporate policies, the group concentrates on developing a sense of community pride. "The things that we do the most are education within the company, networking and support," says Parker, now president of the corporatewide organization.

The group helps employees feel safe about



Rachael Parker relied on the support network provided by Intel Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender Employees during her transition

being out at work by serving as a visible information source for both management and workers. For example, members offer diversity presentations, maintain bulletin boards and represent Intel in community events.

The company sees the group as helping ensure the most productive environment for all

employees. Parker says, "We provide a forum for Intel employees to reflect Intel's commitment to equality, diversity and making Intel a great place to work." ☐

For more information e-mail Rachael Parker at iglobeprez@iglobe.intel.com.



Brian Hunter has coordinated OHSU's sexual minorities employee group since 1999

being out at work by serving as a visible information source for both management and workers. For example, members offer diversity presentations, maintain bulletin boards and represent Intel in community events.

The company sees the group as helping ensure the most productive environment for all

employees. Parker says, "We provide a forum for Intel employees to reflect Intel's commitment to equality, diversity and making Intel a great place to work." ☐

For more information e-mail Rachael Parker at iglobeprez@iglobe.intel.com.

Climbing the Hill

Like other educational institutions, Oregon Health Sciences University's large population is a transient one. With many employees and students coming and going on "Pill Hill," reliable access to community information has been the major benefit of its developing gay, lesbian, bi and trans alliance. And, for OHSU longtimers, the group offers an ongoing sense of camaraderie.

"It is important to have this resource for incoming students to get advice on OHSU from a source they feel comfortable with," says Brian Hunter, senior research assistant at Vollum Institute.

He has been coordinator of OHSU's sexual minorities employee group since 1999 but says it only recently received help from the university. Hunter especially praises support from the school of nursing and the department of diversity and multicultural affairs. Current activities include establishing an online presence so employees and students alike can access information via e-mail and a forthcoming Web site.

"The basic problem is time and participation—we have little of each," acknowledges Hunter, who believes the Web site and regular events will help the organization grow. "OHSU is a great place and, for the most part, a very accepting place to work. I know that, in time, we will become a larger voice in the [sexual minorities] community." ☐

For more information e-mail Brian Hunter at glbta@ohsu.edu.

Banking on Diversity

Oregonians Against Discrimination Luncheon honors four financial institutions

Hundreds of business leaders and other fair-minded citizens are expected to attend Basic Rights Oregon's ninth annual Oregonians Against Discrimination Luncheon, showing support for protecting and advancing civil rights of sexual minority employees and workplaces statewide.

As in the past, the gathering will recognize leaders in workplace equality. This year's honorees include four major financial institutions: Bank of America, U.S. Bank, Washington Mutual and Wells Fargo.

"Many people think of the banking industry as conservative, both in style and in values," says Roey Thorpe, BRO executive director. "But in Oregon, we are fortunate to be the home to



Roey Thorpe

these banks that are committed to nondiscrimination in their employment policies and in offering benefits to domestic partners of their employees. They know, as do over 400 other Oregon businesses, that recognizing the diversity of their workplaces is not only the right thing to do, but it's a smart business strategy."

The luncheon serves as both a major networking opportunity and a significant fund-raiser for the Basic Rights Education Fund, which supports the Fair Workplace Project. The goal is to raise \$35,000, and the Gill Foundation will provide matching funds, up to \$10,000, for any new donor or increase in donation.

"LGBT rights haven't waned just because the economy has. We really do need everyone to step forward to fight for workplace equality," says CM Hall, BRO development director. "Although we work for lesbian, gay, bi and trans rights, we have many straight supporters as well as gay supporters. So this is a luncheon that definitely embraces corporate culture that tends to be heterosexual, as well as the LGBT employers, small-business owners and employees."

Tom Unger, vice president and regional public relations manager of Wells Fargo, will offer the keynote address. Singer and Oregon native Beth Baker will entertain. Honorary co-chairs of this year's event are Joe D'Alessandro, president of the Portland Oregon Visitors Association, and Antoinette Laferriere, president of the Portland Area Business Association and Griffon Financial Group. ☐

The OREGONIANS AGAINST DISCRIMINATION LUNCHEON will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 10 at the Hilton Hotel, 921 S.W. Sixth Ave. American Sign Language interpretation is available. Tickets are \$50 a person, \$20 of which is tax-deductible. For reservations call 503-222-6151.