

COMMUNITY COLLEGES ENCOUNTER BIGOTRY

An employee at Mt. Hood Community College reports a great deal of anti-gay activity on the Gresham campus this month.

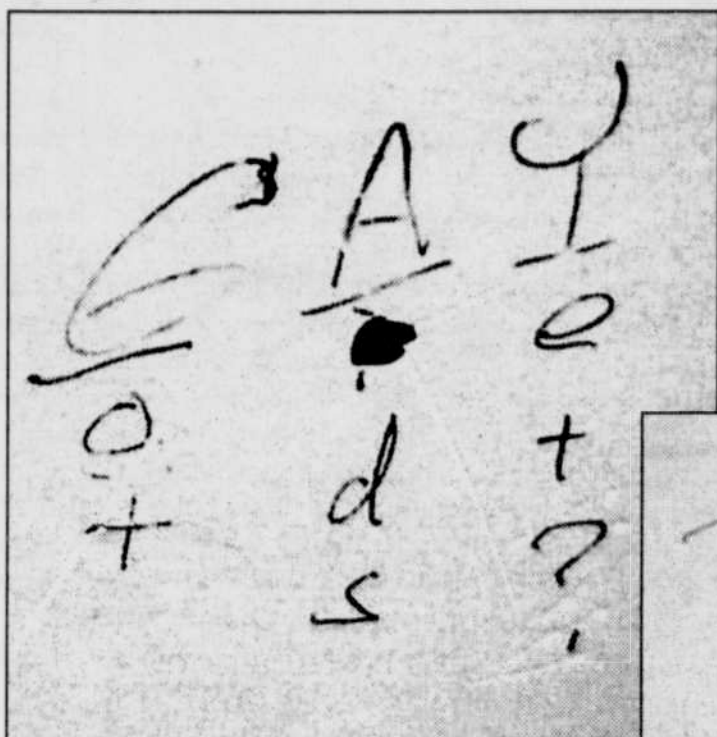
Graffiti was found scrawled in a men's bathroom stall April 2, says Rebecca J. Kenney, Queers & Allies Student Organization co-adviser. The statements: "G.A.Y.: Got AIDS Yet?" and "This school is full of fags. Kill 'em all."

"This moves beyond 'kids will be kids,'" says Kenney, who works as director of continuing education. "Our students' morale, self-esteem, self-confidence, personal safety and potentially even their lives are at stake."

According to Kenney, the gay student who discovered the graffiti "was shaking" the entire time he was in the bathroom. She says that campus security was notified and that custodians reacted immediately to remove the hate language.

"Most likely hundreds of students saw this horrible message and responded either in fear, in agreement or with apathy," Kenney wrote in an e-mail to colleagues. "We must put our heads together and find a way to positively, and immediately, galvanize efforts to stop this behavior on our campus."

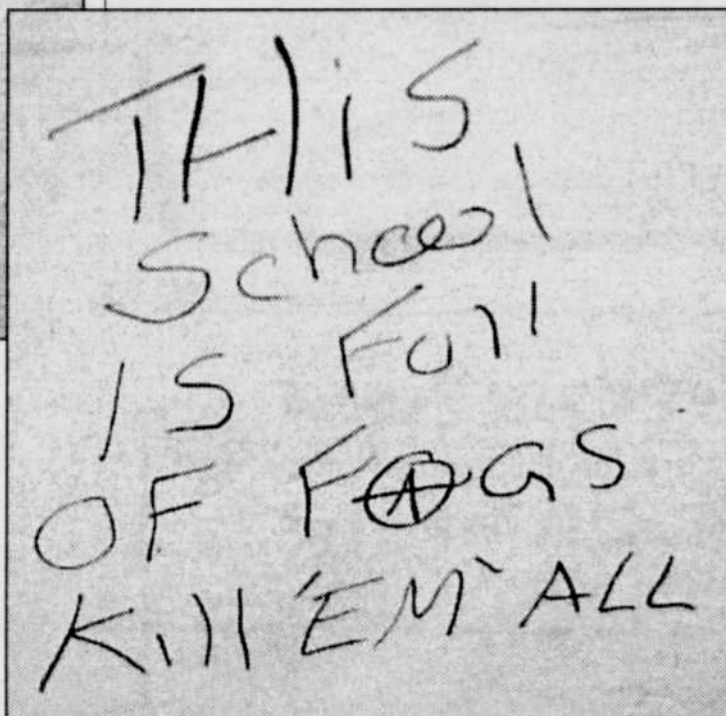
Another incident occurred April 10 in response to the Day of Silence Project, a nationwide protest of anti-gay harassment in schools. Kenney says two men walked into the campus dining room wearing black sweatshirts emblazoned with the word "Homo" and a slash through it as well as the message "Homos repent! Trust Jesus."



PHOTOS BY JANE SABLON

Campus, according to psychology major Jennifer Peters, who was disappointed that her fellow students said nothing about their presence for the first 20 minutes. "They felt like they had support from the people in the cafeteria," she told *Just Out*.

But in another sign of solidarity, Peters says that students began yelling, "Get them out!" and that the men eventually left. "All it took was for people to say something, and they were gone."



Anti-gay graffiti was found scrawled in a men's bathroom stall April 2 at Mt. Hood Community College

But this led to an impromptu, silent counterprotest in which pro-gay bystanders held signs with the words "Hate Monger" and a slash through them. "By demonstrating such poise, courage and intelligence, our MHCC students have well represented this fine college and all who come here each day for an equitable education within a safe environment free of bias, bigotry, harassment and hate," Kenney says.

As security guards escorted the men off campus, the sexual minority supporters followed close behind. "I thought you faggots were going to be silent today," Kenney heard one of the bigots say.

The two men also were spotted the same day at Portland Community College's Sylvania

KROEKER MEETS WITH ROUNDTABLE

Portland Police Chief Mark Kroeker met April 9 with the Sexual Minorities

Roundtable to discuss an alleged anti-gay assault on a straight man by two officers Jan. 24. He reiterated that detectives are taking the matter seriously.

Assistant Chief Andrew Kirkland, who is overseeing both the internal and the criminal investigation, estimated prosecutors will receive details about the case within two to three weeks. He said he has met with the FBI on several occasions to discuss the matter as well as the long delay before supervisors took any action.

"I don't want there to be any doubt that we've not dotted every 'i' and crossed every 't' in this, and that's why we've been extremely thorough," Kirkland said. "It's much broader than just the assault itself; it's everything that happened afterwards."

ROUNDTABLE LIAISON QUILTS

Assistant Chief Mark Paresi, the Portland Police Bureau's liaison to the Sexual Minorities Roundtable, announced April 15 he will be chief of the North Las Vegas Police Department. The 28-year veteran will join the Nevada force June 1.

"Paresi is a remarkable leader with a commitment to...forming partnerships with the sexual minorities community," says Chief Mark Kroeker, who also soon might skip town for the head post in Los Angeles. "Though this is a great loss to the Portland Police Bureau, I'm confident he built a solid foundation for others to follow."

Roundtable co-chairman Norm Costa says Paresi has been a strong supporter of sexual

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