

out standing Diva Preaches Convergence

Bolivia Carmichaels is often found performing and hosting at C.C. Slaughters. Also known as Daniel Elliott, she was the hostess of this year's Red Dress Party and is the force behind many events both fun and fund raising. Carmichaels took time to speak with *Just Out* in an empty room at Slaughters, the popular nightclub in Old Town. She can be seen on any given Sunday at 8 p.m. for Super Star Divas.

My name is Bolivia Carmichaels.

I am known as an entertainer, someone who hosts parties and organizes events.

My cause is bringing communities together and keeping them together. Not just the LGBTQ communities but straight communities as well—bring them together without judgment. Everyone should be encouraged to participate. Straight people should be able to go to Silverado, and LGBTQ people should be able to go to the Egyptian Room without judgment or being made to feel uncomfortable. Even the gay bars here should be working together. We should be trying to make our audience bigger. It shouldn't be Dykes on Bikes versus PFLAG or the Bears versus straight people. We're one big community. We should be supporting one another.

I am 33 years old. I feel 33 years old. I am done with my 20s; I wouldn't go back. I should be 33. I don't want to be 29 for the sixth time.

My childhood ambition was to be a star. I think back to my middle school years and I wasn't popular, part of the elite crowd. I always felt bad and empathized with the kids getting picked on, the overweight kids, the ones with acne. I just thought that wasn't fair, so I became their friend.

My first same-sex crush was on my seventh-grade best friend. I can't tell you his name, but we continued being friends through high school, and in 10th grade we became intimate. Five years later he broke it off, said he wanted a wife and kids. I still think about him from time to time. I wish that he could have been comfortable with his sexuality.

I like to spend my down time by the river, on the beach or swimming. I like water a lot. I find it very calming.

My proudest moment was last December, organizing Family Feud Bar Wars, where different bars compete playing Family Feud. It has been



Bolivia Carmichaels likes to collaborate.

a really popular event, and we're doing it again now. Really, my most recent event will be my proudest moment. Every time I have a part in something successful, I feel really proud.

My biggest challenge is that thing inside me that stops me from contacting big, important people to come to my events, people like City Commissioner Sam Adams. I would love to get people like that to come to some of the events I organize. It's a fear of rejection, really.

A perfect day in Portland would be for it to be sunny outside. Seriously, though, a picnic or a good show, spending time with friends laughing would be pretty close to perfect. I also really like going for long drives and getting lost. Going down different streets, streets I've never been on looking at houses and yards, exploring the city.

My first job was when I was 14 with the Boys and Girls Club. I think I was making \$4.25 an hour. We were picking up trash on Columbia Boulevard behind the Arby's; it was with a bunch of bad kids who weren't getting paid to be there.

My vice is smoking. I quit three days ago, so I guess I can't use that anymore. My phone would be another vice, I think. I have to be able to get in contact with anyone all the time. I can't be incommunicado.

My inspiration is Bettie Midler. She wanted to make it and faced so much opposition. Her father did not want her to be a performer. She started at the absolute bottom. She played bathhouses, and there are no rungs lower than that. I figure if she can do it, then maybe I can, too.

The last queer event I attended was at City Hall for the Night of Noise. I did a half-hour show in a hallway. I had a ball. I also hosted Red Dress a couple weeks ago.

My highest hope for the cause is that one day the LGBTQ community can come together—that the straight community can accept us and for us to accept them. I hope that one day we, as a whole, can accept one another... blacks, whites, gays, straights, all people.... If we all try to make it a little better for someone else and they in turn make it better for someone, then the world would look like a lot nicer place. jo

—Alex Baldino

just asking

Just Out asked supporters of the domestic partnership bill at the Oregon Capitol: "You've just won your rights. What are you going to do now?"



ANNETTE HAIDER
Mental Health Supervising
Registered Nurse and Mom

"We're going to get to the courthouse, sign our papers and have a ceremony with all our friends and family. They can keep their marriage. We'll take domestic partnerships. It means the same to us."



AMY RUIZ
The Portland Mercury News
Editor

"I guess we're going to get signed up. We just got married in Vancouver [British Columbia], but we're looking forward to getting rights in our home state."



TRAVIS PRINSLOW
Basic Rights Oregon Volunteer

"I'm going to prepare to fight the next fight. We know these bills will be referred to a popular vote, so now it's time to fight to keep the rights we just won."



MELANIE ALTARAS
Youth Activist

"Finish high school and try to convince all my buddies to move here."

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