

three phases for the site. In the coming year, the foundation intends to expand it to include more interactive and cutting-edge elements such as blogging, moderated chats, an expanded "ask the experts" section and individual youth spaces.

NEW HAMPSHIRE Study Suggests Gay Men Earn Less

Gay men working in management and traditional blue-collar, male-dominated jobs make less than straight men because they are discriminated against by their employers, according to research released Oct. 24 by University of New Hampshire's Whittemore School of Business and Economics.

Lesbians, however, do not experience similar discrimination in the labor market, according to Bruce Elmslie, professor of economics, and co-author Edinaldo Tebaldi, former assistant professor of economics at University of New Hampshire, now at Bryant University. Their research appears in *The Journal of Labor Research* in the article "Sexual Orientation and Labor Market Discrimination."

According to the authors, gay men who live together earn 23 percent less than married men and 9 percent less than unmarried heterosexual men who live with a woman. Discrimination is most pronounced in management and blue-collar, male-dominated occupations such as building and grounds cleaning and maintenance, construction and extraction, and production.

The authors also found that lesbians are not discriminated against when compared with heterosexual women. They conclude that while negative attitudes toward lesbians could affect them, lesbians might benefit from the perception that they are more career-focused and less likely to leave the labor market to raise children than heterosexual women. According to their study, 18.1 percent of lesbians have children, compared with 49.4 percent of straight women.

"Employers could reasonably infer that a lesbian applicant or current employee will have a stronger attachment to the labor force than will a heterosexual woman," the authors said.

The authors cite a number of possible factors as to why gay men experience labor discrimination and lower wages in certain industries. There is strong evidence indicating discrimination is tied to employer and employee bias.

"Employers may disapprove of gay lifestyles and act on this bias in making hiring decisions," the authors said. Employers also may discriminate against gay men in response to the desires of the majority of employees. If employers consider mixing heterosexual and homosexual employees distracting and detrimental to productivity, the authors said the employers might consider it profitable to discriminate.

In this study, the authors analyzed labor and wage information from more than 91,000 heterosexual and homosexual couples collected by the U.S. Census March 2004 Current Population survey.

NORTH CAROLINA Gay Candidate Enters Race

A gay candidate has emerged to challenge U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C.

Democrat Jim Neal discussed his sexual orientation Oct. 22 in an online interview with the liberal blog Blue NC. The investment banker says he is out in his personal life.

Neal is seeking to become the second openly



"Ex-gay" preacher Donnie McClurkin toured with Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama to help him gain the conservative black vote.

gay Senate nominee of a major political party in U.S. history. The first was Ed Flanagan, who unsuccessfully ran as the Democratic Senate nominee in Vermont in 2000, losing to then-Republican Jim Jeffords.

Neal is the only Democrat running for Dole's seat.

Gays and lesbians have been gaining visible positions in North Carolina leadership since Julia Boseman of Wilmington became the first openly gay person elected to the state's Senate in 2004. In August, Gov. Mike Easley appointed Judge John S. Arrowood to the North Carolina Court of Appeals, making him the first openly gay statewide official.

Gay politics has been a divisive issue in the Bible Belt state. The organization of former Republican Sen. Jesse Helms cited contributions by gays or support by Democrats for gay rights legislation to attack Senate candidates such as Jim Hunt and Harvey Gantt.

SOUTH CAROLINA Obama Tours with Anti-Gay Pastor

Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama enraged gay rights leaders when he signed on "ex-gay" preacher Donnie McClurkin for a South Carolina tour.

McClurkin has described being gay as a curse and said he was gay because of molestation as a child.

Human Rights Campaign president Joe Solmonese criticized Obama on Oct. 25 and urged him to cancel the appearance with McClurkin.

The pastor told *The New York Times* that his words were misconstrued and that he is not on a crusade against gays.

Obama failed to cancel the appearance with McClurkin, scheduled for Oct. 28, but has added the openly gay Rev. Andy Sidden to also speak at the program.

"There is no gospel in Donnie McClurkin's message for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people and their allies," said Solmonese. "That's a message that certainly doesn't belong on any presidential candidate's stage." 10

Compiled by JAYMEE R. CUTI



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