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piv•ot \ˈpi-vət\  
noun

- 1 : a shaft or pin on which something turns\*
- 2 a : a person, thing, or factor having a major or central role, function, or effect b : a key player or position\*
- 3 : a space dedicated to the physical, personal, and social health of all men into men.

\*Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary



**pivot**  
pivotpdx.org

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Have a chat.  
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"Sam is light and energy," Steele says. "She loves life and wants to dive in head first. You just know it looking at her. And being around her just makes you better, makes you want to be better. When we first met it was clear that we would be in each other's lives for a very long time."

Other than running Samantha Swaim Fundraising, Swaim and Steele are passionate about local theater and AIDS/LifeCycle, an intensive seven-day, fully supported bike ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles held earlier this month.

"It was the experience of a lifetime,"

Swaim says. "Team Portland raised over \$35,000 for HIV/AIDS programming. We were proud to be a part of this world-record event that raised more than \$13 million, the largest HIV/AIDS fundraiser in the world. As a team we rode 545 miles ... and were so honored to be a part of such a compassionate and giving community for a week. You have never experienced so much love, joy and heartbreak at once. It definitely tore me down and built me back up."

For more information about AIDS/LifeCycle, visit [aidslifecycle.org](http://aidslifecycle.org).

—WAYNE BUND

## True Colors

PSU Queer Resource Center's Smitty Amabilis advocates for trans students

In his role at PSU's Queer Resource Center, Smitty Amabilis, 32, is on the frontlines of change every day, advocating for trans-friendly policies in every area.

Asked what ze likes about his position, ze says, "Everything, except the red tape and bigotry of Portland State. Oops, I'm probably not supposed to say things like that, but I probably have my job because I do."

Amabilis' irrepressible energy can be seen in the volume of accomplishments ze and his colleagues have brought about on campus.

Trans students can now get hormone shots or refills at the Student Health and Counseling Center. Likewise, the QRC is working on making hormone letters and initial prescriptions available at the SHACC. With health and counseling housed in one department, Amabilis likens the arrangement to "one-stop shopping."

Another change Amabilis is proud of is having helped the QRC become more diverse. Along with Jayvin Gordon-Green, the center's Queer Students of Color coordinator, Amabilis helped organize the first Queer Students of Color Conference earlier this year.

Ze says the center has several goals on the horizon, such as mapping and increasing gender neutral bathrooms, adding a "chosen

name" field to class rosters, introducing a "body positive swim night" at the rec center, and forming Queeries, a queer panel that will address classes and events to educate through storytelling.

Born in Northern Washington, Amabilis has overcome many challenges to get where ze is. "My background is like Pandora's box," ze jokes. "I write research papers on it."

His work with communities of color is especially important. "Despite the fact that I look white, I am part Choctaw and Canadian Indian," ze says. "I grew up in a multi-racial family and, so far, most of my close friends have been people of color. This is who I go to bat for."

So far, "going to bat" has meant making PSU a safer, more inclusive place, which is what Amabilis sees as his larger goal, "to utilize what privilege I can pull from (the world) to further social justice."

—LEELA GINELLE



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