

Q+A

JEN HUGHES

HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY?

Lesbian, gay, queer.

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR A LIVING?

I am a social worker. I work with low income, refugee and immigrant children and their families as a Family Advocate.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN PORTLAND? WHAT DO YOU LOVE/HATE ABOUT IT?

Almost 20 years. I love the beauty that surrounds us here. I love having such easy access to forests, rivers, mountains and the ocean. I love that I can get all of my needs/interests met here. I can see live music any night of the week, go for a hike, attend a meditation group, get out on the water, enjoy some fabulous food/drink...it's all here and more! The opportunities to really experience life in this city are endless. However, I do wish that there was more diversity in Portland.

WHO DO YOU LOOK UP TO/REVERE IN THE GAY COMMUNITY? In the Portland gay community I look up to my dragon boating coach and my teammates. The team that I am a member of is the Amazon Dragons Paddling Club. It was started in 1992 as part of the Lesbian Community Project and is still going strong. My coach and the amazing women on my team inspire me on a daily basis.

HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED GAY BASHING?

I have experienced slurs/negative comments from others when I have been in groups of lesbians.

WHAT IS AN IMPORTANT TOPIC THAT THE LGBT COMMUNITY SHOULD BE TALKING ABOUT AND ISN'T?

We should talk more about giving back to and supporting our LGBT elders who cleared the path for us. We need to spend more time and effort honoring those who fought before us to give us the freedom that we have today. ■



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