

Q+A

David Menez Cantu

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR A LIVING?

I am an esthetician, and I work and own The Spa at Esther Short Park. I am also an ASL (American Sign Language) Interpreter for the Deaf. I work for Clark College part time, and for the Archdiocese of Portland interpreting a Spanish Catholic Mass once a month.

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

I've lived in the Portland metro area for the better part of 25 years. My parents brought us here when we were kids and I've stayed in the area. I love the season changes, and the plethora of activities available to us as Northwesterners. The beach is close, there are mountains to climb, hike and snowboard, rivers to swim, boat, wakeboard or jetski and tan (by using an appropriate SPF of course).

HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION FOR BEING LGBT?

I was an Infantryman in the U.S. Army, and I experienced discrimination on a daily basis. I wasn't worried about it, however, because I had fellow soldiers, brothers-in-arms, who supported me no matter what. I also know that if the people who were discriminating against me would take the time to get to know me, they'd end up being my friend and supporting me as well. This always seems to be the case, thank God, and I have always been blessed to have the opportunity to let them see me as a person in addition to a member of the LGBT community.

WHAT WAS THE BEST PART ABOUT COMING OUT FOR YOU?

The best part of coming out for me was being true to myself and letting my family know who I am and not hiding anything from them in fear of what they might say. I am fortunate enough to still have their unconditional love regardless of their thoughts about me coming out. More importantly, I have my families love and their respect for being who I am and not hiding it. I also have the love and support of all of my close friends who are also my family and that's a priceless blessing.

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