THE ASSOCIATION FOR GAY, LESBIAN, AND BISEXUAL FACULTY AND STAFF OF THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY (AGLBFS)

Invites you to

Join us as we begin our second year!

Tuesday, October 1, 1991
5:30 p.m.
Ohio Union Stecker Lounge
Third Floor

5:30 President Gee will address and respond to questions regarding issues relevant to our constituency

6:00 Business Meeting and Reception (hors d’oeuvres and cash bar)

Note: This is an excellent opportunity to bring your registration & 1991 dues payment if you have not already done so.

Please share this invitation with your Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual colleagues.
September 12, 1991

President E. Gordon Gee
205 Bricker Hall
190 North Oval Mall

Dear President Gee,

This letter serves to confirm your speaking engagement with the Association for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Faculty and Staff of The Ohio State University. The meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 1, in the Stecker Lounge, located on the third floor of the Ohio Union.

We are planning to spend 30-40 minutes with you. First, we would appreciate an 8-10 minute overview of your administration's activities in the areas outlined on the attached pages. Last October, a delegation of six faculty and staff and two students met with you to familiarize you with issues of importance to the gay, lesbian, and bisexual community at Ohio State. Members of our group will want to know what progress has been made in these areas in the past year. After your overview, we will follow with a 20-30 minute question and answer period from our membership. A reception is planned immediately after our meeting, and you are cordially invited to attend as your schedule allows.

As members of the only ongoing organization dedicated to the interests of the gay, lesbian, and bisexual faculty and staff at Ohio State, we are very much looking forward to our meeting with you. We appreciate this opportunity to hear from you regarding your administration's plans as they will affect gay, lesbian, and bisexual faculty and staff. We hope that you will be able to assure us that Ohio State will continue to occupy a leadership position in securing the equal rights of all and in encouraging cultural diversity. Through meetings such as this, our organization seeks to contribute to the efforts of the university community in achieving this goal.

Again, we appreciate this opportunity to meet and discuss issues that we all recognize as important to Ohio State's future as a world-class university.

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If you have questions, or are in need of further information, please contact Eunice Hornsby at 2-4207.

Eunice Hornsby
For the Steering Committee

James Darsey, Communication
Doug Geiger, Residence and Dining Halls
Eunice Hornsby, Office of Affirmative Action
Mike Horvath, Telephone Services
Brad Myers, Office of the University Registrar
Leila Rupp, History
David Todd, Spanish and Portuguese
Bob Wharton, Theatre
Identified Issues of Concern to
Gay, Lesbian, & Bisexual Faculty and Staff

Extension of benefits to named partners. While some cities (e.g., Seattle and West Hollywood) and companies (e.g., Lotus Development) have implemented policies extending benefits to named partners, it is still the case at Ohio State that faculty and staff who have been of long service to the University, and who, in many cases, have been in committed relationships for many years, are not eligible for the health and education benefits that come almost automatically to the new spouse of a staff or faculty member. There are cases at this university where individual faculty and staff members have had to shoulder the burden of medical treatments, insurance, and/or tuition for a partner at the same time that their married counterparts were able to take advantage of benefits largely provided by Ohio State. Such cases reflect areas of serious discrepancy between Ohio State’s stated commitment to non-discrimination and our everyday practice.

Campus Climate. As the chief spokesperson and highest-ranking official of the University, you are looked upon by the University and larger community to provide leadership, not only regarding questions of policy and program, but on the more elusive questions of the tone and moral conduct of the institution. Our group will be happy to hear how you plan to communicate those expectations in an era of increasing violence against gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. Discrimination against these members of the university community is as completely unacceptable as discrimination against African Americans, women, and members of religious or ethnic minorities.

Your job is made more difficult by the Protean and often subtle nature of discrimination. Faculty members, for example, have expressed concern that research into gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues is frequently relegated, because of its subject matter, to relatively new journals or alternative publication outlets. Consequently, this research may be discounted in merit and tenure and promotion decisions at this university without regard to the quality of the research. Students are often inhibited and are certainly not encouraged in the scholarly pursuit of gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues. This occurs at a time when the encouragement of gay, lesbian, bisexual studies could promote the University’s goal of increased interdisciplinary study without increasing financial obligations.

AIDS Policy and AIDS Education. These issues are of concern to everyone in the university community and beyond. In May of 1989, Professor Rhonda Rivera submitted a report on AIDS policy and education to then President Jennings. In September of 1989, a report by Dr. Richard Keeling, an outside consultant, verifying the objectivity of Professor Rivera’s report was completed. Two years later, following the resignation of most of the original members of the University AIDS Education and Research Committee, the University has failed to implement the major recommendations of the Rivera report, and we are still without coherent and comprehensive AIDS policies and education programs that effectively meet the needs of all segments of the University community. In the meantime, the numbers of those affected continue to grow.

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ROTC. This issue concerns not only students, but everyone in the community who is committed to equality and fairness. ROTC policies belie President Bush's claims that the U.S. military is "the greatest equal opportunity employer in the world." The Department of Defense has been unable to present a coherent and plausible rationale for its discrimination against gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. Student response at Ohio State has been relatively moderate, insisting primarily that ROTC practice "truth in advertising" regarding its policies. That this issue has become so public and heated makes it more volatile and difficult, but it is also this visibility that provides an excellent opportunity for Ohio State to exercise a leadership role.

Agenda Setting. There is a tendency in much of our public debate on these and other issues of concern to gay, lesbian, and bisexual faculty and staff, to reduce discussion to narrow economic or legalistic terms. These are clearly moral questions of fairness and equality. Economic and legalistic arguments are no more appropriate here than they were in defense of chattel slavery in the early nineteenth century, as they were used against child labor legislation, safe workplace legislation, work hour legislation, and other labor rights legislation at the turn of the century, or as they have been used against various civil rights initiatives beginning with the modern Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s and continuing today.