



AUGUST 2024

Welcome back, LGBTQ+ Lakers!

And welcome to our new monthly newsletter to keep LGBT FSA members updated on our events, opportunities to get involved, and issues affecting the LGBTQ+ community at GVSU.

In addition to sending the newsletter out via email, we'll also post the newsletters on our website each month.

In this issue:

- Letter from the LGBT FSA Steering Committee Chair
- Meet the LGBT FSA Steering Committee
 - Open LGBT FSA Steering Committee position
- Meet the Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center Staff
- You're invited - Rainbow Social 8/28/24
- Join the Out List
- Submit an idea for the LGBT FSA Newsletter

CHECK OUT THE LGBT FSA WEBSITE!
OR EMAIL US AT LGBTFSA@GVSU.EDU

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome back! If you're like me, the summer went by in a flash. I hope folks were able to take some time off to rest and recharge.

This is shaping up to be a particularly challenging fall semester for LGBTQIA folks. LGBTQIA rights, especially trans rights, are a hot-button issue in what's already been an especially acrimonious election cycle, and that is focusing a lot of negative attention on the community both nationally and locally. We are already seeing the effects of this. Over the last 15 months, we've seen an uptick in incidences of hate speech on campus and some especially disturbing incidents that nearly escalated into physical violence. The climate is likely to become more volatile as we approach the election in November.

For those of us engaged in LGBTQIA advocacy work on campus, this has crystallized a longstanding need for more attention on the safety and well-being of LGBTQIA faculty and staff. There are systemic changes that desperately need to be put into place to improve campus climate, and will benefit all faculty and staff members, not just those in the LGBTQIA community. These changes include better and more consistent campus wide DEI training, especially for supervisors and those in evaluative positions, a complete overhaul of our grievance and complaint procedures, and more mechanisms to gather actionable data on workplace climate from current faculty and staff, in the hopes we can intervene in toxic workplace environments before we lose folks. We also want to amplify concerns about the prevalence of harmful hate speech on campus, such as those expressed by the student group Action Without Reaction in their [comprehensive report](#) on expressive activity (EA) on campus.

The steering committee and other community leaders on campus have had a lot of discussion over the summer about how to move those needs forward. In light of those discussions, the steering committee will be working towards better informing the community of the state of LGBTQIA advocacy work on campus going forward: where needs are, what work is being done, and how folks can get involved. This newsletter is part of that work. We are also focusing on reaffirming our commitment to creating community spaces where we can connect and decompress. Community building has always been a part of our mandate, but it's going to be especially important this semester.

We look forward to being in community with you over the course of the coming semester, lifting each other up, and trying to connect us all both to each other and the work that's being done on campus.

Kyle Felker
LGBT FSA Steering Committee Chair

MEET THE LGBT FSA STEERING COMMITTEE



Kyle Felker
Committee Chair
he/him
Senior Library Application
Developer

How long have you worked at GV?

Houf, a long time. I think it will be twelve years next January.

What is something you are reading/watching/listening to right now?

I'm turning into a true crime junkie in my middle age. I just finished listening to Bear Brook, a podcast series about the Bear Brook murders. Grisly and a compelling mystery.

What is one highlight from your summer this year?

A weeks vacation in the porcupine mountains, hiking and biking, with gorgeous views everywhere.

If you were an ice cream (or non-dairy equivalent) flavor, what would you be?

Rocky road. Probably a good representation of my mental state at any given time-check full of everything!

MEET THE LGBT FSA STEERING COMMITTEE



Kendra Ollis

Programming
she/her

Assistant Director of Admissions and
Recruitment

How long have you worked at GV?

3.5 years (in my current department for the past 2 years)

What is something you are reading/watching/listening to right now?

One Piece and House of Dragon

What is one highlight from your summer this year?

Visiting Japan! Hands down the best experience of my life! American 'ramen' is dead to me.

If you were an ice cream (or non-dairy equivalent) flavor, what would you be?

Vanilla Bean-- not because it's a basic flavor but because it's versatile. 😊

MEET THE LGBT FSA STEERING COMMITTEE



AJ Young

Communications

he/they

Tutoring and Supplemental
Instruction Specialist

How long have you worked at GV?

2 years this week!

What is something you are reading/watching/listening to right now?

NCIS reruns, Michael Pollan's *This is Your Mind on Plants*, and Charles Duhigg's *Supercommunicators*

What is one highlight from your summer this year?

My husband, Han, and I have a small business called Co-Create Studio. This summer we made it to the finals for the Start Garden 100 funding competition. Come see us at [Demo Day on Sept. 18](#) in Grand Rapids!

If you were an ice cream (or non-dairy equivalent) flavor, what would you be?

Something chocolatey and with cherries. The best combination of indulgent and "healthy" - fruit makes everything healthy.

JOIN THE LGBT FSA STEERING COMMITTEE



**Your Name
Here**
Treasurer/Recorder
No experience necessary!

The LGBT FSA steering committee currently has an open seat and is in need of a candidate to fill it! The open position is for a treasurer/recorder, whose responsibilities include:

- Taking minutes at steering committee meetings and getting them to the communications officer to post on the website
- Helping the chair draw up agendas for and attending regular monthly meetings
- Keeping track of the FSA funds (Inclusion and Equity does most of the work, so this is not at all difficult)
- Assisting with the yearly budget request (the chair helps out a lot with this, so don't worry if you've never done it before)
- Pitching in on shared projects like the newsletter, coordinating events, etc.

The time commitment is generally just a few hours a month. Benefits include:

- Getting to work with the other awesome folks on the steering committee
- Meeting and forming relationships with other people in the community across campus
- Being more involved with advocacy work on campus
- Setting future directions for the FSA, including events, areas of focus for advocacy work, etc.

If you're interested, drop us a line at lgbtfsa@gvsu.edu. We'd be glad to answer questions and discuss responsibilities in more detail.

MEET THE MILTON E. FORD LGBT CENTER STAFF

How long have you worked at GV?

A little over 2 years and this will be my 3rd academic year!

What is something you are reading/watching/listening to right now?

Is It Cake? On Netflix, because who doesn't want to pretend to be professional cake investigators.

What is one highlight from your summer this year?

I've gotten to take time with my family this summer, which is not typical. One of those times was a train ride to Indiana, a first for my youngest children. We got to experience the fun of Amtrak and then made a couple of stops through Chicago and just walked the city for hours!

If you were an ice cream (or non-dairy equivalent) flavor, what would you be?

There is a specialty brand of ice cream in New York and one that they sale is called "Pink Lemonade Pop Rocks". Why? It sounds refreshing, odd, surprising, bold, and a little zesty. Just like me 😊.



DL McKinney
Director
they/them



D Hollowell
Assistant Director
they/them

How long have you worked at GV?

This will be my third academic year with the LGBTRC team. Prior to the pandemic, I worked in the (former) Social Justice Education department for a year!

What is something you are reading/watching/listening to right now?

Currently revisiting Big Mood, Little Mood with Daniel Lavery, shuffling Chapell Roan, Megan Thee Stallion and Moses Sumney's new music, reading Black Liturgies, watching Castlevania (but wish I had Disney+ to watch XMen '97 & the Acolyte)

What is one highlight from your summer this year?

Being my brother's Groomsmen for a gorgeous wedding and tearing it up with him and his wife on the dancefloor later that day.

If you were an ice cream (or non-dairy equivalent) flavor, what would you be?

Blue Moon. Michigan original, name inspired by space, unexpected flavor, and it's blue!

MEET THE MILTON E. FORD LGBT CENTER STAFF

How long have you worked at GV?

Started in March of 2022, so about 2.5 years at GV

What is something you are reading/watching/listening to right now?

Watching The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel TV show and always enjoying the “Maintenance Phase” podcast

What is one highlight from your summer this year?

I Hiked Mt. Ida in Colorado (despite some altitude sickness) and visited Snow Mountain Ranch, where I worked in the summer of 2013.

If you were an ice cream (or non-dairy equivalent) flavor, what would you be?

Superman! It’s gay, it’s a Michigander flavor, and it’s bright and joyful.



**Joey Grubbs-
Hulst**
LGBT RC Assistant
she/her



**Rowan
Amour**
Grad Assistant
they/them

Academic Program:

Master’s of Public Administration

What is something you are reading/watching/listening to right now?

I am listening a lot to Chappell Roan and Charli xcx.

What is one highlight from your summer this year?

One highlight from my summer was this one Saturday I spent with my parent where we visited a beautiful estate sale with a ton of antiques.



Join the LGBT Center and the LGBT FSA for a welcome (back) to campus event!

Rainbow Social
Wednesday, August 28, 2024
12-3pm - drop-in anytime!
Kirkhof East Lawn (by the Zumberge Pond)

There will be food, ice cream, games, and more!
We'll also have an area for LGBTQ+ faculty & staff to connect with one another.

Come meet the LGBT FSA Steering Committee, along with faculty & staff friends old and new!

Join the Out List!

The LGBT FSA and LGBT Resource Center maintain an Out List of LGBTQ+ faculty & staff at GVSU.

You can use this list to find and connect with queer colleagues across campus.

Participation is completely optional. **Click here to add your name to the list!**

In next month's newsletter...

- Fall 2024 LGBT FSA Event Calendar
- Campus LGBTQ+ advocacy update
- and more!!

Did a friend send you this?

Email lgbtfsa@gvsu.edu to sign up for the LGBT Faculty & Staff Association email list!



Have an idea for our newsletter?

Please share it with us!

Check out our [idea submission guidelines](#) & [submission form](#)!