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Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center

Davis, California 95616

March 11, 2010

Dear Chancellor Katehi,

Thank you again for your presence at the town hall meeting on March 1, 2010 to discuss the hate crime perpetrated against the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Resource Center. We are encouraged by your recognition of the important and critical services our Center provides as we support the campus' core mission and the Principles of Community. As we mentioned to you at the town hall meeting, this letter serves as a follow up to our discussion about the need to better serve our campus community.

We do understand there is a budget crisis facing our campus, the UC system, and the state of California at this time. This economic crisis is juxtaposed with the crisis we have been facing for many years: the inability to meet the basic and growing needs of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender student, faculty, and staff community on our campus. The requests we present to you below are minimum requirements to effectively serve and educate the UCD community. We do not want to see crucial student affairs and other campus units negatively impacted in order to meet our needs. We encourage creative ways of finding the necessary funds to meet the needs of our broad campus community, yet ask for your immediate attention to these requests. We also would like to voice support for the requests submitted to you from the Black Student Union. Issues regarding access to crucial resources affect all marginalized communities on campus. We stand in support of prioritizing funding to groups and organizations that address the needs of these many communities.

As stated in a letter to the campus community from the Queers for Educational Justice, "Though all units on campus have had their funding cut, the centers function as a crucial, bottom-line safety net for the students most directly affected by the broader cuts, and their labor increases exponentially as students are less able to access resources elsewhere in the university." This has definitely been the experience of the LGBT Resource Center.

We feel confident that with your support and advocacy, we can work together to implement these much-needed requests.

We are happy to provide more information and justification if needed. We wanted to start this conversation as soon as possible and submit our needs to you immediately. We look forward to hearing from you and discussing our concerns further.

Sincerely,

Sheri Atkinson, Director

Sara Farooqi, Office Coordinator

Jezzie Fulmen, Community Counselor

Mark Yanez, Community Intern

Laura Mitchell, Community Intern

Maribel Gomez, Community Intern

Jerome Atputhasingam, Community Intern

Cameron de Leon, Community Intern

History and Highlights of LGBT Resource Center

Since the arrival of the current director seven years ago, the LGBT Resource Center's needs have grown considerably. Below are some examples of programming we have added over the years in response to community needs. We have implemented these additional initiatives with no permanent budget increases; in fact we have sustained budget reductions. This is not an exhaustive list of our programs but rather an overview of some highlights.

Three additional "Awareness Weeks" have been created in addition to the existing Pride Week, we have added: TransAction Week (Transgender Awareness); Beyond the Binary (Bisexual Awareness Week); and Intersex Awareness Week.

Safe Zone program is now housed at the LGBTRC. Previously managed by the Gender and Sexuality Commission (GASC) of ASUCD, a collaboration between GASC and the LGBTRC was created to provide consistency and continuity for the program. As a result Safe Zone is now managed by the LGBTRC.

Transgender Safe Zone was created after assessing a need for more information about transgender issues on campus.

Peer Education Program was created with the purpose of training students to be effective facilitators of presentations in the residence halls about hate speech, homophobia and heterosexism. This was established to meet the increased need for educational efforts targeting first-year and transfer students.

LGBTRC Intern course for credit has been established. Due to increased responsibilities of community interns we created a two-unit course that all in-coming interns must take to adequately provide them with the knowledge and skills needed to serve in their role.

Quantitative Summary & Overview of Achievements for 2008-2009

Total LGBTRC sponsored Programs completed: 46 programs, reaching 750 people

Total Safe Zones presented: 8 Safe Zone Trainings and 2 Transgender Safe Zone Trainings, reaching approximately 500 people

Total Peer Education programs presented: 8 programs presented, reaching 186 people

Queer People of Color Conference: 300 attendees from all over the country

Queer Studies Graduate Symposium: 200 attendees, with academic presenters from around the country

UC Davis has one of the lowest staffed LGBT Resource Centers in the nation compared to other top research institutions in the U.S. (<http://lgbtcampus.org/about/studies>). Additionally, compared to other UC Davis campus resource centers, which have an average of five (5) professional staff, the LGBTRC currently has only two (2) full time professional staff.

LGBT Resource Center Staffing and Operating Needs

Assistant Director

It is vital that a second Student Affairs professional be added to manage the increased volume of crisis response, student services and educational outreach offered by the LGBTRC, specifically as resources have been cut from an existing minimal budget. The skill set of an experienced Student Affairs professional is necessary to manage the Center and meet the needs of the campus community.

The LGBTRC shares common history, goals, and mission with other student resource centers on campus. However, the LGBTRC also uniquely serves a broader, visible and invisible, population of students, faculty, staff, and Davis community members. Because the LGBT community is comprised of many complex identities, we have had to work hard to address the many different needs of the community. We have attempted to do that the best we could with limited resources. However, we cannot sustain our work to meet the demands of the campus community. The demand for services will only continue to increase. Our first priority is securing additional staffing. Having an Assistant Director to assist with supervising interns and managing the day-to-day needs of the Center and its patrons is crucial. This is particularly vital in light of the fact that the Director of the LGBT Resource Center is increasingly called upon to serve on more campus-wide committees and workgroups. In addition, the Director of the LGBTRC also now has oversight responsibility for the Student Recruitment and Retention Center, which takes considerable time and energy away from the LGBT Resource Center.

In addition to the Director, we have an Office Coordinator who is able to serve as the front line person for the Center and coordinates the daily operations and administrative aspects of the Center. However, this is not a fully functioning staffing model to meet the growing needs of patrons of the Center as well as the broader campus community.

It is imperative that the LGBTRC secure funding for a permanent full time Assistant Director (Student Affairs Officer III classification).

Full Time Community Counselor

With the creation of the new Community Advising Network (CAN), the LGBTRC now has a 50% time community counselor shared with the Women's Resources and Research Center. As we anticipated, there has been a high demand for these services. Below is a report from our current community counselor, Jizzie Fulmen:

Community Advisor, LGBTRC + WRRRC

"Within four months of the advent of this position, it has become apparent that both the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Resource Center (LGBTRC) and the Women's Resources and Research Center (WRRRC) could easily utilize and benefit from a full-time community counselor each, and that the LGBTRC in particular still has significant unmet need with their Community Counselor only available to them at 50% time (realistically more like 40% time with furlough and CAPS administrative time subtracted).

I have had upward of 50 scheduled sessions with students referred from the LGBTRC and almost 25 scheduled sessions from students referred from the WRRRC. The real demands on my time, however, have come from providing support to student communities in moments of need. Between November of 2009 and February of 2010, I have made myself accessible to students for informal one-on-one and group support through a significant number of community crises. These include student activism and arrests, interpersonal conflict involving student-staff, a near-completed suicide, a multi-month rolling crisis that required a student's removal from campus

and then ongoing coordination of crisis team support, the threat of hate speech directed at Hillel House from a group known to target the LGBT community, support for the Vagina Monologues, and the vandalism of the LGBTRC and the subsequent town hall and media attention. I have also participated in the planning of the Queer Leadership Retreat and four multi-event awareness weeks (TransAction, Beyond the Binary, Gen Sex, and Intersex Awareness) in a way that contributed to student support, self-care, and awareness of resources. I have also played a very active role in the Consultation Team for Transgender Care coordinated through CAPS and its advocacy with SHIP on behalf of students. Finally, the CAN as a whole has been tapped for various non-community-specific outreach requests, and I have responded to several of those.

It is clear that many of these demands were in service to students affiliated with the WRRRC or with both communities, but that the majority of them come from the needs of the LGBT community.

After only about three months, I became aware of the need to strategize with the directors of both Centers about ways to limit students' utilization of my role so that I could remain available for the most acute situations without becoming overextended. While we have been able to limit my workload in a way that feels appropriate, I believe that the need to take such steps is a direct illustration of community needs that remain unmet."

*Because of the highly limited staff at the LGBTRC, our need for a Community Counselor has been high. This does not indicate a low need for the WRRRC. **We in no way want to take away from the need for the Community Counselor position at the WRRRC.** This position is vital for both of our Centers' work and we would like to advocate for a full time position at the WRRRC as well.*

Permanent Operational Budget

The LGBTRC, from its inception, has had a very minimal budget. Not only has this communicated the university's value of the LGBTRC, but it has also withstood several budget cuts over the last seven years, which has created significant, negative impacts on our ability to fulfill our mission. Other campus units such as the Office of Campus Community Relations and ASUCD have been providing us with the majority of our programming money as well as funds to hire interns. While we greatly appreciate the support from these organizations on campus, the money provided to us is "soft" money and thus not a permanent part of our budget. The lack of guaranteed funding makes it increasingly difficult to plan and implement programs, while also keeping the Center operational. A permanent budget of \$30,000 dollars beyond the cost of staff and intern salaries would allow us to meet our current needs.

Permanent Student Staffing Budget

Student interns are an invaluable part of the work that the LGBTRC does. In addition, we support the campus' efforts to provide students with employment opportunities, particularly in these challenging economic times and rising student fees. Student interns are able to connect with their peers in the broader student community in a unique way. They provide valuable knowledge to Center staff who advocate for their needs on a campus-wide level, in addition to assisting with the daily operations of the center, implementing programs, and conducting outreach. We currently have five (5) interns and because of their passion and dedication they work above and beyond their job requirements, often to the detriment of their own academics. Students should not be responsible for doing the work of the university; they should be the primary benefactors of services and education. They see the many demands of the campus community and rise to the challenge of meeting those needs, yet the current level of their workload is unsustainable. Having a total of ten (10) student interns would greatly enhance the work we do and enable us to expand our services and outreach across the campus community,

but more importantly would allow students to have a healthy balance between academics and work. We are cognizant that many students, faculty, and staff see the mission of the LGBTRC as more than just “work,” but survival. The university could provide support for these interns equating to approximately \$30,000 per year (if we are able to secure work-study students the cost could be lower).

Program Coordinator

With the many educational programs and trainings offered throughout campus, a full-time program coordinator to oversee this component of our services is critical to our operation. Again, a professional student affairs person in this position would provide quality oversight for the LGBTRC, and provide greater training and development for the student interns who work extensively in planning and implementing programs and workshops. The experience needed for this position aligns with the Student Affairs Officer II classification.

Graduate Student Researcher

We have had a number of graduate students over the years who have worked with the LGBT Resource Center for the same pay rate given to undergraduates. Therefore, these graduate students had to work additional jobs to cover their fees because we were unable to provide that funding with our limited budget. A permanent GSR position housed in the LGBTRC would ensure our ability to work with graduate students on campus and strengthen our connection to the various professional schools and academic departments. Additionally, it would accomplish the academic objectives of the LGBTRC and provide greater resources for, and access to, faculty on campus. Many graduate students are also conducting research related to the LGBT and Queer community. Having a GSR position would allow us to support valuable academic research related to the LGBT and Queer community on campus. This necessitates Graduate Studies to allocate two work-study units per quarter to the LGBTRC and we would need approximately \$7,000 to cover the portion of their fees and salary not covered by work-study.

Campus Wide Hate Crime & Bias Motivated Incident Reporting System

Currently, students can report incidents through Student Judicial Affairs (SJA). However, the SJA process utilizes the same reporting system for any type of student issue, ranging from interpersonal conflicts to substance abuse. We feel strongly that there should be a separate, centralized, clear and explicit process for specifically reporting hates crimes and bias motivated incidents. It is crucial that these incidents receive special attention and visibility, and that there is a system for addressing these issues on campus. These issues should include incidents ranging from verbal abuse on campus to discrimination in the classroom perpetrated by faculty and Teaching Assistants, as well as issues that may arise while accessing medical care and other services on campus. Currently, students do not know how to address many of the situations they face on campus. It is crucial for those who receive these reports to have a competent understanding of issues that underrepresented and underserved communities face.

We recommend a work group be convened including university officials, students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented and underserved communities. UC Riverside has created an effective system for reporting hate crimes that could serve as a model for UC Davis. You can access UC Riverside’s system at the following: stophate.ucr.edu. We recommend the work group research existing models utilized by other universities across the nation to put together a system that fits our institution.

Gender Neutral Restrooms on Campus

We recommend that all campus buildings designate at least one gender-neutral restroom as soon as possible. We also ask that at least one gender-neutral restroom be added to the campus standards for new construction. This proposal is supported through an ASUCD resolution from 2006-2007.

Traditionally restrooms are divided into Male and Female rooms, which contain multiple sinks and are subdivided into multiple stalls. This creates a public space, partially divided into semi-private spaces. For many, this lack of privacy is a problem. Nursing mothers sometimes need a private space to breastfeed or use a pump, parents of different sex children or different sex caretakers of the elderly or disabled need a space in which they can comfortably be together, and those with social anxiety or other conditions need more privacy than a traditional restroom can provide. Beyond these groups, transgender people and others with non-traditional gender identities face a variety of problems in traditional restrooms. There are incidents of harassment, denial of use, arrest, and violence directed towards transgender people simply using the restroom. Furthermore, there is the simple question of which restroom to use when you are female by gender but biologically male.

The implementation of gender-neutral restrooms on campus can provide one opportunity to create safe spaces for Transgender and Gender Queer people. Many Transgender and Gender Queer people experience discrimination, harassment, or general discomfort when forced to choose from gender binary restrooms because they do not clearly fit into either. The privilege of having access to safe restrooms for gender conforming people often goes unacknowledged. Being able to have access to facilities that meet one of our basic human needs is one way to affirm the inherent dignity in all of us.

Campus Wide LGBT Trainings

While training opportunities are very valuable and should be encouraged, we feel that one-time trainings for students, faculty, and staff cannot provide the necessary education and/or address on-going issues. We call on the entire campus community to assess current trainings, courses, and services they provide to determine whether or not they are inclusive of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community. We encourage departments and individuals to consult with the LGBT Resource Center to strengthen these trainings and services and find solutions together. One center cannot reach every corner of campus and the LBTRC is here to assist everyone with the responsibility of making this a safe and inclusive campus community. We hope that you will encourage the Academic Senate and others to institutionalize diversity training for all UCD employees.

Sexuality Studies

We would also like to strongly encourage support for the Sexuality Studies program. Over the last several years, two key queer faculty of color have left UC Davis. This has left a void in the department as the type of scholarship and research areas they were committed to have not been replaced. We advise consultation with the Women and Gender Studies Department, where the Sexuality Studies minor is housed, to increase the support and commitment to academic scholarship around queer issues. We encourage the academic senate to explore developing Sexuality Studies into a major with its own academic department.

Queer Art on Campus

We would like to see visual representations of the LGBTQ community on campus through the expression of art. A mural similar to the one at the Memorial Union has been suggested. We recommend exploring options for locations and consultation with the LGBT community to find a visible space on campus where this expression could be placed. Having an institutionalized and

permanent expression of queer identity on campus would convey to the LGBT and broader campus community that the university values all identities.

Summary of Approximate Costs

Assistant Director, SAO III	\$44,000-\$75,000
Program Coordinator, SAO II	\$40,000-\$68,000
Full time Community Counselor—determined through review of position	
Operating and Programming	\$30,000
Intern Salaries	\$30,000
GSR position	\$7,000

cc: Campus Community
Fred Wood, Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs
Griselda Castro, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs
Rahim Reed, Associate Executive Vice Chancellor,
Office of Campus Community Relations