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Queer Identity: Awareness and Advocacy of the LGBTQ Community Through the Efforts of Illinois Wesleyan University's Pride Alliance

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Poster Presentation P11

**QUEER IDENTITY: AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY
THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF ILLINOIS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY'S
PRIDE ALLIANCE**

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Illinois Wesleyan University's Pride Alliance consists of a group of students that have discovered that their own identities do not quite fit within the bounds of the hetero-normative society in which we live. Pride Alliance is the LGBTQ support group on campus that welcomes gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered people, and LGBTQ "allies" or anyone who is supportive of sexual minorities. The current members of Pride are self-identified queers and caring friends, with *queer* being a non-confining term that allows for uncertainty of and movement between gender identities and sexual orientations. This year, Pride Alliance has been especially active in educating the IWU campus about LGBTQ issues, and has been working to make important changes in the community: gaining support for same-sex marriage, attempting to change IWU's nondiscrimination policy to include the protection of gender identity. Including information gathered through the use of visual ethnographic methods, this poster provides insight into Pride Alliance, the identities of its members, and their efforts to increase awareness of the concerns of the LGBTQ community.