

# Idaho LGBTQ Oral History Project

**Dax Chizum**



**BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY**

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This Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Oral History Project began as a key component of a cross-listed Boise State University course, Intro to LGBTQ Studies (GEN 380, HIS 381, SOC 497). Dr. Riley Caldwell-O’Keefe taught the course and designed the project as an interactive learning tool to help students understand LGBTQ history, with special emphasis on Idaho history, and the impacts of this history on local individuals. In addition to this history and context, students learned interviewing techniques throughout the semester. We discussed ethical considerations and obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the project. Throughout the process, we worked with Boise State Special Collections and Archives librarians, Alan Virta and Cheryl Oestreicher. The culmination and digital release of the collection would have been impossible without them. We are thrilled and honored to offer these first-person insights which help provide a more well-rounded and comprehensive story of Idaho history.

**Name:** Dax David Chizum

**Biography:** Dax David Chizum was born in 1968 in Redondo Beach, California. Dax identifies as a gay, Caucasian, male and sees himself as belonging to the working class. He moved to Idaho at the age of one and was raised in the Wood River Valley, which helped to expose him to a great deal of diversity due to the high volume of tourism in the area. He didn’t have strong religious roots growing up, however when he came out at around the age of 20, his mother had a nervous breakdown and claimed that Dax had “broken her heart.” Now things have changed and Dax is an advocate for human rights at the Idaho Human Rights Education Center. During this interview, Dax touches on his life after coming out, how coming out affected his work for the Idaho Human Rights Education Center, he discusses where he feels most comfortable and uncomfortable as a gay man in Boise, what he feels are the biggest issues facing the Boise LGBTQ community as well as what are some of the biggest obstacles facing the Humans Rights Center in Boise.

**Keywords:** Interfaith community, “Don’t Ask/Don’t Tell, role model, age discrepancy, safe schools, Anne Frank memorial, Nicole LeFavour, financial stability, Add The Words movement, Idaho Safe Schools Coalition, United Nations

**Interview date:** 11/29/2011

**Interviewer:** David Norling

**Interview duration:** 55:06

**City:** Boise

## Timed Notation:

00:00	Introduction of Name
00:20	Place of Birth
04:42	Religious background
05:46	Coming out story
10:16	Resistance among family and friends
12:40	Relationships or communities not out to
14:04	Freedom of being out

16:24	Positives of coming out
19:02	Being out and relating to work at Idaho Human Rights Education Center
22:30	Common questions answered based through work
25:42	Places comfortable being at in Boise
28:38	Places avoided or uncomfortable in Boise
30:04	Impressions of LGBTQ community in Boise
33:42	Exposure to LGBTQ communities statewide
35:16	Biggest issues facing gay community in Boise
38:48	Opinion on repeal of Don't Ask/Don't Tell
41:08	Goals pertaining to work in Boise
44:24	Current working projects
47:02	Allies for Human Rights Education Center
49:20	Personal goals and dreams
51:08	Hurdles within work
52:34	Paring statements
55:06	End of interview