

Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education

Volume 41 *Faculty Life Issues*

Article 28

9-1-2011

"In Dreams Begin Responsibility"

Sivagami Subbaraman

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Recommended Citation

Subbaraman, Sivagami (2012) ""In Dreams Begin Responsibility"," *Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education*: Vol. 41, Article 28.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/conversations/vol41/iss1/28>

as a political platform. For example, some student groups may want to use the LGBTQ Resource Center as a platform to push a particular perspective about sexuality that may or may not be in concordance with the Catholic Church. At the university, some students wanted the resource center to endorse a "Sex Positive" week, which was hosted by GU Pride, United Feminists and the Georgetown Solidarity Committee. The week advocated particular perspectives about sexuality, and the resource center chose not to endorse this agenda. It did, however, continue its mission by providing resources and education, when necessary, for those students, faculty and staff associated with or affected by "Sex Positive" week.

The implementation of any LGBTQ initiative at a Jesuit institution may be most effective if it is supported by the executive administration of the institution, starting with the president. One of the major strengths that helped GU to create and implement a LGBTQ Resource Center was the support and leadership coming from the top. The administrators modeled for other staff and students working with them the Jesuit principle of *cura personalis* and a spirit of love and equality. It was this leadership which also required a transparency and inclusivity throughout the entire process.

These insights and lessons learned may be utilized strategically in any Jesuit-affiliated university that desires to implement a LGBTQ initiative or resource center on campus. The administrators and faculty

of GU shared their ideas and insights openly, and have assured us they are interested in sharing this experience with fellow Jesuit institutions. They acknowledge that the creation of the resource center is not a panacea; homophobia and



Sivagami Subbaraman, director of the LGBTQ Resource Center, Georgetown University.

hetero-sexism cannot be conquered overnight. Still, they unanimously agreed that the results were worth the effort. We would like to thank specifically those members of the Georgetown community who agreed without reservation to talk with us about the LGBTQ Resource Center, its implementation, and what they believe contributes to its success. Without their help we would not have been able to compile this report, and we are grateful for their time, energy and willingness to engage in further conversation about implementing LGBTQ initiatives at other Jesuit universities. ■

Addition to the Report "In Dreams Begin Responsibility"

By Sivagami Subbaraman

The line comes from an old Irish Catholic play serves as touchstone for how we envision the work at the Center. It has been a dream for many, over many decades to have space, value, permission, and belonging on the hilltop.

No dreams, no vision for this work is possible without both an individual and a collective sense of responsibility—to create a community that speaks to all of who we are — a community that gives expression to the full range of our humanity and dignity, which is a fundamental principle of the Ignatian tradition. Central to this work is our ability to grasp and make tangible the central paradox: to hold in place equally the sense of an

impossible dream, and an *intractable responsibility*, in order to do this work.

The Center opened its doors in the Fall of 2008, and in our three years here, we have become both integral and integrated into the campus community. We participate in the full range of pre-orientation, orientation, and leadership programs at the start of the year, and close with Lavender Graduation, and between offer Coming Out Week, Gender Liberation Week, Pride Week, and special speaker series. We also collaborate with many academic units to deepen the conversation on campus. Lavender Graduation honors LGBTQ and allied students and their contributions to the community; and it has grown from 30 students to 70 students with more than 200 attending the event. It has become a central community celebration to start off our Commencement week, and a way to rejoice in all of who we are. We have worked very hard to find and re-engage our LGBTQ alumni, and we now routinely participate in Homecoming, Reunion, and John Carroll alumni week-ends. For many of our alums who have felt dis-engaged or not welcome, this has been a huge sea change, and feel they can now truly call the Hilltop their home.

Sivagami Subbaraman is director, LGBTQ Resource Center, Georgetown University.: ss826@georgetown.edu.