

Trump Administration rattles the queer community

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The 23-year-old art student did not realize the change would be immediate.

Mickey Bush identifies as a non-binary individual who uses they/them pronouns. They explained the binary as being male or female and identifying as non-binary means the person does not fall strictly under either category. Mickey said there are different variations of being non-binary, but in general, a non-binary person is one who does not align with standard ideas of gender.

They said they began to notice a change in the nation only days after President Trump won the election.

"We've got a pride flag just out on our porch hung up and I remember two or three days after Trump was elected to office, my neighbor came by and told me how brave we were for having our pride flag out and I think that's maybe when I realized that I had something to fear under this office," Mickey said. "That's a lot of what it was immediately afterward. Just fear of what is going to happen. How are we going to continue to live?"

For Mickey, this fear was not something they always knew. They said under the Obama administration they felt as if the queer community had an ally in times of hardship, but Trump instills a sense of fear in the community as he either ignores issues or inspires them.

"Now we don't have anybody who is going to listen to what we've got to say about it. Before there was at least hope that something could change," Mickey said. "Now it's like we're fighting an uphill battle in the pouring rain walking knee deep in mud trying to win a battle and still trying to have people hear us over the thundering voice of President Trump who just spouts nonsense most of the time."

Mickey said being queer in Trump's America is more difficult than in previous administrations.

Dealing with hardship is not something new for Mickey. Although they have never dealt with it on a national level, their personal life has been riddled with it.

As the oldest sibling in a single-mother household, Mickey said they were often forced to take on a parental role with their younger sister.

Cassandra Bush, Mickey's younger sister, said she appreciates everything Mickey did for her when they were growing up.

"It was pretty hard on my mom working two to three jobs and always being away. Sometimes Mickey had to make me dinner and even put me to sleep before my mom would come home. On a child that is pretty hard but I can't imagine how tough that role was to suddenly have to be an adult at 12, but they always managed," Cassandra said. "Money has always been tight but me and my sibling were always fed and had our homework finished and Mickey was a big part in making that happen."

As a child, Mickey said they began to realize they were queer as young as fifth grade. Despite this early realization, Mickey did not come out until high school when they said they were outed by a friend.

Mickey was one of a small group of closeted friends at their high school. Although they all knew and respected each other, it was one of these friends who outed Mickey by asking about their girlfriend in the middle of class. Unknown to this younger friend, no one in the class knew. Mickey said it started with someone being surprised and spread around the school so quickly their sister knew by the time they got home.

"A lot of people who would talk to me before, they didn't really say anything negative to me, but they just stopped talking to me," Mickey said. "The people I would usually sit by in class and talk to, they were just not about it. Definitely not the kind of control I would have liked



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICKEY BUSH

Mickey Bush said they are concerned about the queer population under Trump's presidency.

to have over that situation, but you know, shit happens."

This would not be the end of Mickey's high school problems. Soon after, one of their best friends turned on them and convinced the rest of their friends to do the same. Mickey said all of these things combined caused them to have to take a day off school. This was the day they finally came out to their mother.

Mickey said their mother was very receptive and supporting of them being gay and even invited their girlfriend over. However,

Mickey said their father does not know and because he is not in the picture they would like to keep it that way.

Although Mickey's mother took their being gay well, they were still afraid to come out to their mother as being non-binary. Having only started to come out as such a year and a half ago, Mickey is still in the process.

"That conversation was a lot more difficult," Mickey said. "I didn't even know how to begin to

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