

Club Spotlight: Gay-Straight Alliance

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When I first joined the St. Andrews chapter of the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), it was in support of my friends. One, was a gay male the other a lesbian. I had no idea what to expect from a meeting or if I, as a bisexual would fit in to this entire equation. The same thoughts may be going through the minds of many people on campus, whether they are straight, bisexual or otherwise.

October is national Anti-Bullying month (It is also GLBT history month). And, while bullying can effect anyone that may be the least bit different, it is a huge problem for people in the LGBT community. Both of the friends that I mentioned before, they're still interested in being active on campus through spots, clubs, and activities. In many of those cases, they felt that they had to change to be a part of the campus community. This change, ranged from hiding their sexual orientation, all the way to changing their personality to be closer to some gender norm. While a lot of people may not see this as a problem, they may never think of how they would feel if the roles were reversed. How would they feel if they were not accepted because of something that was so much a part of themselves, like their voice or preference in music?

The Gay Straight Alliance is not a club here to push an agenda or change people. Our goal is to promote a community of acceptance, where everyone can feel at home, grow, and be successful. While promoting bullying preven-



tion is one of our main goals, we also attend conferences once or twice a year, focused on the LGBT community and how they are viewed in smaller communities— such as teams or campuses— as well as the world at large. While global media provides a wonderful resource for information, it can also promote stereotypes that are not necessarily true, such as the portrayal of gay men. I've met many straight guys who will tell you in a second that all gay men aren't real men, but limp-wrist boys that wished that they were women. In school and through my experience with GSA, I can tell you that guys and girls, gay and straight can be found in every possible flavor. The point that we want to show is that every person is different and those differences do not give any one a reason to believe that anyone else, gay, straight lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or whatever, is incapable or undeserving, of a healthy, happy, life where they can be accepted as they are.

To promote the idea that differences don't make the person less, GSA is planning on sponsoring a drag show

along with other campus groups. I feel like this will be a fun way to have people on campus look at their friends, teammate, a classmates in a new light. Who knows, maybe one person will meet someone after the show, who's a little different, someone that they would never usually talk to or would normally ostracize, and find a friend underneath. Also, we will soon begin filming a video for the "It Gets Better Campaign" as well as shooting photos in support of the NOH8 campaign.

For me joining GSA, started as a favor to a friend. But, as President, I want to do a favor to our campus. Through GSA, I want to help people creep out of that comfort zone or niche they've found to discover new things about themselves or just to open a door to being able to communicate with people of new cultures or with different perspectives.

I hope that this little blurb will help bring some new faces to meetings or at least create a desire to support some of our goals if they match your thoughts.

GSA will meet every Tuesday in the Albemarle main lounge a 8pm.

And, yes I know that's the same time that Glee! comes on, but don't worry, you wont miss it.

Also check out these great links
<http://www.noh8campaign.com/>
<http://www.itgetsbetter.org/>
<http://www.pointfoundation.org/index10.html>
<http://www.hrc.org/the-hrc-story/hrc-foundation>

"Think Globally, Act Locally"