

# UtahStateUniversity

## ACCESS & DIVERSITY CENTER

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### A YEAR IN REFLECTION

“The Access and Diversity Center was created to leverage the synergy of what were previously five separate student service offices,” said James Morales, Vice President of Student Services at USU. “Combined under one umbrella unit, these offices can now better serve students by working as one aligned entity.”

Almost a year has passed since Dr. Morales, Vice President of Student Services, made that statement in support of the new Access & Diversity Center. In that time, this organization has accomplished a staggering amount. The individual program coordinators, freed from many of the administrative concerns that once capitalized their time, are now better able to focus on serving and supporting the students of Utah State University in pursuing their goals. This issue of our newsletter includes highlights from each of our Programs. Truly, the Access & Diversity center is a dynamic marketplace of ideas, centered on helping the current and future students of Utah State University succeed. We invite you to stop by our office anytime to meet with our dedicated staff.

### Educational Outreach

Under the direction of Todd Milovich, the volunteers and staff of our Educational Outreach Programs have contributed over 34,000 hours of work to the success of our Cache Valley Schools.

These programs boast 117 student tutors and mentors that are working in 22 different schools. You may have heard of some of our most successful programs: America Reads, Paws, OATS, Mariposa, and GEAR UP.

Our Educational Outreach Programs have an enormous impact on our small community, giving young students the academic, social, and confidence boost they need to thrive. Student success is not limited to their education alone; our programs enrich student’s lives, families, and the



### STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

**Rachel Jaggi**

Rachel Jaggi, LGBTQA intern for the Access & Diversity Center, graduated from Utah State University in Spring 2011 in Honors with a 4.0 GPA and a triple major in German, International Studies and Sociology. She is the recipient of the Presidential Scholarship, the Academic Competitiveness Grant, the Annette-Kade Scholarship, the Lillywhite Scholarship, as well as a recipient of grants from the Sociology Undergraduate Research Fund, the Honors Research Fund, and ASUSU’s Academic Opportunity Fund. She has been named the Valedictorian, Undergraduate Researcher of the Year, Scholar of the Year, and is a nominee for the Legacy Award for the College of HaSS.

She has also been involved in many other activities and organizations at Utah State. As a sophomore, Rachel studied abroad at the University of Bielefeld in Germany, where she was a member of the International Student Union. Upon returning to Utah State, Rachel became an active participant in Alpha Kappa Delta, the sociology honors society, and was also selected as an Undergraduate Teaching Fellow. She has also become a leader in extracurricular campus organizations. She is an active participant in LIFE, the student gay-straight alliance, and an active participant in the OUTSpoken program. She is currently serving as an intern in the Access and Diversity Center. She is also the student representative on the Allies on Campus Steering Committee.

Rachel looks forward to attending graduate school in sociology, where she hopes to research gender and migration. If you would like to support outstanding students like Rachel Jaggi, please contact Michelle Bogdan at 435-797-1729 or email her at [michelle.bogdan@usu.edu](mailto:michelle.bogdan@usu.edu).

community as a whole.

### Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Ally Students

Our LGBTQA Programs promote inclusion and diversity as their primary goals. This atmosphere of acceptance has nurtured incredibly successful programs and popular student organizations, all of which constantly strive to promote diversity on campus and throughout our community.

L.I.F.E. (Love Is For Everyone), one of our student organizations, has sponsored and participated in a staggering amount of wildly successful events. Thanks to the drive and focus of its members, L.I.F.E. has managed to: bring nationally-recognized speakers to campus; provide a safe and open atmosphere for students of multiple faiths, ethnicities, and political creeds; and—most importantly—devoted much effort to giving back to campus and Cache Valley communities. The L.I.F.E. members' dedication and success is particularly impressive when noting that they begin each year with no budget, no pledged support from any university entity, and often face obstacles that other clubs do not have to contend with. Kate Kendall, the Executive Director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, asserted that L.I.F.E. was definitely in the top 2% of university gay straight alliances across the nation. The L.I.F.E. club was a finalist this year for the Robins Award: Organization of the Year.

### Veterans & Non-Traditional Students

Promoting access to higher education is the primary focus of our Veterans & Non-Traditional Student Programs.

Currently, the Veterans Services department educates, counsels, and processes the educational benefits for over 450 veteran students. In addition, we promote Veterans interests across campus by collaborating with university personnel to improve access and retention.

We also offer a variety of services for the Non-Traditional student. Non-Traditional students are often defined as individuals with a greater than three year gap in their education. However, the Access & Diversity center is delighted to be able to include and serve an even broader group of non-traditional students who don't feel they fit the

traditional college student mold. We offer tutoring services for nearly any class taught at Utah State, and through our Non-Traditional Student Association, we are able to offer social and peer group development as well.

### Multicultural Students

The Access & Diversity Center's Multicultural Student Programs work to engage multicultural students in order to provide the following: individualized support, access to resources that increase the likelihood of retention and graduation, opportunities for leadership and leadership development, and opportunities for service/outreach to the community. We offer such programs as REP Week (an orientation program for incoming students), TOPS (an academic course designed to facilitate the social, cultural and academic transition of first year students), Spring Leadership (an academic course designed to teach and enhance leadership and professional skills), mentoring, as well a variety student clubs and organizations.

Our student organizations include: ACES Leadership Club, Asian American Student Council, Black Student Union, Latino Student Union, Native American Student Council, and Polynesian Student Union. These groups invite students to celebrate culture and engage around issues relevant to the communities they represent. During the academic year, the Access & Diversity Center partnered with its multicultural clubs to host several successful events including: Salsabration; Tip Toe into Asia; World Aids Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Candlelight Vigil; Black Out Loud; Soul Food Dinner; Miss Indian USU Pageant; 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Pow Wow; Luau; and Latino Student Union's Soccer Tournament. Our Black Student Union's Soul Food Dinner was honored to receive ASUSU's "Event of the Year" award. Students participating in our Multicultural Student Programs and clubs completed over 500 hours of service and educational outreach to campus and the surrounding community.

### Scholarships

Many of our students would say that one of the most important forms of support we offer is financial assistance. With the economy in a slump, students are returning to USU to improve their marketable skills in record numbers. The decision to attend university often finds our students coping with heavy financial burdens. Through the generosity of our donors, the Access and Diversity Center is able to support those students who represent not only the greatest need, but also the greatest merit.