

**PCLGBTC**  
**2004 - 2005 Executive Summary**

Submitted by: Cathi Wentworth, Chair  
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**Initiatives--**

We began our year with three main initiatives and as we progressed we found the need to add three more. The six major initiatives listed below served to guide our work this year:

1. Put into practice our newly reorganized structure and changes to our by-laws and evaluate our functioning to determine the effectiveness of our new structure.
2. Work to build the Commission's relationship with the President and other key administrators.
3. Get the word out that the Commission exists and we are here to represent the LGBT community to the President.
4. Provide members of the community with ways to give us feedback that will aid us in our future planning efforts.
5. Work more collaboratively with the other Commissions, the University Senate, and the Employee Council.
6. Gain a better understanding of the issues facing people who identify as transgendered.

**Achievements--**

The Staff Concerns Committee sponsored an information table at the campus resources fair during New Student Orientation. Many students and parents stopped by to see what we were about. It is important that we maintain a visible presence at Orientation in order to send the message that there are campus resources available for students and that Emory is an open/inclusive community. We have plans to continue this in the future.

We sent a letter to the President and other administrators requesting a way to communicate Amendment One concerns across campus and asking the University to take a stand regarding the Amendment. This request was met with overwhelming support from the President's Cabinet and the University Senate which resulted in a statement that sought to educate the Emory community about the Amendment and its potential impact. The President's Cabinet, the University Senate, Sharon Strocchia (President of the Senate), Gary Hauk, and President Wagner were all significant contributors to this effort. In addition, an article was published in the Emory Report regarding these efforts and further educating the community and a couple of Commission members wrote letters to the Emory Wheel and Saralyn Chesnut was highlighted in the Emory Report. The PCLGBTC Executive Committee and Saralyn Chesnut were the key contributors in this effort.

During benefits open-enrollment, we co-sponsored an information session for Faculty and Staff on Same-Sex Domestic Partner benefits offered by the University. Five Emory employees attended this event. In the future we understand that HR will make this an ongoing session offered each fall during the annual open-enrollment period. Margaret Clawson, the Staff Concerns committee and Human Resources made this happen.

In December, we sponsored a Holiday Gala which enabled us to make many new friends and enjoy those we already knew. The President and his wife were also able to join us for the festivities. This event was attended by approximately 100 members of the Emory community. Our goals for this event were to provide outreach to the LGBT community as the Commission in an effort to build connections and provide support following a disappointing November vote on Amendment One and to provide a venue for the LGBT community and President Wagner to become better acquainted. Paul Towne and Ben Haddock made it happen.

The Student and Alumni Concerns Committee reviewed the language used on student forms across campus to ensure that the language is inclusive of LGBT persons and reflected University policies.

We began transitioning the responsibility of the annual PRIDE Banquet, held in March, to the Office of LGBT Life. The Commission will continue to provide financial support for this event for at least one more year, however, the coordination of the event will rest with the Office.

The Commission decided not to sponsor the Essay Contest this year as we had no one to volunteer to take responsibility for it and historically there have only been one or two entries. We have begun discussions with the LGBT Studies Committee to determine the feasibility of an academic program taking responsibility for the Contest. We believe in the importance of this Contest, however, we are not sure it is the most effective use of the Commission's time, energy, and money.

Two members of the Commission volunteered to coordinate two lunch roundtable discussions for the Emory LGBT community to give students, faculty, and staff an opportunity to give us feedback about the Commission, the LGBT Life Office, and the climate at the University. Approximately 40 people attended these discussions. Unfortunately, only one or two faculty members attended and very few students. Andy Wilson, JD Davis, and Ali Arain were responsible for coordinating and recording these events. As a result of these discussions, Andy Wilson designed an electronic survey which was distributed through the LGB Announce listserv that allowed individual members of the community to give us more detailed feedback. We received 112 responses to the survey and have plans to hire a graduate student to analyze the data over the summer. We plan to share the findings of this survey with the President and the Office of LGBT Life as it will serve to inform future LGBT related efforts on campus.

Representative members of the Commission and the Director of the Office of LGBT Life worked closely with the Committee responsible for developing the new Discriminatory Harrassment policy to be sure the language was LGBT inclusive and consistent with existing University policy. This process worked beautifully and Sharon Strocchia and Amy Adelman were very accommodating and wonderful to work with.

We co-sponsored a brown-bag lunch event with EGALA (Emory Gay and Lesbian Advocates) to assist LGBT couples in planning their legal protection. Beth Littrell of the ACLU of Georgia presented. Approximately 35 people attended this event. Margaret Clawson and the Staff and Faculty Concerns Committee coordinated this event with EGALA.

This year's membership drive was one of the most successful ever. We received 22 applications/nominations and had 8 openings to fill. We attribute the increase in numbers of applicants to the increased visibility of the Commission and the e-mail sent out by Gary Hauk's office announcing the membership drives for all three Commissions. Gary's use of e-mail to announce our membership drives across campus was greatly appreciated and we hope he will continue this type of annual support for all three Commissions in the future.

We sponsored an information session on Transgenderism for Commission members. Approximately 20 Commission members attended. Saralyn Chesnut and a guest speaker, Scott Turner Schofield, an Emory alum who identifies as transgendered, were the presenters.

The Staff and Faculty Concerns Committee worked with representatives from other Commissions and the Employee Council to secure a table for the Commissions at this year's Staff Fest. We had several Commission members volunteer to work at the table throughout Staff Fest. Unfortunately, our table was a challenge to find as it was mixed in with some of the games and since the Staff Fest had to be moved indoors due to inclement weather space was limited and crowded.

Representatives from the PCLGBTC served on a committee sponsored by the Alumni Office with the purpose of creating an LGBT Alumni Affinity Group. This group has enjoyed great success this year with their first big event taking place during Emory Weekend: the LGBT Blue Jean Brunch. There were 42 attendees at the event which took place in the atrium of the Math and Science Building.

This summer we will be updating the Commission's website thanks to the work of Ron Gatlin, Rebeca Quintana, and Kathy McKee.

We had a beginning of the year retreat to develop our initiatives and make plans for the year and an end of the year retreat to evaluate our year and begin planning for next year. Both of the retreats were extraordinarily successful.

We determined that we were pleased with the majority of changes to the Commission's structure/by-laws and would continue in our current direction for another year.

We invited President Wagner and Provost Lewis to our meetings and upon an offer by the President, we voted to invite him to join us for an "executive session" meeting for the first 20 minutes of each meeting in the future as needed. The Commission requests that this time with the President serve as an opportunity for him to ask for our feedback on important issues and an opportunity for us to inform him about important issues facing our community at Emory and beyond.

We implemented a New Member Orientation meeting this year to share the Commission's history, role, bylaws and logistics with the new members. We also discussed what it means to be a Commission member, how to be an effective and involved member and what is expected of Commission members. This was well received by participants.

As Chair, I participated in many meetings with the leaders of the other Commissions, the University Senate, and the Employee Council. Some of these meetings were with the EOP office, some with the Provost and some with President Wagner. Each of these meetings was informative and gave us an opportunity to learn more about the operation of each group, build alliances across groups, and made it easy to collaborate with each other as needed.