

2015

LGBT+ COLLEGE CONFERENCE PROGRAM



Middle Tennessee State University

April 9 - 11

MESSAGE FROM CONFERENCE CORPORATE ADVISORY BOARD

On behalf of the 2015 LGBT+ College Conference Corporate Advisory Board, I welcome and thank you for sharing in this year's event! The vision and leadership of MT Lambda and MTSU continues to break new ground here in the state of Tennessee, and your attendance is part of that vision. As a Diversity and Inclusion advocate and professional I immediately accepted the invitation to join the Corporate Advisory Board (CAB) in 2014, and was honored beyond measure to be called to the Chair role for the 2015 conference. As a participant this year you are going to be "WOWED" by the quality of the programming and events designed to better equip you to embrace who you are, and have the courage to bring that whole person into every aspect of your life

The conference CAB is comprised of business and community leaders who strongly believe in the significant impact this event is having on our future locally and beyond. Our primary focus is three-fold: 1.) Share information with our colleagues and peers, encourage their participation and attendance, 2.) Offer advice and counsel to the programming and presentation efforts, and 3.) Secure financial and public support for this tremendous undertaking.

I would like to personally thank the members of the CAB, listed on the back of this program, for their time, talents, and gifts of partnership with the student body, faculty, and leadership of MTSU. It is such a rewarding experience to work in tandem with other professionals who value an inclusive approach to the ever "Diversifying" workforce, community, and world.

I am not an Alum of MTSU, though I am able to live vicariously and inclusively through my husband who is a proud MTSU Alum. It is that MTSU heritage coupled with a vision for the future that has lit the fire of passion that you will experience here at the conference. What you are able to glean and apply from this year's event will make our TN college campuses, workplaces, and the world a better place for all. Engage, Embrace, and Enjoy the conference!



DENNIS A. STULL

Director-Elect TNSHRM

2015 Corporate Advisory Board Chair

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CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS

Barbara Turnage
Bea Perdue
Belinda Kane
Bobbie Porter
Colby Jubenville
Diane Easter
Greg Cason
Jonathon Breeding
Joshua Rigsby

Lance Silva
Maria Salas
Richard G. Moffett III & Beverly G. Burke
Ron Balcarras
Ron Snitker
Terry Bird
Vernice "FlyGirl" Armour
William Coleman & Dennis Stull
William Langston



WELCOME LGBT+ CONFERENCE ATTENDEES!

On behalf of the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce and the Convention and Visitors Bureau, I'd like to welcome attendees of the 2015 LGBT+ College Conference to the heart of Tennessee! Our graceful architectural structures date back to the early 1800s and blend perfectly with modern shopping, dining, medical facilities and amenities to lend a touch of Southern nostalgia to our vibrant and growing community.

While you're here, please explore! Located on the historic Murfreesboro Public Square is the stately Rutherford County courthouse; this dates back to pre-Civil War times when it also served as a watchtower, a ballroom, and a prison. The Stones River National Battlefield and Cemetery commemorates those who fought at the pivotal Civil War battle that began on New Year's Eve in 1862. Other historic sites include Cannonsburgh Village—a reconstructed 1800s Southern village, and two antebellum homes that played crucial roles during the Civil War: Oaklands Mansion and the Historic Sam Davis Home & Plantation. Recreation is an important part of life in our county—visit our 10-mile paved Greenway system, golf courses, multiple parks, as well as scenic Percy Priest Lake.

Don't miss out on great shopping and dining. Besides unique specialty shops in the downtown district, we have retail developments, antique malls, Stones River Mall—a community favorite for generations, and The Avenue® Murfreesboro—

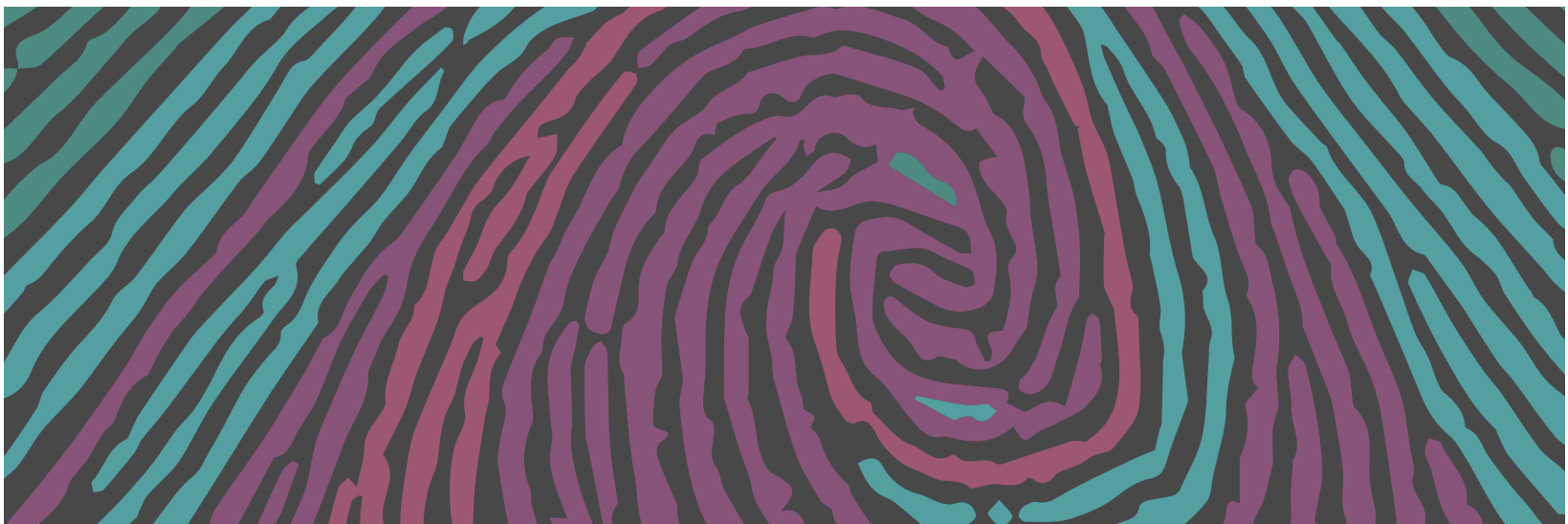
Tennessee's largest outdoor retail and dining destination. We are pleased to offer a wide range of dining experiences to suit every budget and taste—choose from over 350 restaurants!

Be sure to stop by our state-of-the-art Visitors Center, which features a Civil War timeline, kiosks with details on attractions, lodging, dining, shopping and events, and maps and guidebooks of the area. Our gift kiosk, Rutherford County Keepsakes, is a great place to pick up local products and souvenirs.

If the Chamber of Commerce or Convention and Visitors Bureau can be of any assistance, please call our office at (615) 893-6565 or check out our website at www.ReadySetRutherford.com. Again, my best wishes to each of you!

Cordially,

Paul Latture, III, President
Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce



2014 REFLECTIONS

Last year, with the launch of the Inaugural LGBT+ College Conference, we hosted representatives from twenty-one colleges and universities, public and private, as well as a number of community colleges. These diverse groups convened to examine issues that have an impact on LGBT+. April 10 -12, 2014 marked for participants an opportunity to examine a variety of topics designed to empower students and administrators to bring change back to their campuses.

Throughout the first day of the conference, attendees reflected on their own personal journeys. Beverly Watts, Director of the Tennessee Human Rights Commission, opened the conference by welcoming students from across the state and impressed upon them the importance of fighting for positive social change. Alan Gendreau, the first openly gay NCAA Division 1 college football player, encouraged students to embrace their own identities throughout their college experience, and Stephen Loveless of the Tennessee Equality Project led a strategy session focused on establishing S.M.A.R.T. goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely) for each student organization present at the event.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Members of the Inaugural LGBT+ College Conference Planning Committee presented a state wide LGBT+ campus climate report to the Tennessee Human Rights Commission hearing in Nashville.
- MTSU and Volunteer State Community College collaborated to establish independent Safe Zone programs.
- TBR has joined as a sponsor of the conference and is supporting a more comprehensive campus climate surveys.
- A faculty advisor network has been established to connect groups and campuses in an effort to share resources and unit to generate positive changes on their individual campuses.

The focus of Day 2 was student outcomes, panels and group discussions equipped students with the tools they needed to foster local support for campus events, the skills necessary to work with a college or university to generate positive and inclusive campus change, and the forethought to plan ahead for life after college and bringing one's whole self to work.

Day 3 began with breakout sessions for students to learn about and confront their own biases that they may have concerning members of the LGBT+ community. Over six sessions, conference-goers addressed bullying, trans* issues, LGBT+ and communities of color, and attitudes towards bisexual people. Day 3 concluded with Pastor Bryan Currie's discussion of homosexuality and religion, one of the many high points for attendees, and an empowering experience for attendees from religious institutions who learned ways to discuss LGBT+ issues with their campus administrators.

Since last year we have witnessed several empowering outcomes as a result of the Inaugural LGBT+ College Conference.

RESULTS

- A research program, Tennovation, has been established to identify and address needs of LGBT+ students
- Conference programming this year addresses issues identified on last year's climate survey: veteran support, Greek life, transgender inclusion issues, improving campus programming for LGBT+ students
- Safe zone programs at Christian Brothers University, Volunteer State Community College, and Middle Tennessee State University have been established



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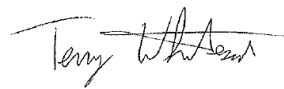
It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2015 LGBT+ College Conference at Middle Tennessee State University. It's especially pleasing to see so many faces back from last year. The partnership between the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences (CBHS) and MT Lambda in the presentation of this event speaks to the foundation of academia. We have to lead in providing education, research, and thought on issues essential to community well-being.

The six academic units that make CBHS have not only been at the forefront of influencing public policy and practice, but in many cases have been among the first to make inclusion a priority. We must continue those efforts for the benefit of the students that we are preparing to enter the workforce. These new professionals will be expected to exhibit competence in their ability to work with and provide services to a diverse population – understanding the essence and importance of diversity and inclusion as well as the real-world applications that our corporate and community friends can share. We also owe it to our supporters to be a resource for research and thought that will translate into next practices for building and maintaining the inclusive enterprises that contribute to uplifting and advancing the whole of us. We have already witnessed the tremendous return on investment from the Inaugural Conference last year. By invitation from Executive Director Beverly Watts, results from the conference survey were shared at the 2014 Human Rights Commission Hearing. Additionally, MTSU and Volunteer State Community College have collaborated to develop and provide SafeZone training. SafeZone programs have been established at Christian Brothers University, Volunteer State Community College, and MTSU and I know there are others planned.

I am most excited about Tennovation, the new research effort which matches organization and community needs with faculty and student researchers across all of our Tennessee colleges and universities. One of the first is the Tennessee Board of Regents partnering with MTSU to collect data regarding the climate for LGBT+ students in all of our system institutions. Having TBR also sign on as a sponsor for 2015 along with Fifth Third Bank and UBS Financial Services should be especially validating to Diane Easter and her corporate peers, who worked so hard last year.

To Dennis and all the members of the 2015 Corporate Advisory Board, thank you! You are standing with us to provide a safe space for open and honest dialogue, applied learning, collaboration and exploration of ideas. All of our students, faculty, and administrators as well as your peers who are with us in 2015 are sure to have a tremendous learning experience. I'm glad all of you in attendance are with us and I know that each of you can and will make a contribution to the success of the 2015 LGBT+ College Conference at MTSU thought to ensure academic freedom for future generations.

Again, I thank you for being a part of the continuous learning that creates new and better outcomes for all of us, now and in the future.





DAY 1

THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2015

Location: Ingram MT Training Center (ING)

Registration 10:00 a.m. | Plenary 10:30-11:00 a.m.

POSTER SESSION I 11:00-12:00

Ingram MT Training Center (ING)

The 2015 LGBT+ College Conference will host poster presentations of research related to LGBT+ issues, especially research focusing on issues affecting LGBT+ college and university students and LGBT+ individuals experiencing various life transitions related to higher education (transition to college/university, transition from college/university to the workplace, transition from the military to a college/university setting, etc.). Research investigating higher education and workplace diversity issues is included.

The theme for this year's conference is Diversify Your World. Conference events will focus on the connections between members of the LGBT+ community and veterans, Greek/fraternal organizations, religious groups, and people in the workforce. Research overlapping with these populations will be presented.

PARTNERSHIP PRESENTATION 12:15-1:15

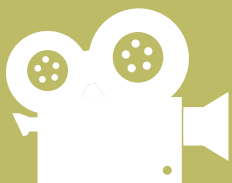
Corporate and community partners are encouraged to bring their research needs to the Tennovation Research Consortium. Tennovation is made up of faculty and centers in higher education in Tennessee who can contribute research expertise on topics such as:

- Employment climate: How do various constituencies view the current climate for different groups? What LGBT+ outreach might an organization need?
- Pilot Interventions: For example, if an organization is developing inclusion policies, they might pilot interventions and determine the most effective training.
- Perception: How do customers, retailers, partners, suppliers, etc. perceive your efforts to reach out to and engage with the LGBT+ community?
- Initiatives: Evaluate conceptual ideas regarding LGBT+ programs or initiatives that need data and analysis to build management, financial, and policy support.

The results of demonstration projects and lessons learned will be presented, and attendees will be encouraged to register their research needs and expertise with Tennovation.

LUNCH BREAK AND INTERACTION TIME 1:30-3:00

POSTER SESSION II 3:00-4:00



LGBT+ FILM FESTIVAL

Sponsored by Tello Films

LOCATION: Keathley University Center Theatre (KUC)

REGISTRATION: 6:00

WELCOME 6:30

The festival features one minute films which have been submitted by conference attendees and community members. Themes of the films will include: coming out (to yourself, to your friends, to your family), love and relationships, hopes and dreams (getting married, starting a family, etc.), and being an Ally/LGBT+ supporter. Short films will also be presented accompanied by a discussion with the filmmakers.



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DAY 2

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2015

Location: Ingram MT Training Center (ING)

Registration 9:00 a.m. | Plenary 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.

PANEL I INTERFACING WITH YOUR INSTITUTION 10:00-11:30

Student organizations frequently host events with an eye to educating and entertaining their campus communities. How can student organizations effectively align their goals with their institution's goals to produce successful events? Panelists will offer timely advice to students from an institutional perspective. How can students work with their institutions to take fullest advantage of available resources and to maximize the impact of their events?

Students planning events can benefit from the practical tips and tricks that will be discussed. Administrators and other professionals can learn how to work with various constituencies for the mutual benefit of all.

Moderator

Dr. John Omachonu, *Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Middle Tennessee State University*

Panelists

Dr. Kenny E. Yarbrough MBA, THD, CDP, *Director, Student Life & Diversity Initiatives, Volunteer State Community College*

Dr. Debra Sells,

Vice President for Student Affairs & Vice Provost for Enrollment and Academic Services, Middle Tennessee State University

Dr. Mellisa Bruninga-Matteau, *Assistant Professor, Martin Methodist College*

Steve Smotherman, *Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores*

LUNCH 11:30-1:00

PANEL II BRINGING YOUR WHOLE SELF TO WORK 1:00-2:30

The panel of highly regarded leaders will discuss how employers seek to understand and acknowledge what each employee brings to the table in order to make them feel appreciated, supported, and motivated to excel. Students preparing to enter the employment pipeline will have an opportunity to gain insights on how potential employers' policies and practices address various dimensions of diversity, including gender identity and sexual orientation. D & I professionals and other leaders in attendance will benefit from open and honest dialogue in building their knowledge and exploring new thought leadership for the benefit of the work unit and organization.

Moderator

Patrick McCarthy, *Professor, Industrial/Organizational Psychology Middle Tennessee State University*

Panelists

Rosa Berger, *Financial Center Manager III, Fifth Third Bank*

Bobbie Porter, *Diversity and Equity Initiatives Director, Tennessee Board of Regents*

Jeffrey T. Webster, *Director Diversity & Inclusion, Americas Diversity Office, Nissan North America, Inc.*

Ron C. Snitker, CEP, *Director, Sales Marketing & Administration Equity Plan Advisory Services, UBS Financial Services Inc.*

BREAK 2:30-2:45

PANEL III VETERANS TRANSITIONING 2:45-4:15

What issues do veterans confront as they transition to a college/university environment? What additional issues confront LGBT+ veterans? Panelists will discuss the veteran experience and the resources that might be needed to assist veterans with their

Panelists

Steve Snyder-Hill, *Author*

Sgt. Kimberly Ligon

Heather A. Conrad, *MS, VetSuccess On Campus Counselor, MTSU*

PLEASE WELCOME OUR KEYNOTE: *VERNICE “FLYGIRL” ARMOUR*



LOCATION: Business and Aerospace Building, State Farm Room (BAS)

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: 7:00-8:30

Biography:

Known simply as FlyGirl, Vernice “FlyGirl” Armour went from beat cop to combat pilot in 3 years. Within months of earning her wings, she found herself flying over the deserts of Iraq supporting the men and women on the ground. After serving two tours overseas, she had become America’s First African American Female Combat Pilot. After returning home, she realized that many people wanted to create breakthroughs in their own lives, they just didn’t know how.

From her experiences, she created a 7-step process called the Zero to Breakthrough™ Success Plan. She now travels extensively sharing this message through her keynotes, coaching and seminars. From the moment she leaps into the audience, she shows attendees how to go from “Zero to Breakthrough” and create a personal flight plan utilizing her candid strategies to win on the battlefield of business and life!

An honorary Doctorate of Laws was conferred on Vernice from Chancellor University in 2010. She has also received awards as a pioneering pilot, to include her commanding role in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). She was the Marine Corps’ first African American Female pilot, first African American woman on the Nashville Police Department’s motorcycle squad, Camp Pendleton’s 2001 Female Athlete of the Year, two-time titleholder in Camp Pendleton’s annual Strongest Warrior Competition, and a running back for the San Diego Sunfire women’s professional football team.

Special thanks to the MTSU Distinguished Lectures Fund, Department of Psychology, MTSU Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance, MTSU Provost’s Access and Diversity Advisory Board, and MTSU Student Activity Fees



DAY 3 SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2015

Location: College of Education Building (COE) Room 160

Registration 9:30 a.m. | Plenary 10:00-10:30 a.m.

KEYNOTE—THE LEGAL AND RIGHT WAY TO INCLUSION, ILONA TURNER 10:30-11:30

As legal protections and personal attitudes toward issues of gender identity continue to evolve, what are the challenges we face on policy and practice fronts?

PANEL I GREEK LIFE AND LGBT+ COMMUNITIES 12:00-1:00 (COE 160)

A panel discussion exploring the difficulties LGBT+ students face when joining or participating in Greek activities on their campus. We will also discuss various ways in which Greek organizations can partner with LGBT+ and Allied student organizations through campus events and programming.

Moderator

Bea Perdue, *Development Officer, MTSU*

Panelists

Dr. Jame'l R. Hodges, *Director, Office of Student Activities, TSU*

Stephen Dominy, *Coordinator of Fraternity & Sorority Affairs, APSU*

LUNCH 1:00-2:15

STRATEGY TALK: TRANS INCLUSION: WHY IT MATTERS 2:15-3:30

Presented by Dr. Marisa Richmond

Recent developments in federal law have effectively banned discrimination in the workplace and in schools towards transgender employees and students, and yet, the discrimination continues and implementation of equality rules remains lacking. We will discuss what federal language means and the tools that are available to end discrimination.

STRATEGY SESSION INTERFACING WITH YOUR INSTITUTION 2:15-3:30

This strategy session complements the Interfacing with Your Institution panel discussion. The strategy session is designed to provide hands-on tips and tricks from experienced leaders who have met the challenges of hosting successful events and who can share that knowledge with participants. Attendees will have a choice of the following sessions:

Incorporating Recurring LGBT+ Programming

Presented by Donna Braquet, UT-Knoxville

LGBT+ Programming at Community Colleges

Presented by De'Marcus Jackson, Columbia State Community College

Planning Large Events

Presented by Allison Heming, UT-Knoxville

LGBT+ Programming at Private Institutions

Presented by Brock Swims, Christian Brothers University

PANEL II RELIGION AND LGBT+ COMMUNITIES 3:45-5:00

A panel discussion exploring the difficulties LGBT+ students face when attending a religious college or university. Often times these students face barriers to establishing LGBT+ inclusive campus policies and are sometimes faced with push back from their institutions when hosting LGBT+ events or programming. This panel will explore various strategies that bridge the gap between students and these institutions.

Moderator

Pastor Bryan Currie, *Interim Pastor, Holy Trinity Community Church*

Panelists

Tom Hilyer

Rev Mary Louise McCullough, *Second Presbyterian Church*

Keven Lewis, *President, Interfaith Affirming Alliance, MTSU*

CONFERENCE CLOSING AND ACTION PLAN REVIEW 5:00-5:30

Participants will “report out” key learnings from the conference and make recommendations for next year’s agenda.

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DR. JOHN OMACHONU

Dr. John Omachonu is currently Vice Provost for Academic Affairs at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). He also serves as the institution's Chief Diversity Officer. A Professor of Electronic Media Communication and a radio broadcaster by training, Omachonu came to MTSU in July 2004. His previous experiences include department chair in Georgia and New Jersey; and executive director of collegiate broadcast media facilities in Florida and Georgia, as well as associate dean and interim dean both at MTSU. Dr. Omachonu's educational background includes a Ph.D. in Mass Communications from Howard University in Washington, DC.

DR. KENNY E. YARBROUGH

Dr. Kenny Emmanuel Yarbrough serves as the Director of Student Life & Diversity Initiatives at Volunteer State Community College. He manages and drives college wide diversity initiatives and manages all student organizations. He serves on the President's Cabinet in the capacity of Professional Staff Chair. He has implemented several initiatives at Vol State that have been instrumental in the retention and persistence of minority students. He joined Volunteer State Community College from working in the non-profit arena in Durham, NC, as the Associate Director of The Renaissance Education Group Inc.

DR. DEBRA SELLS

Dr. Sells completed her Bachelors of Arts in Sociology and Communications at Hope College, located in Holland, Michigan. She completed her Master of Social Work with a concentration in Interpersonal Practice and Clinical Casework at the University of Michigan in 1983. She completed her Doctorate of Education at Arizona State University in 1996 with a dissertation entitled "The Freshman Year Experience: A case study of a freshman living-learning center." Dr. Sells has served in the division of Student Affairs at Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa; California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo; and at Arizona State University in Tempe. Dr. Sells joined the administration at Middle Tennessee State University in January of 1996.

BOBBIE PORTER

Ms. Bobbie Porter is Diversity and Equity Initiatives Director for the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR), one of the largest higher education systems in the country. In her role at the TBR, she is responsible for developing and leading system-wide diversity and inclusion initiatives for the 46 institutions within the system and serves on the agency's Completion Delivery Unit which works to facilitate the board's strategic goals to close success gaps for underrepresented minority and low-income students. Bobbie holds a Masters of Public Administration from Tennessee State University and a BA in Communications from the University of Memphis. She lives in Murfreesboro with her husband and their three children.

DR. MELISSA BRUNINGA-MATTEAU

Dr. Bruninga-Matteau has a BA in English from Gustavus Adolphus College, and a BA in History from the University of Montana, Missoula. She completed her MA and PhD in Medieval European History at the University of California, Irvine in 2011. After teaching in California, Arizona, and Washington, DC, she is currently an Assistant Professor of History at Martin Methodist College in Pulaski. In addition to her teaching duties, she is the advisor of Equality Alliance and Phi Alpha Theta, and the Co-Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence.

STEVE SMOTHERMAN

After attending college at ETSU and a successful career in Learning & Development that includes the last 10 years as at Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores Corporate Headquarters, Steve has added a new chapter to his career—LGBT workplace advocate. Steve was a founding member of Cracker Barrel's LGBT Alliance where he has chaired the group since 2011. He is an active member of the Nashville LGBT Chamber of Commerce, HRC, LGBT ERG Leadership of Nashville, and a Certified Out & Equal Diversity Trainer. His passion for workplace inclusion has been recognized by those both inside and outside the Cracker Barrel organization. A recent Unite Magazine poll listed Steve as one of the top 50 most influential LGBT individuals in Nashville. Steve lives with his partner of 20 years in Gallatin, Tennessee. Steve has two sons, who are his proudest personal accomplishments.

SGT. KIMBERLY LIGON

Sgt. Kimberly Ligon is a Masters of Social Work student at Middle Tennessee State University. She also works at the Boys and Girls Club of Murfreesboro. Dr. Barbara Turnage, MSW Coordinator and professor, describes Sgt. Ligon as "dedicated to being part of the solution in everything that she encounters, and that is going to make her a success and an asset to our program and the profession." Kimberly completed her first overseas deployment in 2014 at Bagram Airfield, the largest U.S. Military base in Afghanistan.

REV. MARY LOUISE McCULLOUGH

Rev. Dr. Mary Louise McCullough is senior pastor at Second Presbyterian Church Nashville, an open and inclusive congregation. Previously she was pastor of a similar church in Pittsburgh, Pa. and began her ministry at an inclusive church in San Francisco. Mary Louise has been shaped by seeing the gospel primarily through the lense of social justice. She understands Christian spirituality as deeply entwined with God as Lover of justice. She is a former journalist and graduated from San Francisco Theological Seminary.

DEREK FRISBY

Derek W. Frisby formerly served as an Associate Professor of History and is now a Faculty Coordinator for the College of Liberal Arts and International Education at Middle Tennessee State University. He continues to teach Tennessee, US, and military history for both the Global Studies and Cultural Geography program and History Department. He is a Middle Tennessee native, MTSU alum, and US Marine Corps veteran whose research interests deal with military occupation and reconstruction strategies and his teaching emphasizes the connections between warfare and society. He currently leads the “Warfare and Public Memory” Education Abroad courses to battlefields such as Iwo Jima, Peleliu, western Europe, Sicily/Italy, and Vietnam analyzing the interpretation and preservation of these sites.

JEFFREY T. WEBSTER

Jeffrey Webster joined Nissan in 1985 as a production technician at the company’s vehicle assembly plant in Smyrna, Tenn. In 1989, he transitioned to the Human Resources team as an employee relations representative. He was later promoted to employee relations section manager and served in that role in several different production areas. In May 2001, Webster transferred to the Canton plant to serve as department manager for employee relations, training, organizational development and communications. He was promoted to his current position in March 2006. Webster earned a bachelor of business administration degree from Middle Tennessee State University.

RON C. SNITKER

Ron Snitker, MBA, CEP, is the Director of Sales Marketing and Administration at UBS Financial Services Inc. He is also the co-chair of UBS Pride Americas, UBS’s LGBT Employee Resource Group, with over 650 members. Ron is active with several local and national philanthropic causes. Ron is currently on the Nashville LGBT Chamber of Commerce Board and leads the Marketing committee. During nearly 20 years as a Nashville resident Ron has held positions, chaired events, or volunteered with The Oasis Center, Nashville CARES, Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Nashville Symphony Guild, and Blair School of Music Guild.

HEATHER A. CONRAD

Heather has worked with the veteran population for the last 20 years. She has been employed with Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) since early 1997. Most recently she has managed and directed VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) at MTSU. MTSU was the first school in the state of TN and the 12th nationally to partner with the VA to adopt this program. Heather loves her work and the gratification of being able to assist veterans and their family members in becoming successful in this phase of their lives. Heather was awarded “VetSuccess on Campus counselor of the Year” award 2014.

PASTOR BRYAN CURRIE

Bryan Currie is the Pastor of Christian Education and Congregational Care at Holy Trinity Community Church – a UCC congregation that proudly serves Nashville’s LGBT Community. Bryan has walked several roads during his 15+ years of ministry, including traveling the country for more than a decade as a pastor and keynote speaker for Christian youth events. In addition to studying theology and earning his Master’s in Divinity in 2001, Bryan also completed a MA in youth development – focusing his study on working with LGBT youth. Although Bryan is a southern boy at heart, he spent several years in New York City managing youth programs for a non-profit organization that serves LGBT youth in NYC schools. Bryan has spent many hours studying scripture and talking with folks in the gay community – both in church and community settings – about what the Bible does (and doesn’t) say about homosexuality. He’s excited to share with our community also!

DR. MARISA RICHMOND

Dr. Marisa Richmond is the Lobbyist of the Tennessee Transgender Political Coalition. In 2008, she became the first openly transgender person to win an election in Tennessee when she was elected to the Davidson County Democratic Party (DCDP) Executive Committee. She is now in her fourth term and currently serves as a Vice Chair of DCDP. Also in 2008, she became the first African American, transgender person to serve as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention from any state. Dr. Richmond has three degrees in U.S. History from Harvard University, the University of California, Berkeley, and her Ph.D. from George Washington University.

JAME’L R. HODGES

Dr. Jame’l Hodges received his Bachelor of Arts degree in English with a minor in Mass Communication from Virginia State University; his Masters of Science degree from Florida State University in Higher Education Administration and his Doctoral degree from the University of Southern California’s Rossier School of Education. Hodges is an active member of NASPA, SACSA and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated. This past summer he was selected to participate in the Mid Manager’s Institute sponsored by NASPA and SACSA Region III. Aside from his full time work at TSU, he also makes time to present leadership development to several colleges and Universities.



ILONA TURNER

Ilona Turner is Legal Director of the Transgender Law Center, the largest national organization dedicated to advancing the rights of transgender and gender nonconforming people. Ilona previously worked as a staff attorney at the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and as the lobbyist for Equality California. She has written numerous articles on transgender and LGBT rights issues. She received her J.D. from the University of California, Berkeley School of Law.

KEVEN LEWIS

Keven is a student at MTSU completing degrees in Anthropology, Religion, and Jewish Studies. His academic interests lie in the Anthropology of Religion, and upon completing his undergrad career, he intends to pursue his PhD exploring the intersections of religious and sexual identities. As an undergrad he has worked with various communities at MTSU including MT Lambda, the Religious Studies Association, and is the founder of the Interfaith Affirming Alliance; whose goal is to provide a place for individuals of all backgrounds, religious or non-religious, to come together in a welcoming and safe environment.

PATRICK McCARTHY

Dr. McCarthy is a Professor and the Industrial/Organizational (IO) Psychology Program Director for MTSU. He received his Ph.D. in I/O Psychology from George Mason University and his J.D. from the Nashville School of Law. Dr. McCarthy is a licensed attorney and has over 25 years of HR consulting experience with over 50 organizations. He has previously served as Director of MTSU'S Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness and has served on the Leadership Development Executive Board for the Tennessee State Collaborative on Reforming Education.

STEPHEN SNYDER-HILL

Stephen Snyder-Hill joined the military in 1988 and served nearly three years on active duty in Germany and fought in the first Gulf War in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait before his honorable discharge in 1996. He reenlisted in 2001 and was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn in 2010. Throughout his military career, Snyder-Hill received numerous awards and decorations, including the Meritorious Service Medal.

TOM HILYER

Tom Hilyer is a native of Alabama, and graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (MRE/MDiv), Auburn University (MHS) and Belmont University (MEd). He has served in several pastoral roles, including lead pastor of a deaf congregation, youth minister and minister of education. For 14 years he served as a Baptist missionary, first in Spain and later in West Africa. After his divorce in 1992, (his "wake-up call"), Tom left the mission field and taught at Auburn University for 6 years. In 2001 he came out to some of his family and friends, and began the quest to answer the question that has consumed most of his life: Can a gay person be a true disciple of Christ? He presently works as a high school Spanish teacher, and serves his church, Holy Trinity Community Church, as vestry chairman.

ROSA BERGER

Rosa is a Financial Center Manager at Fifth Third Bank and currently manages the Music Row banking center in Hillsboro Village. With over 15 years in financial management experience, she has received multiple awards for production and performance. Rosa is the Co-Leader of the Fifth Third Bank LGBT Business Resource Group and is very active in the Nashville community. Lending her time to Nashville Cares, The Oasis Center, Cable, Nashville Pride, and Nashville in Harmony, Rosa is a familiar face in the nonprofit and LGBT activist space.

STEPHEN DOMINEY

Stephen Dominy serves as Coordinator of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs at Austin Peay State University. He graduated undergraduate school from Mercer University in 2009 where he received his BBA in Integrative Marketing Communications. He went on to graduate school at Florida State University where he received his masters in Higher Education and Student Affairs. He currently serves as the Southeastern Interfraternity Council (SEIFC) Assistant Executive Director and is the incoming co-chair of the NASPA Fraternity and Sorority Knowledge Community. Stephen's interests include karaoke, vocal and instrumental performance, leadership development, and Seminoles football.

BEA PERDUE

Bea Y. Perdue is currently the Director of Development for the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). She is responsible for building public and financial support for the six academic disciplines that reside in the College. Her unique professional career with success in marketing, information technology, higher education and non-profit leadership enables her to develop, assess and align strategic priorities for maximum return on organizational investment. Her areas of expertise include marketing, human capital training and development, community engagement and specialized non-profit initiatives.

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