

## HOW YOU CAN BE AN ALLY

**Don't assume everyone is cisgender and heterosexual.** Recognize that gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, etc. people are present in every walk of life, in every community. Almost everyone knows someone who is a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, but they may not know that their friends, family members, or co-workers identify with the community.

**Recognize the diversity in our community.** Our communities consist of people from all different backgrounds, different sexual orientations and gender identities, different racial and ethnic groups, and from all religious and spiritual paths. Create an atmosphere of acceptance and celebration of diversity in your surrounding area.

**Avoid making assumptions based on stereotypes.** Don't assume an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity because of the way they look, dress, or act. Assumptions based on stereotypes are often inaccurate and can be quite hurtful.

**Come out as an ally.** Let other people know that you are supportive of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer people.

**Get involved with the fight for LGBTQIA+ civil rights.** Stay up to date with SGD-relevant issues in your school, business, state, and nation. Consider donating to a LGBTQIA+ equality organization (i.e. HRC, Lambda Legal, ACLU).

**Continue to educate yourself.** If you don't understand something, look to local or online resources, read an article or book, and participate in discussions related to LGBTQIA+ issues and individuals.

**Try gender neutrality.** Use gender-neutral terms when discussing significant others (e.g., "my partner and I...", "my spouse..." etc.).

**Discuss issues of importance to LGBTQIA+ individuals and communities.** Do this in a positive, non-judgmental manner.

**Provide information and referrals of resources for LGBTQIA+ individuals.** Familiarize yourself with local and national resources on SGD-related issues. Refer people to offices, individuals, and other resources that have the information they need. Be willing to assist people in accessing support and information.

### For Faculty and Staff:

- If you are a faculty member, facilitator, or instructor, include information in your syllabi or handouts to show that you are an ally to all students, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. This can be done for any underrepresented group and can coincide with university nondiscrimination policies.
- Incorporate SGD issues and LGBTQIA+ individuals into course curriculum. Many historical and contemporary figures are members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Use examples involving LGBTQIA+ people/situations in math and economics courses. Look at healthy same-sex/same-gender families, couples, and individuals in sociology, child development, psychology, etc. Talk about LGBTQIA+ individuals in education and leadership courses.
- Incorporate SGD issues and LGBTQIA+ individuals into staff development. Residence hall assistants, university police, health care providers, administrative assistants, and custodial/facilities staff will encounter LGBTQIA+ individuals in the course of their work. Their attitudes toward students and co-workers who are members of the LGBTQIA+ community will make a big difference in the university climate and culture.
- Review your department's publications. Suggest changes ensuring documents are inclusive of all sexual orientations and gender identities. If appropriate, create publications specific to the needs of the LGBTQIA+ population (e.g., health services brochures, support materials, etc.). Doing this will convey that LGBTQIA+ students are valued.