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The Vermont Coalition of Lesbians and Gay Men

in their work to pass legislation guaranteeing equal rights to Lesbians and Gay men in Vermont and insuring protection for People With AIDS and HIV+ persons. Contribute to our cause and add your name to our mailing list. We need your help.

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THANK YOU!

National Teleconference Held at UVM and Castleton

Pat Noll

"Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Students" was the title of a national teleconference presented February 6th, by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and National University Teleconference Network and hosted by UVM and Castleton State College. The program focused on assisting campuses to deal with homophobia and harassment and to provide a supportive environment for gay, lesbian and bisexual students. Students, faculty and staff from area colleges and universities attended, providing an opportunity to network and compare experiences and programs.

The teleconference panel, responding to prepared and live phone-in questions, included Rosalind Andreas, V.P. for Student Affairs at UVM, Kevin Berrill, Director of the Campus and Anti-Violence Projects of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, L. Lee Knepelkamp, Professor at Teachers College/Columbia University, Kathy Obear, President of the Human Advantage and Jamie Washington, a doctoral intern and former Assistant Director of Residential Life at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County.

Speaking from personal as well as professional experience, panelists responded to a broad spectrum of questions highlighting the particular needs of college

students and their campuses—Does curriculum include gay/lesbian/bisexual studies or integrate those life experiences in other subject areas, and if not how can they make that happen?, the importance of relationships and the difficulty for gay, lesbian and bisexual students in finding, socializing with and developing open loving relationships with one another, questions of free speech and distinguishing between the legally permissible and the morally offensive, acknowledging, as individuals and as institutions, gays, lesbians and bisexuals as one aspect of diversity in the college community.

A strong position was taken that the gay, lesbian and bisexual population needs "allies", people who identify as heterosexual and are willing to actively support gay, lesbian and bisexual concerns. Too frequently, the task of educating others falls to the oppressed group rather than leadership and initiative coming from administrations and other people in positions of power and privilege.

Comparisons were made between racism, sexism and heterosexism. The panelists acknowledged that gay, lesbian and bisexual issues remain a primary place where lack of knowledge and myths fuel harassment and homophobia. The need for campus-wide education was underscored as was the imperative to create a

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