



BGLAD Newsletter

August, 2000

Bisexuals, Gays, Lesbians and Allies At DuPont

Contact: BGLAD.BGLAD@usa.DuPont.com

See us at www.DuPontbglad.com

4th Annual BGLAD Speaker Event!

BETTY DEGENERES

will speak at the **DuPont Country Club**

Crystal Ballroom

Tuesday, October 3, 2000 at 10:00

Audio Bridge: (973) 628-6885 passcode: 75095

(Replay available Oct 3-5 402-220-0610 or 888-695-

7635 passcode 75095) Co-Sponsored by U. S. HR

DuPont Employees and invited guests are welcome

(if you wish to bring your non-DuPont guest, send a

message to BGLAD with the person's name and

connection to you).

When Ellen came out to her, Betty began a journey

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BGLAD NETWORK

**MEETING October 3rd 2:00
p.m. DuPont Country Club**

BARRIERS TO UNDERSTANDING

BGLAD members are invited to work together with Betty DeGeneres to learn practical ways to help others and ourselves on the journey of understanding and acceptance of bisexual, gay, and lesbian people. The discussion will examine a number of questions, including:

-What are the most difficult barriers to understanding for your child, family, colleagues, (continued on page 2)

This Newsletter is published by BGLAD--Bisexuals, Gays, Lesbians and Allies at DuPont. If you wish to receive the Newsletter, please send a confidential email to BGLAD.BGLAD@usa.DuPont.com or via paper mail to P. O. Box 2192 Wilm., DE 19899-2192. All mail received by BGLAD is confidential. The leader of BGLAD (the Network Liaison) is Carol Lowrie (carol.l.lowrie@usa.DuPont.com). The editor of the Newsletter is Michael Leach (michael.b.leach@usa.DuPont.com) and an assistant is being sought. The Newsletter is published six times per year. Submission of relevant articles and information is very welcome. See us at www.DuPontbglad.com

DEGENERES TO SPEAK OCTOBER 3rd

(continued from page 1)

of understanding and growth. Betty is now a speaker for gay and lesbian rights and the National Coming Out spokesperson of the Human Rights Campaign, the first heterosexual to hold the position. Betty will address the fundamental issues of valuing all people, equity for gays and lesbians, coming out, and domestic partner benefits.

When Ellen came out to Betty during a beach walk 23 years ago, Betty "was shocked." She cried and pored over library books on homosexuality. "I worried about who would take care of Ellen," she says. "I'm of the generation where you got married...period." But as her daughter matured, Betty's fears gradually dissolved.

"I want to help the parents of gay children to just accept that there are differences -- we're not all alike. As long as our gay sons and daughters face discrimination and are excluded from the basic protection of our laws, I will urge all American families to come out for fairness. I am thrilled at this wonderful opportunity to talk with gay and straight DuPonters about the importance of

coming out, because honesty truly is the best policy."

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO LUNCH WITH BETTY DEGENERES AND DUPONT SENIOR MANAGEMENT?

Send BGLAD a message indicating you would like to go to lunch. Space is very limited.

BARRIERS TO UNDERSTANDING

(continued from page 1)

yourself

-What helped the most?

-What hurts happened and how can we prepare for and "positivize" them?

Funding is available for one non-Wilmington (>100 miles distant) person to attend the entire day. If you would like to be in the lottery for the funding, send a note to BGLAD with a paragraph explaining why you should get the travel funds (and don't forget to get your supervisor's support for the work day in Wilmington). This session is open to BGLAD members only.

EDUCATION: THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING

Twenty years ago, DuPont was struggling with embracing diversity and we still are. In 1980, we were working hard to understand how to value women and racial minorities in the workplace. While the journey of understanding isn't over, DuPonters have made great strides. To support each of us in our transition to fully value every person, the CREW (C**reating** a R**espectful**

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Environment Workshop) program is underway in many DuPont organizations. One of the CREW sessions deals with sexual orientation. *Is your site using CREW?* If not, please contact your HR leader to encourage the use of CREW.

CREW isn't the only way to learn about sexual orientation. The Office of the Chief Executive recently held a session with Brian McNaught. Brian worked in Lucent for many years, and led Lucent's program to embrace and accept their non-heterosexual employees. There were very positive learnings in the OCE session: training for the next level of leadership is planned.

Performance Coatings global leadership recently held an awareness session resourced by gay employees in the SBU. This approach is "up close and personal" and was very powerful: top-down support is an essential element in any change. Another technique involves community-sponsored education initiatives, such as the "Empowering Voices for Equal Rights" conference held in Charlottesville, Virginia in April.

Regardless of the method employed, the opportunity to explore different ideas in a safe environment is the key to changing DuPonters understanding of our diversity policy and learning to live it every day. mbl

DUPONT, BOY SCOUTS, AND UNITED WAY

What a dilemma: the good work done by the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) vs. discrimination against gay boys and leaders and certain religious groups.

In this Newsletter, the issues are examined from a variety of perspectives: BGLAD members, DuPont, and the published statements of the BSA.

THE SUPREME COURT DECISION: BSA is a Private Organization and May Discriminate

Boy Scouts of America v. Dale, Supreme Court Case 99-699

Can the state of New Jersey require the Boy Scouts of America, a private group, to appoint a gay scoutmaster without violating the groups' free-speech and freedom of association rights? The Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that the state violated the free-association rights of the Boy Scouts by applying a public accommodation law to force the Scouts to accept a gay scoutmaster.

James Dale, who earned his Eagle Scout badge, became an assistant scoutmaster in 1989. While attending Rutgers University, Dale revealed his sexual orientation during a speech in his capacity as co-president of the university's Lesbian/Gay Alliance group. In July 1990, scouting authorities sent Dale a letter, severing all ties with him. When Dale wrote to inquire the reason,

the response said "the grounds for this membership revocation are the standards for leadership established by the Boy Scouts of America, which specifically forbid membership to homosexuals." Dale sued in state court, saying the Boy Scouts violated a state law, which prevents places of public accommodation from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation. After a trial court judge ruled in favor of the Scouts in 1995, both the Superior Court of New Jersey and the Supreme Court of New Jersey ruled in favor of Dale. The Boy Scouts appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which agreed to hear the case.

Legal principles: The freedom of association includes the freedom not to associate with certain individuals and ideas. Though the First Amendment protects free-association rights, the freedom of association is not absolute. In order to qualify for free-association protection, a group must engage in some form of expressive association. States have a compelling interest in eradicating discrimination in public accommodations.

" The First Amendment protects expression, be it of the popular variety or not." (Justice Rehnquist) "...The fact that an idea may be embraced and advocated by increasing numbers of people is all the more reason to protect the First Amendment rights of those who wish to voice a different view. In fact, until today, we have never once found a claimed right to associate in the selection of members to prevail in the face of a State's anti-discrimination law. The only apparent explanation for the majority's holding, then, is that homosexuals are simply so different from the rest of society that their presence alone - unlike any other individual's - should be singled out for special First Amendment treatment." (Justice Stevens)

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA SUSTAINED BY SUPREME COURT

Press Release: June 28, 2000

We are very pleased with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the Dale case. This decision affirms our standing as a private association with the right to set its own standards for membership and leadership. This decision allows us to continue our mission of providing character-building experiences for young people, which has been our chartered purpose since our founding.

For more than 20 years, the Boy Scouts of America has defended its membership standards. We went to the highest court in the land, the U.S. Supreme Court, in order to do so. The Boy Scouts of America, as a private organization, must have the right to establish its own standards of membership if it is to continue to instill the values of the Scout Oath and Law in boys. Thanks to our legal victories, our standards of membership have been sustained.

We believe an avowed homosexual is not a role model for the values espoused in the Scout Oath and Law. Boy Scouting makes no effort to discover the sexual orientation of any person.

Scouting's message is compromised when prospective leaders present themselves as role models inconsistent with Boy Scouting's understanding of the Scout Oath and Law. Scouting's record of inclusion is impressive by any standard. However, we do ask all of our members to do their best to live the Scout Oath and Law. Today, boys from every ethnic, religious, and economic background in suburbs, farms, and cities know and respect each other as they participate in our program. We thank the parents, volunteers and friends of Scouting who have supported us in this case and others. We respect other people's right to hold differing opinions and ask that they respect ours.

In a support brief filed by three of Scouting's largest chartered organizations, they addressed why Scouting has been so effective for 90 years: "Scouting's program for character development is effective precisely because it teaches through both precept and concrete examples of its adult leaders ... Scoutmasters exist not only to espouse the ideals of Scouting, but more importantly to live and embody them; they are the role models of the Scouting movement."

<http://www.scouting.org/nav/about.html>

BGLAD MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

UNITED WAY SHOULD NOT FUND BOY SCOUTS

Letter to the Editor -- Wilmington News Journal -- July 8, 2000

Bravo to New Jersey United Way agencies for their recent objective and principle-based decisions to terminate support of The Boy Scouts of America. I have nothing personal against the Boy Scouts, but I do loathe discrimination of any kind, and I despise their publicly stated and fought-for policy of discrimination based on sexual orientation. But the Boy Scouts pursued it to the Supreme Court of the United States, and won their case with a ruling that the Boy Scouts are a private organization and they have the right to discriminate based on sexual orientation if they so wish. So be it. Now I would ask that Mr. Charles Anderson of United Way of Delaware continue his record of exceptional leadership and move to expeditiously remove the Boy Scouts from the list of organizations and agencies in Delaware that receive funding from the United Way prior to this years campaign. For Mr. Anderson and United Way this is not a subjective decision, not a political decision, not a personal decision, not a hateful decision, but an objective and principle-based decision. The United Way must not and cannot support or fund any organization that discriminates in any way, shape or form. And in fact it does not, except for the Boy Scouts. Not one of the myriad of organizations and agencies supported by the United Way has any explicit policies or practices that discriminate against anyone on any basis, except the Boy Scouts.

So logically and objectively, regardless of whether you agree or disagree with the Boy Scouts, public funding of their organization is no longer an option.

July 22, 2000

Delaware Voice

On Saturday, July 8th the News Journal printed my letter to the editor, “*United Way should not fund Boy Scouts.*” I talked about an objective, non-political and non-personal decision to be made based upon a fundamental principal. In the two weeks since that letter was printed I have received phone calls, responses have been published referencing diversity, discrimination, influence of homosexuals, and hate mail has arrived at my home.

Let’s look at the issues raised considering that without exception they are not dealing with fundamental principals, but are subjective, political, personal and emotional reactions of intolerance. First the mail. The following is the exact text of a post card I received.

7/8/00

To: Tom B., Fag-Lover & Probable Homosexual

Your miserable creed in the local “rag” today is an absolute farce. Of course, the NJ which looooooves homos gave you plenty of space to air your gripe about the Unite Way.

I think, by this letter you are showing your true colors--that is, you are a homosexual, but don’t lhve the courage to admit it! Thank the Good Lord that the majority of the Supreme Court decided that the great B.S.A. could continue to outlaw “queers.” There is some justice in this world, after all! Why don’t you crawl back under the rock from which you emeged to write this stupid correspondence?

From one who has always loved the Boy Scouts, their honesty, integrity, loyalty and love of God!

An old Boy Scout

The post card arrived in the cowardly tradition of hate mail without a return address and typed with what looks like an antiquated typewriter. Isn’t hate mail against the law – even for *an old Boy Scout*? I don’t think there is a hate mail merit badge is there? I have many friends who are great Boy Scouts and Boy Scouts Leaders. I suspect the *great B.S.A.* would be embarrassed to even think, let alone acknowledge this author is or was ever involved in the Boy Scouts. Personally, I have great value for the note. First, it helps me to teach my children all about hate, ignorance and intolerance. They can see what real personal hate looks like and sounds like because they will never learn it from their father. Perhaps others who read this column – maybe even the Boy Scouts will use the note as an example of things that are NOT morally straight, within the Boy Scout oath or that build character. Secondly, I was born Caucasian, Christian and male in the United States. While I have worked hard and struggled in my life I have had

every privilege afforded to me for nothing else than those 3 simple facts – deserving or not. I suspect the many wonderful and great friends I have that are female, African American, Hispanic, Asian, Gay, Jewish or American Indian are a little more familiar with this brand of correspondence. So by the tiniest of fractions it has given me a small piece of sensitization about their possible experiences in life and about hate and intolerance.

The issues:

For those not wanting children sleeping in a tent with homosexuals. I have some bad news. They already are. They are also in your government, teaching your children in school, coaching them in sports, defending the country, fighting fires, keeping streets safe from crime, running corporations, and looking down your children's throats at the doctors office.

For those believing diversity alone is all about acceptance. Not quite. We were diverse in the 1950's. African Americans sat in the back of the bus, women were not allowed on the course, in the club or at the job, and if you had any mental disabilities you were locked away. A policy, piece of paper or sign in the window that excludes a segment of society is not acceptance or diversity, but historical shame. Only when we *accept, tolerate and embrace* differences will we have a healthy diverse society.

For those who argue against United Way dropping the Boy Scouts. Bless the Boy Scouts and the good they do for so many – it could be so many more. If you wish to support them you know where to send your money. I encourage you to do that. You don't need United Way. No one can challenge your right to support and fund the organization.

Point remains. The Boy Scouts have a policy that excludes a segment of society based upon sexual orientation. That is discrimination, albeit in their case legal. Regretfully nonetheless, it is inappropriate that they receive any public funding, i.e., United Way.

Tom

2000 UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

TO: DuPont United Way 2000 Campaign Leaders

As an employee of DuPont, I've been a generous giver to the United Way for 33 years. A few years ago, as the Boy Scouts started to fight for the right to discriminate against gays, I started to designate a few United Way agencies which don't discriminate as the recipients of my contributions. But now that the Boy Scouts have won the right to openly discriminate against people who are not heterosexual, I no longer feel I can support the United Way at all. I will give my contributions directly to the agencies of my choice by means of 12 checks postdated monthly to cover all of next year.

Open discrimination against gays is one of the last publicly accepted prejudices. Some people still consider blacks, women and maybe even people with certain religious or ethnic heritage as inferior. But few would dare voice such prejudice inside DuPont or in many public circles. People with those prejudices confine their ignorance to small circles of bigoted intimates. However many people still hold that homosexuality is a choice and a bad choice at that. Because of this misconception, society says it's OK for the Boy Scouts to insist that boys change their sexual orientation in order to join. The assumption is that they can and should chose heterosexuality. But we don't choose our sexual orientation. We are born with it. And we must treat all people fairly, equitably and with great respect regardless of their genetic mandate.

I hope that many other DuPonters take the same approach so that the United Way will encourage the Boy Scouts to stop discriminating. If the Boy Scouts chose to continue to discriminate, I'd hope the United Way would no longer provide corporate support for them. As leaders of the DuPont company, I hope you go to the United Way with this message and encourage them to do the just thing... drop the Boy Scouts as a United Way member until the Boy Scouts treat all young boys equally regardless of their genetically predetermined sexual orientation.

Elaine Donald

DUPONT POSITION - UNITED WAY/BOY SCOUTS

The recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling related to the Boy Scouts of America has generated some employee questions about the Boy Scouts' standing as a United Way of Delaware member agency, as well as DuPont's position on this.

This is a very sensitive issue that we are addressing thoughtfully. DuPont has a longstanding commitment to United Way as the preferred channel for providing community services to the people of Delaware who need them most. At the same time, DuPont has a corporate non-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation.

We have spoken to officials of United Way of Delaware regarding this issue. United Way's non-discrimination policy currently does not include sexual orientation. In the fall, United Way will review its discrimination policy and will make its 2001 funding decisions.

We have requested that DuPont be involved in the policy evaluation process. United Way welcomes our involvement. We will strongly encourage United Way to include sexual orientation as part of their non-discrimination policy and make funding decisions accordingly. If this does not occur, we will determine the appropriate action for DuPont in light of our anti-discrimination policy and as a long-time supporter of United Way.

For this year's campaign, we strongly encourage DuPont employees to continue their generous record of giving to the United Way and its member agencies.

If you feel strongly about the Boy Scouts' issue, United Way offers a number of options that will enable you to designate your contribution. These include the CommunityCare fund; giving to TargetedCare areas within CommunityCare; or designating your contribution to the agency(ies) of your choice. All of these options will be clearly explained by your business, function or site coordinator; the options also will be clearly outlined on DuPont's new on-line pledge system.

If you want to make an undesignated contribution, yet object to the funds benefiting the Boy Scouts, you should write a note to the United Way indicating that you want the Boy Scouts omitted from the distribution of your contribution.

We understand the questions and concerns that DuPonters may have regarding this issue. We are committed to working with United Way to fully evaluate the situation in light of our core value to treat all people fairly and with respect.

DuPont External Affairs

A MEMBER RESPONDS

In your recent email you very politely asked me to reconsider my position on discontinuing my support of the United Way. I would like to further explain the position I have taken on the Boy Scouts and their supporters. My position is based on the following premise:

Institutionalized discrimination fuels fear and misunderstanding, leading to hate crimes, including violence against those viewed as "different" or inferior.

Please consider the following:

People are not born with prejudices toward gays, they learn them from others. Prejudices are learned by on-going exposure to consistent messages that gays are different, not "compatible with scripture", "biological defects" as Dr. Laura Schlessinger states, not worthy of equal protection under the law with regard to employment, housing, insurance, health care, spousal rights, adoption, inheritance, and taxes, and now not worthy as members of a long standing institution, the Boy Scouts.

Consider the case of Matthew Shephard. How do you believe his murderers developed their belief systems regarding gays? I assert it was institutionalized discrimination stemming from our government, schools, religious institutions, and social clubs, including the Boy Scouts. And if you think that the case of Matthew Shepherd was an uncommon occurrence, you would be mistaken. Consider the U.S. military- another example of institutionalized discrimination that leads to violence. There are any number of cases of violence in the military to cite, including several recent cases where young men in the military were brutally assaulted and in some cases murdered by fellow military personnel because they were perceived to be different- not worthy of "membership".

Did you know that studies have shown that twenty-five percent of all teenage suicides are believed to be socially tortured homosexual youths who have been made to feel so unworthy that they killed themselves? Did you know that one out of four gay men have been physically assaulted because someone knew or perceived them to be gay? The preponderance of gays and lesbians are the target of a life-time of verbal epaulets, forced to endure gay jokes and ridicule, and often feel un-empowered to speak out for fear of further retribution including the loss of their job or housing? In case you were unaware, there are no federal or Delaware state laws that protect gays in the workplace. Gays are regularly fired from their jobs solely on the basis of their sexual orientation. The Cracker Barrel Restaurant chain, for example, specifically prohibits the hiring of gays and lesbians. There are many other employers who maintain the same policies. All other minorities are protected under federal laws against such discrimination: not gays. What kind of message does this send to our society? To me the message is: Gays and lesbians are not worthy of protection under the law, and what ever they get they deserve. Hate crime statistics support this. Lack of domestic partnership benefits supports this. People's

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willingness to continue support, direct or indirectly, of organizations that openly discriminate against gays and lesbians support this.

Where will this all end? At the greatest extreme, the President of Uganda last year declared that all homosexual citizens of his country are to be imprisoned for life! In certain countries in the Middle East, gay men are publicly tied and placed behind stone walls, which are pushed on top of them. If that doesn't kill them, they are gunned down. While such an extreme measure is, I hope, unlikely here in the United States, I can envision further legislation and public policy to take away basic human rights from populations determined to be different. In deed it is already happening. The recent passage by many states, including Delaware, of the Defense of Marriage Act now formally makes it illegal for two committed citizens of the same gender to marry and therefore be entitled to all the legal rights that go along with it, and further provides that any such persons legally married in other states will not be recognized as such in our great state. It is clear to me that fear, misunderstanding, and hate will continue to erode human rights for our gay and lesbian community unless we speak out.

In my opinion, the Boy Scouts very public position, has fuelled in a major way the fear and misunderstanding of gays and lesbians in our society. Their hollow victory in the courts will validate for many the premise that gays are not worthy of equality, that they are different, and that targeting gays and lesbians through hate crimes is acceptable. Any organization, such as the United Way, or any individuals, who directly or indirectly support organizations who discriminate, fuel fear and mistrust, are themselves partly responsible for the hate, violence and inequity imposed on our gay and lesbian citizens. Therefore, it is essential that we step forward in a very courageous and assertive way and find ways to continue support of responsible charitable organizations- those who unlike the United Way and Boy Scouts, do not have blood on their hands while hiding behind the thinly veiled walls of the "greater good" and the First Amendment.

So, just as you ask me to reconsider my support for the United Way and Boy Scouts because of all the good they do, I too ask you to reconsider your position. For many, this is much more about the continued persecution of gays and lesbians than it is about membership in a club. Frankly, there are many alternative means of providing leadership training to our gay youths outside of the Boy Scouts.

I, for one, am unwilling to turn a blind eye to social injustice, and ask you to remember the five last unqualified words of the Pledge of Allegiance which we all recited in school for so many years, and which you likely lead your Boy Scouts through at the beginning of each of your troop meetings:

"..... liberty and justice for all".

I personally am committed to this effort; it is the corner stone on which this great country was founded. Respectfully, Mark

IT'S NOT JUST UNITED WAY AND BOY SCOUTS
-- IT'S DUPONT

DuPont United Way 2000 Campaign Leaders,

Twenty years ago it was "ok" in DuPont to make racially-offensive jokes, and belittle women. Now the vast majority of DuPonters recognize that regardless of our beliefs, our non-white and female colleagues must have our respect, at the very least at work and hopefully in every setting. DuPont has not made such progress in not discriminating against gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans-gendered people.

I've been a Boy Scout leader for 20 years. I've counseled hundreds of boys and young men with never a care about their personal characteristics beyond attempting to advise them in ways that would really help. For the last 10 years, I've worked extensively with Eagle Scout candidates who struggle with the BSA's requirements about "belief in God", and found in every case that the young men had a spiritual faith, although not necessarily in the traditional organized religious manner.

I know first-hand the wonderful work that the Boy Scout program does. So, it is with considerable anguish that I recommend DuPont sever all ties with the Boy Scouts of America, nationally and locally. The organization advocates organized discrimination of gays and certain religious sects - policies which are anathema to DuPont. DuPont has not yet reached even reasonable compliance with our policy regarding gay, lesbian, and bisexual employees. We must begin to walk our talk, and withdrawal of support of the Boy Scouts should be part of confronting poor performance against our policy.

The United Way has accepted the BSA as an agency for many years. The United Way of Delaware does not require its agencies to be non-discriminatory. If the UW continues this stance, I urge you to withdraw from the United Way entirely or ensure that no DuPont Company contribution aids discriminatory agencies. If the UW continues to permit discriminatory agencies, I urge DuPont to advise all employees in the Wilmington area of UW's posture so that they may decide where to earmark their contributions. As it is unclear how the UW allocates funds, this should also be investigated and a full disclosure made to all employees in Wilmington.

Through our influence of the national United Way program, DuPont should advocate these same changes in all United Way organizations.

Although DuPont has no direct influence on the Delmarva Council, BSA, DuPont should undertake to the Council leadership our lack of support for the discriminatory policies of the Boy Scouts and help the BSA leadership to understand that DuPont, and other companies around the

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world are withdrawing support, nationally and locally. It would be a huge loss to the U. S. if the Boy Scout organization were to go out of business, but we can not support an organization which has policies antithetical to our own.

Lastly, in DuPont, we have not mounted the kind of education and awareness campaign needed to enable many of our colleagues to follow the sexual-orientation portion of our non-discrimination policy. I made those jokes twenty years ago -- the opportunity to learn is what changed my behavior. I want you to strongly advocate a sustained, multi-year educational effort on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans-gender issues in DuPont: it's the only way we will achieve the ideal of "valuing people".

Michael B. Leach

BGLAD MEMBER NEWS

COMING OUT

June 19, 2000

To Whom It May Concern: (editor's note: this letter was written with the intent that it be shared. The addressee is a colleague who actively works for gay rights in their SBU and in DuPont. mbl)

I want to start out this letter by stating that speaking with you in person would have been my first choice had I felt more comfortable and ready. However today I am not where I want to be in my degree of comfort and hopefully this letter to you will help to explain why.

First, let me applaud your efforts and efforts of my fellow-employees (actually all of you are my fellow-employees) for coming forward to tackle issues (real and perceived) which exist today in a world composed of diverse people and cultures. Those of us who are not heterosexual are blessed to be members of every culture and are both included and excluded from every culture. Thanks to each of you for stepping forward to make life and work better for each of us as we strive for acceptance.

I am a person who has served DuPont for many years in several work assignments and in several capacities. I have been located in the Troy area for about 10 years and have connections and work assignments between the Mt. Clemens, Troy and Wilmington sites and connect with various disciplines and levels within those organizations.

As a person who is gay I find the world I live in and work in be a challenge to me everyday in that I don't feel free to bring my whole self into the work place. For sure, bringing one's self as a whole person is a choice we can make but when you bring in elements of a life-style that conjures up so many emotions I chose to leave my outside life "outside".

I know too, that many cultures, not “just” the gay community, face this when coming to the work place, but we can hide better, so you are less able to “help” us (as evidenced by this letter today). We can also be hurt and harmed and you may never know it and it may be a risk on anyone’s part to assist us or try to connect with us (again you are sensing my fear here). This is reality in our world, we cannot have it all, we know this, we just want to be who we are without harm to you and without harm to us.

For sure I don’t wear what I am sexually as a badge of honor -- I am still struggling everyday with being secure in who I am. Working in DuPont over the last several years, I am beginning to see very positive changes that go way beyond policy statements and position statements. I have seen CREW in progress where vignettes are shared and employees get a chance to talk through and share in areas that make us (regardless of gender, race and sexual orientation) uncomfortable. CREW should be alive and nurtured at every level of the organization within the Company with planned “refreshers”.

For the most part, people are supportive and range from accepting to tolerant of homosexuals in the work place at least that is what we like to think, but is it true? There are of course those people who say the Bible condemns us for life, and they are the most hostile and threatening to me and I can only hope those in leadership positions think beyond the Bible (yet another fear!).

For sure there are a lot of people in the work place who don’t like us and would prefer that we not exist and either avoid us and make our work life unpleasant. The unpleasantness comes in many forms and ranges from graffiti on Company property, keying (damage) of cars, gossip and innuendo to name a few. Those who know about us and accept us (notice word tolerate is not used) will ask how are you and “X” doing and how was your weekend. This feels really good.

Those who don’t know me, struggle with what to ask and how to ask it. Those who I have not let in are a struggle for me, continued lying and a sense of betrayal is not a healthy thing for me, for them or for DuPont. One thing for certain, I have never known a member of management to act disrespectfully toward me but I have known fellow workers to be disrespectful toward a fellow gay employee. Why I this? Is the respect from management sincere? I don’t know, it “just-is”.

Ideally, I want to be able to share who I am with you and my management (they probably already know). I’d like to share who I am for at least three reasons:

- 1) Being a whole person is better than being a part of a person and knowing the real me allows me an opportunity to have a better relationship with you and vice versus,
- 2) Resourcing of struggling fellow employees who are where I am today
- 3) Validates to all of us, that we are everywhere and we need and want to be included

In my career right now things are clicking for the organization and me. The last thing I want to do is upset my career or give my organization(s) an “issue” that becomes a “site-wide” event. I know too I cannot have it both ways, I cannot continue to hide who I am and expect things to change. I know too that I cannot expect you to carry a banner for me. I know too that I need to take risks and this letter is a risk but not as big as I’d like it to be.

As I try to further personalize why I feel and what I feel it becomes harder as the hurt comes in many forms and well, you say to yourself after a while “just get over it”. I think of the peers that I interact with on a daily basis. How hard it is to not use the right pronoun when speaking (rarely do I) about my weekend and who I may have spent it with. I know too how hard it is for them to feel I am not telling them everything and engaging them in my life, as they too feel left out. Should I tell them? Will they in-turn tell someone? Is it time? What will happen to me? Will the other gays in the workplace now feel I will betray their confidence that they have in me?

There are more than 10 – 12 people I interact with in the region that are gay and are of every race and gender. As far as I know all of these people are contributing hard-working members for their organizations and who, like me (for now), want to remain anonymous. I feel that for the long-run it would be better for us and the future generation if we put a face and name in place of “anonymous” but this is where I am at for now.

One thing we in DuPont can do more of is to continue educating all of us on why networks exist (BGLAD, ASIAN, Women etc.) and let people know what kinds of benefits each network brings to its membership and to the Company. DuPont should be proud of what networks do for the Company, it brings people together and fosters a sense of belonging and includes people who feel left out (real or perceived) of the mainstream.

If for one minute we think prejudice does not exist in the work place, repaint all walls a neutral color and maybe let all of us experience the terrible things people express about people and differences that scare them. Let us see the “wall of shame” for a week and experience the shock and shame and see how fast the work force rally’s around and begins to “fix” the problem. Anytime I hear a fellow-employee challenge CREW and the powerful messages of CREW, I cannot help but think that their world must be a better place than mine but for now, my world is my world and it should not be judged as a bad world.

In closing, keep doing the good work that you are doing, I support your efforts and we support your efforts. We all deserve to know and respect one another for what we are; and not mask who we are for fear of rejection and prejudice. We all need to work toward acceptance of cultural differences and this is a small step to let you know that there are gay people out there in the work place and there is fear (real and perceived) that we all need to work on.

Name Withheld for the present
Fellow Dupont Performance Coating Employee

GAY DAY AT DISNEY WORLD

I attended Walt Disney World during the Gay Day celebration that the gay community creates by showing up at the Magic Kingdom the first Saturday in June. Anyone who has checked this out on the web knows to wear the color red so you could be recognized as a gay person contributing to the gate take for Disney World.

I arrived by bus from a Disney resort. The bus drivers were instructing people that Disney was expecting large crowds and the Magic Kingdom would be open until midnight. Some of the community purchased T-shirts that said GAY DAY JUNE 2, 2000 so that there was a known presence to the straight community if they could not tell from other hints being observed. The gay community represented 90% of the people in the Magic Kingdom during that day. Parties started various evenings prior to Saturday at various parks and hotels and continued after the gay day. It was nice to be able to walk hand in hand with your partner in a public setting.

The community was together across the various groups of gay men, lesbians and transexuals. Some of the guys wore flashy attire, including red glitter-covered combat boots. I met people from all over the east coast and mid-west. Some came with their kids and others came locally from Florida with friends or partners. There was a parade in the afternoon that turned into a contest with the gay Disney employees trying to get a spot to perform in the parade. The event was very comfortable and safe. Even after the event, my partner and I were recognized at restaurants as a couple. We were asked by more than one waiter if we came down for the weekend and if we were having a good time. Even at Emeril's, not on Disney property, we were asked about our observations and enjoyment of the gay day.

This is a fun event enjoyed by all of the gay community in unity. I stayed for 10 days and did not see any protests during that time and the gay community contributed a large market share of the money taken in during this timeframe.

Virginia

GAY WORLD NEWS

WILL COCA-COLA BE A TREND-SETTER FOR DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS?

By Paul Mueller Jul 17, 2000

It is perhaps the most widely recognized brand name in the world. And now nearly 100 years after a Georgia pharmacist first concocted the caramel-colored syrup put into every one its cans and bottles, the corporate masterminds behind the Coca-Cola logo are serving up even more attention.

This time, the company's gay and lesbian employees, as well as gay and lesbian consumers, are taking notice as Atlanta-based Coca-Cola Co. (NYSE: KO) takes a step 98 other Fortune 500 companies have already taken.

In June, Coke announced it would extend healthcare benefits to the same-sex domestic partners of its employees in the United States. It is a step which may soon be felt at Coke's plants outside the U.S. as the rest of its 31,000 employees will simply have to have a Coke and a smile while the company decides the fate of benefits for non-U.S. employees.

"We are committed to ensuring that the company offers the best environment for all employees," says Ben Deutsch, a Coke corporate spokesperson. "This extension of benefits is consistent with our commitment to making the company most truly diverse corporate culture in the world."

That commitment, Deutsch refers to, is already visible at the world's largest soft-drink maker. The company prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation, offers diversity training including sexual orientation issues, and offers a gay and lesbian employee group -- KOLAGE -- which stands for Coca-Cola, cleverly represented in the title by its New York Stock Exchange ticker symbol, KO, Lesbian And Gay Employees.

"I think it is great," said Kim Mills, education director for the Human Rights Campaign. Mills says she had been working with members of KOLAGE leading up to the announcement, offering them advice on how best to propose the idea.

Will Others Follow?

Now the focus turns to the other heavy-hitters in the soda industry and speculation on whether or not those companies will follow Coke's lead in offering the benefits.

"It certainly is possible," Mills says, pointing to examples from other industries, like the oil and banking sectors, where one company takes the lead and others follow.

And there are similarities, too, in the airline industry. Last year, three major U.S. airlines announced that they would offer domestic-partner benefits to employees – first UAL Corp.'s (NYSE: UAL) United Airlines, AMR Corp.'s (NYSE: AMR) American Airlines quickly following suit, and then US Airways Group (NYSE: U). Could the same hold true in the soda industry?

Coke's arch rival PepsiCo Inc. (NYSE: PEP), makers of Pepsi, Mountain Dew and Slice, currently does not offer domestic-partner benefits, but according to Richard Detwiler, a Pepsi corporate spokesperson, "it is something we will be looking at more closely." Pepsi does not have an official gay and lesbian employee group, even though it does offer diversity training, including sexual orientation issues.

And over at the third largest soft drink firm, Cadbury Schweppes Co. (NYSE: CSG) – yes, the ones that make the Easter candy – domestic-partner benefits are not offered either, although as company spokesman Mike Martin says, "we are well aware of the issues even before Coke made its announcement." Martin says that even though no employees have approached corporate management about the possibility of offering the benefits, it remains on the HR department's overall agenda of items. "Certainly with Coke's announcement," he says, "it has raised a level of awareness."

Coke's Rough Time

Coke's decision to offer benefits is a bright spot for the company after its announcement earlier this year that it would eliminate 6,000 jobs, or one-fifth of its worldwide work force. But the company had troubles even before that — from a major recall in several European countries to disappointing sales in Asia and Latin America to a lawsuit from several former African-American employees who claimed they were denied promotions because they of their race. Coke's image has suffered some severe blows in the last year.

Source: <http://www.gfn.com>

HOMOSEXUALS MORE LIKELY TO BE LEFT-HANDED

July 6, 2000 7:43 AM EDT

TORONTO (Reuters) - Homosexual men and women are more likely to be left-handed than their heterosexual counterparts -- a finding that indicates sexual orientation, like handedness, may be determined before birth -- Canadian researchers said on Thursday.

In a study published in the July issue of "Psychology Bulletin," researchers said that a meta-analysis of 20 studies involving more than 23,000 men and women had found the odds that gays and lesbians would be left-handed was 39 percent greater than heterosexual people. A meta-analysis is a statistical technique using the results of previous studies to reach a reliable conclusion.

The study found gay men were 34 percent more inclined toward left-handedness than non-gay men while the chances were even greater among homosexual women, where they were 91 percent more likely to be left-handed than heterosexual women.

“This is one more piece of evidence that sexual orientation is at least partly determined in utero,” said Ray Blanchard, head of the Clinical Sexology Program at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto, and one of the study's authors.

The results also suggest there may be at least one cause of homosexuality common to both men and women, Blanchard noted, adding that most biological research on sexual orientation has suggested that lesbianism and homosexuality have different causes. Although it has not been conclusively proved that handedness is determined prior to birth, fetuses typically indicate a preference for the right or left hand while still in the womb -- by, for example, moving it more frequently or sucking on a thumb.

Mario Lalumiere, another of the study's authors, said the study's main contribution was to provide “a window” into the early developmental period of the fetus. “It's quite all right if we look, for example, to social factors in adolescence to try to explain a person's sexual orientation. That's fine. But it will never be able to explain every single case of homosexuality because we know for sure now that there are causes of sexual orientation that are much earlier than that,” he said.

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MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Katie Replogle

Since the last newsletter, we have gained six new members and lost ten. The large “lost” number reflects departures that have actually occurred over the last year. I check the BGLAD database annually against corporate directories, and invariably some people turn up missing. Total membership is now 239 – 123 allies and 116 BGL’s, 62 of whom are “out” to the network. With the exodus from the Nemours Building, the site with the most members – 52 - is at Barley Mill Plaza. Pharmaceuticals still leads business units with 21 members. Membership at non-US sites has grown considerably in the last six months; we now have five members in South America and three in Europe.

We extend a warm welcome to our six new ally members in Brazil and Wilmington and one new "out" lesbian.

Remember that you can stay connected to BGLAD after you retire if you can receive email at home! Just send us your address!

Want information on BGL events in the Delaware Valley area? You should be on the Mid-Atlantic Chapter's mailing list. The contact is Elizabeth.A.Oneal@usa.dupont.com
