

# VOICES SWELL

The Newsletter of the Denison University Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Alumni Association

Vol 23.1

April 2016

## GLBTAA Spring Update

by Patrick Hewitt '10

GLBTAA Representative to the Alumni Council

Prior to each Denison Alumni Council meeting on campus, the GLBTAA's representative updates the larger Council on our activities. Here's a version of GLBTAA representative Patrick Hewitt's spring report to the Council.

Every election year underscores the ongoing need for the LGBT community to promote understanding, education and interaction. The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Alumni Association continues to promote a strong network of Denison alumni to build connections, promote education and support current students.

In September the GLBTAA hosted a social hour during Big Red Weekend. The event was open to current students, alumni, faculty and staff and the discussion ranged from current issues on campus to the dramatic changes in campus life for LGBT people. The event, hosted by Dean of Students Bill Fox and his

family and moderated by current Outlook President Brian Allen, showcased the continued work of current students to make Denison a welcoming place.

Over the winter the GLBTAA set up and began managing an account to provide alumni the opportunity to direct donations to Outlook. For those wanting to support our current students, here are the details:

1. Visit [www.support.denison.edu/give](http://www.support.denison.edu/give) to make your contribution online.
2. Designate your gift toward highest priorities on the first page.
3. On the second page under "additional details about my gift" indicate that your support is for the GLBTAA Fund.

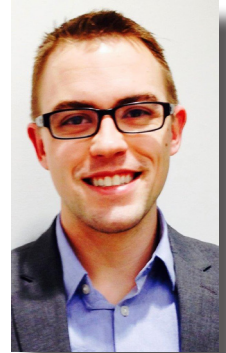
Any donations go directly to the fund to support on-campus events and community-related educational opportunities for current students.

For the alumni association, the Steering Committee continues its work to build a website for the organization. It will include up-to-date information, an online newsletter, information about how to get involved and ways to give to Denison.

The GLBTAA will be hosting an open house during the 2016 Reunion Weekend. It will take place on June 4 from 3-5pm in Beth Eden (the admissions office). The event will include a social gathering, conversation and brief updates on Outlook, the Queer Studies program and the alumni association. Stop by to meet new Denisonians, connect with former classmates and get an update on the Denison GLBT community.

Life on campus has also changed, with the college introducing new majors such as Data Analytics and Global Commerce to meet the demand of prospective students and better orient the college toward in-demand careers. The Center for Career Exploration is also introducing new ways for Denisonians to explore the workforce and for alumni to assist current students, such as the internship program and Denison Switchboard [see article elsewhere in this issue].

The GLBTAA has numerous opportunities coming up to get involved and stay in contact with your classmates, friends and current students and we will continue to update you in the coming months.



## Reunion Weekend 2016

You planning to be at this year's Reunion Weekend, June 3-5?

Classes are those from 1941, 1946, 1951, 1955-1956-1957, 1966, 1976, 1980-1981-1982, 1976, 1991, 2000-2001-2002, 2006 and 2011.



If you're going to attend, by all means plan to join other LGBTQ alums at the informal GLBTAA Saturday afternoon gathering to be held at Beth Eden beginning at 3pm on Saturday, June 4.

If you have any questions about it, contact Patrick Hewitt '10 at [Patrick.W.Hewitt@gmail.com](mailto:Patrick.W.Hewitt@gmail.com).

**Look for the rainbow flag!**





## News from Your GLBTAA Steering Group

by Kim Cromwell '81  
Member, GLBTAA Steering Committee

Members of the GLBTAA Steering Committee been having conference calls every two-three months, and we've had some great discussions. Here are a few of the things we're talking about:

- Connecting with and supporting our student group, Outlook, and other members of the Denison LGBTQ community, including Queer Studies, faculty and staff.
- Encouraging and facilitating LGBT alum support for key Denison initiatives, including annual giving, the Center for Career Exploration and the Denison Internship Program.



Denison's Center for Career Exploration:

## Connecting Alums with Students

by Liz Morrison '06  
Director of Networks and Communities

As the Center continues to grow, we're investing heavily in experiential opportunities to help students discover, in a low-risk way, what they like and what they don't.

That's where our alumni come in—while students can intern anywhere, connections with alumni demonstrate the value of our community and make lasting impressions on students.

### How Can I Help Denison Students?

- Offer an internship. E-mail me at [morrison@denison.edu](mailto:morrison@denison.edu) to get started. My primary function is to identify, recruit and manage off-campus volunteers and institutional partners (alumni, parents, employers, advanced degree admissions officers, foundation officers and other friends of Denison) that will support undergraduates and alumni of all ages in their individual and collective career pursuits.
- Offer an externship: Externships are job-shadowing experiences as short as one day.
- Join Switchboard: Make an offer to Denison students. Offers may range from grabbing coffee or giving tips about living in your city to internship and job opportunities. You can also use Switchboard to post an "Ask" to other Denisonians. Click here to join Switchboard!

### Current Funding Opportunities

Stipend Program: Rolling deadline, individuals may submit applications and may receive up to \$4,000 over their Denison career to help with travel costs, housing, and wage losses when

- Re-naming/re-branding our group so that we will be more accessible, visible and easily identifiable to our constituents and the college;
- Preparing for reunion weekend, June 3-5, when we will host our annual and well-attended LGBT reception;
- Continuing to refine our communications, both in terms of the vehicles we use and the perspectives we offer; and
- Planning for a possible summer reception in Provincetown, MA, sometime during the last week in August.

As always, we welcome hearing from you, even if it's just to say hello. Let us know what you're thinking, what you've been up to and when we'll see you.

Please join us at Reunions June 3-5 and Big Red Weekend, September 23-25! *Go Big Red!*



### Follow the GLBTAA on Facebook

Go to Denison Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Alumni/ae Association to sign up.

participating in an internship. Students seeking or who have secured paid or unpaid internships are encouraged to apply. Stipends are awarded to students completing internships across all industries and job functions.

Thanks to generous gifts from alumni, Denison is also able to offer some interest- or subject-based internships. Two funding opportunities of possible interest would include the Douglas Romaniak Stipend, which supports students interested in working with gay and lesbian or AIDS-related issues and the Donald Kaplan Stipend, which is awarded to a student who is interested in the corporate world and in helping AIDS patients in New York City. The preferred site for this stipend is God's Love We Deliver, a nonprofit organization that delivers food to AIDS patients. These stipend opportunities do not count towards the lifetime cap of \$4,000, so students awarded this stipend may apply for a stipend through our general program during a different summer.

Denison LGBTQ alums are invited and encouraged to connect with students in offering experiential opportunities. How about it—can you help?



## Did You Know...

- For the second year in a row, the Office of Admissions has announced a record number of applicants for the incoming freshmen class of fall 2016.
- In February *Orange Is the New Black: My Year in a Women's Prison* author Piper Kerman met with Denison students to talk about prison reform.



**Bryan Blaskie '09** will music direct the West coast premiere of "The Boy From Oz," the musical that follows the life and career of Peter Allen, from his start as an opening act for Judy Garland, his marriage to Liza Minelli and his battle with AIDS. The show is produced by Celebration Theatre, the longest continuously producing LGBT theatre company in the United States.

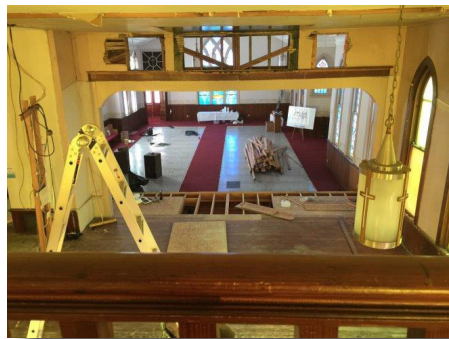


The show opens April 29 for all you Southern Cal alums — [www.celebrationtheatre.com/#!shows-and-tickets/cqnr](http://www.celebrationtheatre.com/#!shows-and-tickets/cqnr)

**Kris Haberman '96** and Ernie de la Torre (his partner of 15 years) were married on June 29, the day after the Supreme Court decision legalizing nationwide same-sex marriage. He reports they were "lucky" to have both sets of parents walk them down the aisle with their siblings and extended families in attendance. And then on October 20 son, Parker, was born in Colorado — a happy and healthy little guy (here's a pic, because what new parent doesn't have a million pics to share!/? Just ask!)



**Valerie Cooperider Mockus '94** has moved back to Ohio while working on her doctorate in business administration. She



and partner, Gary, have also purchased her childhood church less than 10 miles from Denison and will be renovating it into their summer home — [www.hebronchouse.com](http://www.hebronchouse.com) as they plan to move back to Key West after completion of her degree. She has

also had several occasions to reconnect with retired biology prof, Julie Mulroy. Valerie is the president of Apple Pi Consulting, which is a small practice with three consultants providing assistance to institutions wishing to improve financial aid processes and practices and serving over 100 colleges from Bangor, ME, to San Diego, CA.

**Nick Geitner '09** received his PhD in Physics from Clemson University in August 2014 (dissertation title: A Biophysical Understanding of the Applications and Implications of Nanotechnology) and has since been working as a Postdoctoral Researcher at Duke University. If you're curious what his dissertation is, in lay terms Nick looked at how the rapidly developing classes of nanomaterials (which already appear in



## OUT AND ABOUT

### What's Happening With Our GLBTAA Members

medicine, cosmetics, electronics, sunscreens...) interact with things such as proteins and environmental pollutants in order to see how they behave in complex systems and what that means for their toxicity and impact. He then brought that information into applications such as oil dispersion for spill cleanup and nano-medicine. Now we know! More recently—and on a lighter note!—he got engaged to his sweetheart, Zhao Zhang, and they plan to wed this summer.

Lucky for us, **Audrey Miller '94** admits that "modesty is not my strong suit!" so she's sharing a lot.

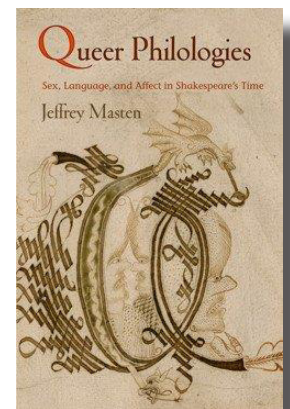
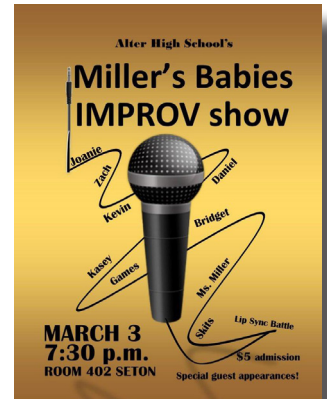
"I graduated with a mass communications major and an education minor, but I never dreamed I would teach. But now I can't imagine doing anything else! I have been a teacher for the past 16 years at a small, private high school where I teach English and public speaking.

I attended Wright State University part time to get my English teaching credentials and got my Masters from Miami University two years ago.

I have been involved in several aspects of students' lives through teaching. I moderate several clubs including the debate club and the creative arts club (the Muse Machine) and our very first improv troupe, which the founding members named Miller's Babies. We have a couple improv shows throughout the school year and recently raised over \$500 for the charity "To Write Love on Her Arms" for a recent alumnae who lost her battle to depression. These kids are amazing, and I feel so thankful to work with them.

Outside of school, I have had several big changes in my personal life. I ended a relationship that I had been in for 17 years and bought my first home ever — all on my own. I adore being a homeowner and having a space all my own. Life is an amazing adventure. Each day brings new twists and turns. And although it can be exhausting and tough, I wouldn't want to be anywhere or anyone else!"

**Jeff Masten '86** has a book forthcoming from the University of Pennsylvania Press. Entitled "Queer Philologies: Sex, Language, and Affect in Shakespeare's Time", the book studies the history of sexuality through the history of the English language, asking how the particular words and terms in use around 1600 by Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe and others inflect the way people understood sex, emotion, bodies and body parts and sexual practices.



## OUT AND ABOUT ...continued

Reading a world before the terms “heterosexuality,” “homosexuality” and “sexual intercourse” in its modern sense, how can we translate the languages of sex, bodies, and relationships of the English Renaissance? More info can be found at [www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15512.html](http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15512.html)

**Lisa Wilson-Wright '94** writes of the passionate dialogues she had with **Geoff Phillips, Stephen Thomas, Valerie Mockus** and **Kevin Fore** (all Class of '94) last spring at their Reunion and their extensive conversations about the need for Denison programs targeting first-generation college students.

First-generation students often arrive at Denison (and other universities) ill-prepared to navigate the complex academic, social, cultural and economic challenges that come from being the first in their family to go to college.

Valerie has been meeting with folks at Denison to try to get the

ball rolling, discussing what types of programming are available and what alumni like us could do to help get a program started and provide mentorship to first-generation students.

If you are interested in providing

ideas or support (or in pushing things along at Denison), let Valerie ([valerieamockus@gmail.com](mailto:valerieamockus@gmail.com)) or Lisa ([lisa.wilsonwright@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.wilsonwright@gmail.com)) know.



**Val and Lisa chatting with Brian Allen '17 and Dr. Julie Mulroy at 2015 Reunion gathering**

## QUAD HAPPENINGS

The Queer Community and the Campus

### Outlook Update

by **Brian Allen '17**

**President, Outlook**

**F**ebruary and March have been exciting months for Outlook. It seems as the school year goes on the more and more Outlook is receiving recognition across the campus. Between the weekly collaborations--and the standard of values that Outlook has set throughout the year--I can safely say it is becoming one of the best student organizations on Denison's campus. I attribute this to how busy we have been the past couple of months and how successful we have collaborated across campus. It may seem as though I am repeating myself about the collaborative efforts, but it is purposeful because of how important it is for the organization to succeed.

February proved to be a jam-packed month between Outlook elections and MBLGTACC, Outlook was moving forward in many ways. It pleases me to announce the newly-elected Executive Team:

- Jeremy Torres '18 – President
- Ash Egoiff '18 – Vice President
- David Villagomez '19 – Secretary
- Em Bennett '19 – Treasurer
- Hayoung Lim '19 – Public Relations Director
- Rhea Patil '19 – Outreach and Advocacy Coordinator
- Serena Allegro '19 – FYRE Coordinator
- Alena Lassen '18 & Andrew Yelton '19 – DCGA Community Senators

We are very excited to see this group lead Outlook next year! They have proved themselves worthy this year, and I know that the organization will be safely passed on to them. They have already shown strength and creativity in creating next year's

budget that was submitted at the end of February. I'm very excited to see what they conjure up throughout the next year!

MBLGTACC — the Midwest Bisexual, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Ally College Conference — also took place at the end of February. Over a weekend, Outlook took seven members (**Hayoung Lim '19, Theo Tran '18, Alena Lassen '18, Matthew Lemus '18, Elysse Jones '16** and me) to Purdue University in West Lafayette.

For me — and I think I speak for the others as well when I say — it was one of the most informative weekends I have had in a while. It was so refreshing to be around other queer people from colleges around the Midwest. It was also so interactive, I personally made so many new contacts that I look to see how Outlook and my leadership skills can be bettered. Like I said, I think I speak for the group with regard to this sentiment.

The picture of the group was with none other than Todrick Hall — singer (semi-finals of “American Idol”!), songwriter, rapper and actor. Todrick invited Outlook to dinner after his show, and we got to know him a little bit better! He was FABULOUS.



**From left to right (back): Alena, Theo, Todrick Hall, Matthew, Elysse Jones Front: Hayoung, Brian**



Between Janet Mock, Angelica Ross and midterms, March has proved to be just as busy as February.

For those of you who do not know, Janet and Angelica are two trans women of color who are not only activists but also major businesswomen in the U.S. Janet works for MSNBC and Angelica is the CEO of TransTech, her company that helps give trans people transferrable skills to use in the workplace from the experiences they have already had.

This company is truly fascinating. In any event, Janet and Angelica graciously came to Denison in place of Laverne Cox, and I must say it was one of the most successful events of the year. We had a huge turnout, and Herrick Hall was filled to the brim with students, faculty and administration alike including Dean of Students Bill Fox and President Adam Weinberg, who gave some opening remarks.

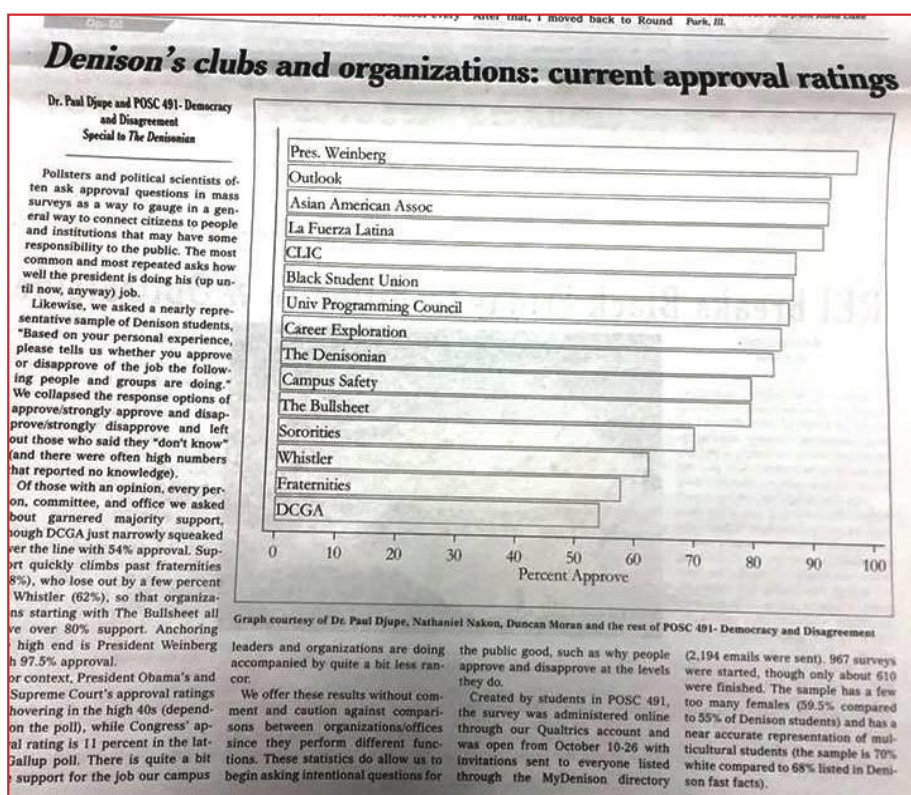


The feedback that I have heard from students, faculty and staff has all been so positive. It is so exciting to see the campus engaged with the trans identity. [My selfie has Angelica on the left and Janet on the right].

As we move into the latter part of the semester, look forward to hearing about the amateur drag show at Relay for Life and the end-of-the-year drag show with Nina West (a.k.a., Andrew Levitt '01) and other distinguished guests. We still have ongoing collaborations with Global China Connection, C3, the Middle Eastern Culture Club, Hillel, Denison Feminists and Taste of Culture!!

Outlook meetings are held Thursdays at 6:30pm in the University Room on the 4th Floor of Slayter Hall.

E-mail: [outlook@denison.edu](mailto:outlook@denison.edu); Twitter: @DU\_Outlook



**This recent poll taken by the student body, with an overly representative sample of over 600 students, puts Outlook second behind President Weinberg in "approval." This is a huge success for Denison and for Outlook. It just goes to show a little hard work and dedication pays off!**

**Did You Know...**

- Denison has earned a spot on the Peace Corps' annual top volunteer-producing schools list, with nine graduates currently serving. The college ranks 14<sup>th</sup> among small colleges and universities, the agency recently announced.
- College Raptor's Smart Choices 2016 Awards had Denison ranked #13 among 43 colleges where students are most likely to get accepted, stay enrolled and graduate in four years. Denison's acceptance rate is 86% with a four-year graduation rate of 84% and a first year retention rate of 89%.

**We're updating our e-mail address list. Please send your current preferred address so we can stay in touch with you.**

**Also, tell us what you're up to — professionally, avocationally, romantically, whatever... so we can pass it along.**

Contact us at [voicesswell@aol.com](mailto:voicesswell@aol.com)

# Outlook's Public Relations Director Promotes Inclusion

by Ryan Carson, Opinion Editor  
The Denisonian, November 3, 2015

**"If you ever see me don't assume I have an attitude on my face, it's a New York thing," says **Jeremy Torres '18**, a political science major from New York. Torres doesn't want his New York persona to scare away the naive freshman.**

Being a political science major with a queer studies concentration is an advantage Torres believes he has when working to foster collaboration between different organizations at Denison. "Being a political science major, it's not what everyone expects it to be as we learn about how the mechanics of how things work. It helps in a way," Torres said.



Last spring, Torres was elected as Public Relations Director of Outlook. Outlook is an organization that represents LG-BTQA+ individuals and issues on campus. Torres has helped to expand Outlook's presence on campus this semester along with the club's president, **Brian Allen '17**.

"I actually give credit to Brian Allen, our current president. We have intentionally gone out and targeted certain groups that we

feel that we need this connection," Torres said.

As head of Outlook's PR, Torres works on the social media campaign that promotes awareness on campus when Outlook is hosting special events such as Coming Out Week. "I run all of their Twitter and Facebook accounts. Any event you see a poster, I created that."

Coming Out Week has been one of the highlights of Torres' brief career at Outlook. During the conclusion of Coming Out Week, Torres worked with Outlook to collaborate with the Black Student Union about issues involving people of color and LG-

BTQA+ individuals. "Coming Out Week, which I helped organize, we did a collaboration with BSU and it was well attended and highly praised. In the future, people want us to collaborate more, it when great [sic]," said Torres.

Torres, along with the rest of Outlook, helps foster a culture of inclusion at Denison. Torres and members of the executive board stress the fact that Outlook meetings are a safe space. "So we all understand that coming out is a process. If the person is comfortable coming out there, in that space everything there is confidential," Torres said.

In addition to the Outlook meetings, Torres and other Outlook Executive Board Members hold office hours weekly to support and foster sustained dialog. "We do hold office hours, Monday through Friday, and we have in total about 10-12 office hours a week," he said.

Torres views Denison University as a college in transition. "As of right now I feel we are slowly progressing towards building bridges," he said. "As in every other place you see parts where it's not progressive."

Those tough conversations that are happening all around campus between groups that may not necessarily agree on issues is a hallmark of Outlook's new regime. These tough conversations are accredited to individual members and their willingness to discuss their varying experiences at Denison. "My first year it was difficult trying to find that niche," he said. "I do think that Denison is mostly diverse as compared to other liberal arts universities."

*Photo Courtesy of Nelson Dow*

[Ed. Note: Jeremy is the newly-elected President of Outlook for the coming year.]



## We Bid Good-bye to a Campus Friend

**S**teve Crawford, Denison's Director of Alumni Relations, has announced that he will be leaving the college on April 22 to take a position with The Wellington School, a private K-12 institution in Columbus.

In an e-mail to Denison colleagues and friends, he admitted that the departure after 11 years in the Alum Relations office is "bittersweet." He explains that the prospect of working with Wellington's college counseling program was one that nicely blends his 25 years of experience in undergraduate admissions and new student orientation with the opportunity to mentor students.

Steve credits the college for enabling him to have "grown professionally in ways I didn't know I could." As the GLBTAA's "go-to" person for so many of our questions, needs and requests—and advice—Steve has been an incredible ally for LGBT alums and students. We have greatly appreciated his friendship and collaboration as the GLBTAA has worked to expand and enhance the role of LGBT alums in the life of the college. Steve is not a Denison alum, but it only takes a few minutes with him to appreciate his love for his adopted alma mater.







## Queer Studies Program Popular

*by Dr. Warren Hauk, Director of Queer Studies and Members of the Queer Studies Committee*

The Queer Studies Program has been actively engaged with the wider Denison community during the 2015-2016 academic year. We anticipate five seniors graduating in May with a concentration in Queer Studies with another 20 students currently declaring an intention to complete a Queer Studies concentration. Below are details of several campus events that Queer Studies has co-sponsored this year and a description of our new Quest writing awards.

On November 2, Queer Studies co-sponsored with the department of Art History & Visual Culture a showing of "Karmen Gei," a 2001 film directed by Joseph Gai Ramaka that re-envisioned Bizet's opera "Carmen" in postcolonial Senegal with a queer twist. The director visited campus for the showing and met with one of the QS 101 (Introduction to Queer Studies) classes to discuss with students the film and its implications.

On February 15, visual activist Zanele Muholi presented her work in the Knapp Performance space and had lunch with students. Her work has focused on human rights activism and the representation of the visual history of lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex and transgender identities/politics in post-apartheid South Africa. This event was co-sponsored with Studio Art.

Queer Studies was a co-sponsor with Outlook for Outlook's biggest event this year, a Q&A discussion with trans activists Janet Mock and Angelica Ross. Mock works for MSNBC and is the author of the bestseller, *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love & So Much More*. Ross is an entrepreneur devoted to helping train and employ people in the trans community. The March 2 event drew students and faculty from across the university, many of whom stayed after to meet Mock and Ross. Outlook President Brian Allen moderated the discussion and Denison President Adam Weinberg was present to help with the guest introductions.

Along with several campus groups, Queer Studies co-sponsored a Global Studies seminar titled "Fascination with the Foreigner: New Prints Made in Berlin & Dresden, Germany" that featured the work of Denison Studio Art and Queer Studies professor Ron Abram. According to Ron, "Over the past four years, I've been at work on an interdisciplinary project that combines printmaking, sculpture, animation/film projection and bookmaking. The work focuses queer themes of identity through the research and use of a particular historic site in East Berlin and Grimm Fairy Tales as metaphorical structures."

This academic year the Queer Studies Committee has developed categories, criteria and procedures for what we have dubbed the "Quest" writing awards.

The awards, sponsored through a gift from a Denison alum, recognize excellence in writing in the categories of senior research writing, junior/senior writing, first year/sophomore writing and creative writing. Students who have completed assignments with substantive queer-related content as part of a Denison course may submit in any category (or all categories) for which they are eligible.

First place awardees will receive \$200 and second place awardees will receive \$100. We plan to launch the writing awards for the 2016-2017 academic year.



## Interested?

As part of Denison's new interdisciplinary major in Global Commerce, the college is searching for a Program Administrator. Go [here](#) for a description of the position



## Did You Know...

President Adam Weinberg gives an insider's perspective on choosing college — with five key tips to help understand what really matters when searching for the right college — in *The Huffington Post* [www.huffingtonpost.com/adam-weinberg/five-tips-for-choosing-a-college\\_9369730.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/adam-weinberg/five-tips-for-choosing-a-college_9369730.html)

VOICES SWELL, the newsletter of the Denison University Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Alumni/ae Association, is circulated to members of the association and its friends. Contributions of text, and donations toward the costs of publication and postage, are always welcome. The newsletter takes its name from lines of the Denison *Alma Mater*: "To Denison . . . In praise our voices swell" ⇔ Subjects and contributors to VOICES SWELL are gay, lesbian, bisexual and straight; in the absence of a specific statement, mention in these pages should not be taken to imply that a subject or contributor is either gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight. Mail for VOICES SWELL

should be addressed to: Rick Carson, 1035 Cherry Street NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701 ([voicesswell@aol.com](mailto:voicesswell@aol.com)). ✉ Fred Porcheddu '87 founded this publication; Fred, Jeff Masten '86 and Rick Carson '65 have edited previous issues, and this one (and all those since 1997) have been edited by Rick. ▼ GLBTAA Steering Committee includes Caitlyn Battaglia '13, Rick Carson '65, Kim Cromwell '81, Patrick Hewitt '10, Nikki Hurley '15, Laura Kendrick '04, Jeff Masten '86 (Patrick is also the GLBTAA constituent representative to the Alumni Council). ► Check us out on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/groups/160020328041/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/160020328041/)) and denison everywhere.