

## MEMORANDUM OF SOLIDARITY

**Note: Original memo text is in gray and italics; new response/solutions are introduced in bold red and listed in black text.**

*To: Lisa Freeman, President;  
Vernese Eghill-Walden, Chief Diversity Officer and Senior Associate Vice  
President for Academic Diversity*

*From: National Symposium on LGBTQ Research in Higher Education Participants;  
Students of the TransAction Task Force*

*Date: November 8, 2017*

*On October 14, 2017, researchers, faculty, staff and students from across the United States and Canada gathered on NIU's campus for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual National Symposium on LGBTQ Research in Higher Education. As part of session presentations, NIU student members of the "TransAction Task Force," presented their work in advocating for broader transgender inclusion at NIU and what next steps were needed. This memorandum serves to both highlight their work, share their needs, and demonstrate solidarity.*

*We, the participants of the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Symposium on LGBTQ Research in Higher Education, supported by current research and data, affirm the previous and current work of the TransAction Task Force. Further, backed by our knowledge of practice and research centered in LGBTQ+ student support, we contribute the following in unity with TransAction Task Force and all trans-spectrum faculty, staff, and students at NIU. This list identifies (by members of TransAction Task Force) the needs for trans inclusion at NIU.*

*Alongside TransAction Task Force, we ask for your action on the following:*

- Campus information systems must better communicate with each other
  - NIU DoIT should work with system providers to use preferred/proper names from those who use and update their name in MyNIU and other systems, or within Human Resources for faculty and staff with improved consistency**

### **University systems specific solutions include:**

- We continue to work on making sure all NIU systems are compatible and can be more efficient and effective. In doing so we believe this will also help us improve the preferred/proper name process for all**
- Human Resources Services (HRS) is working on technical solution to ensure that all preferred/proper names are pulled from MYNIU to HRS for student employees by Jan/ Feb 2018**

- HRS is working on an online solution for faculty and staff to enter their preferred/proper name
- As more system issues, we ask TransAction to make us aware through the GSRC of what the concerns are and/or what else we may need to do to address these types of concerns
- *Required University-wide training for inclusion of LGBTQ+ identities, particularly trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming identities and visibility of these identities in existing mandated training*
  - *Human Resources, Deans, and Department Directors should provide opportunities for all employees to partake in LGBTQ+ Ally Training, or similar department-specific LGBTQ+ training*
  - *Educational offerings including Title IX Training, Ethics Training, HAVEN, AlcoholEdu, and UNIV 101 curriculum should use customizable options to include these identities*

### **Campus training specific solutions include:**

- Senior leadership completed LGBTQ+ training and thought it was valuable to hear from students. Vernese and Molly can work with Provost and Deans to schedule LGBTQ+ trainings over the year
- While NIU does not own all materials from all of the trainings (such as Ethics), we would be supportive of making recommendations to the vendor regarding the inclusion of trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming. (*Note: We have had examples where students bringing issues in such systems like HuskieLink where NIU and other institutions using these systems have/will benefit*). NIU can the lead the way!
- Title IX and AAEC welcomes feedback from GSRC and TransAction on all currently mandated on-line trainings.
  - In future on-line trainings the introduction could include a message of inclusion and be inclusive of NIU values of diversity, naming gender identities
  - Utilize images via video, pictures, inclusive language, and other means to insure we are being representative
  - Another meeting will be set in December to evaluate what has been accomplished and ensure we are moving in the same direction.
- *Improvements to NIU LGBTQ+ inclusion in Housing and Residential Services*
  - *Include a question on the NIU housing application stating, “Would you prefer to have a roommate who is LGBTQ or identifies as an ally?” It is preferred that housing work with the NIU Gender and Sexuality Resource Center staff to match students who answer affirmatively.*
  - *Expand gender-inclusive living options by having gender-open floors (i.e., roommates may be of any gender identity, not restricted to “the opposite sex” binary) in all residence halls*

- *Expand the LGBTQ+ Living Learning Community option in New Hall to include an additional cluster and/or additional residence halls that are more affordable*

***[FYI: Additional Information about Housing/LGBTQ LLC:***

- *We currently have co-ed floor but room assigned are gendered*
- *We have a few of single gendered floors but more co-ed than single sex.*
- *Currently trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming student assignments are made upon students reaching out to the GSRC*
- *Each year, without marketing, at least 30 inquiries are made about this LLC LGBTQ community*
- *This year there are 12 students currently live in LGBTQ LLC (floor is at capacity)*
- *Expanding to more affordable floors would could be more economic for students]*

**Housing specific solutions include:(in process)**

- *Housing is aware of these request and welcomes the opportunity to explore these recommendations with their housing team and representatives from TransAction. I have encouraged my team to look at best practices at other institutions that have inclusive residential programs*
- *OneCard*
  - *Anyone using the preferred/proper name option should be granted a one-time replacement fee waiver*
  - *OneCard staff should be trained on how to respectfully assist students, faculty, and staff utilizing this update*

**OneCard specific solutions include:**

- *The one-time fee waiver is in process. Vernese and Larry are working on the details of how to implement.*
- *OneCard staff are open to training and Molly and Vernese will follow up*
- *Improvements to Health Services inclusion of LGBTQ+ patrons*
  - *Publicize Health Service's internal information system which includes preferred/proper name and pronoun pre-registration*
  - *Review website and gendered titling of services (i.e., Women's Exam) to include or be defined by exam type (i.e., STI exam, external/internal genitalia exam) or body parts (vaginal/pelvic exam, etc.)*
- *Offer hormone monitoring as part of blood work testing (if not in-house, include with other bloodwork sent to Quest Diagnostics)*

- *Ongoing LGBTQ+ health service training for doctors, nurses, intake, and insurance staff*

**Health Services specific solutions include:**

- Health Services will look into publicizing a student's option to pre-register with preferred/proper name and/or pronouns and provide an update along with potential next steps (such update would be provided at a mutually agreed upon time).
  - Health Services welcomes the opportunity to review its web site related to best practices of communicating health exams, including the addition of a Trans Health tab where inclusive services could be listed
  - Although Health Services does not have the staff to provide adequate, on going monitoring of hormone lab results, Health Services can send hormone monitoring as part of blood work testing to Quest. (They will start now)
  - Some staff has undergone Ally training and would explore additional LGBTQ+ training opportunities.
- *A university-wide consistent, stated commitment, and action inclusive of trans identities*
    - *Trans students, faculty and staff must be included in committees, policy, and decisions made related to gender and trans-specific policy at the ground level, not just at their unveiling*
    - *At new student and new employee orientation and within statements and visual media to the campus community, highlight, as with additional marginalized populations, the institutional value of support of trans students, faculty, and staff*
    - *Share occurrence data of trans-related bias and Title IX reports along with action taken to resolve the issue (either at the individual or departmental/institutional level)*

**University-wide inclusion specific solutions include:**

- We will commit to being intentional in including trans, non-binary and/or gender non-conforming students, faculty and staff in committees, policy and decisions made related to gender and trans-specific policy at the ground level.
- We will work with EMMC and HR
  - New employee orientation training will be reviewed to determine if the messages and images include marginalized groups specifically trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming identities.
  - Molly and Vernese will work with Abbey Wolfman and Abbey Dean to continue to address inclusivity in application and orientation materials
- Bias reports are tracked by gender identity and sexual orientation and it is the second highest reported bias incident.

- ADEI does plan to publish a summary report on these incidents
- Campus Experience Survey will be conducted spring 2018 and there will be effort made to make there are questions inclusive of trans, gender non-conforming and non-binary identities.

*We encourage the university to continue to show its support through continued conversations with TransAction Task Force maintain an open dialogue, and work with stakeholders and supportive administrative offices to share this work. True progress and inclusion comes with ongoing efforts, communication, and action. We wish you and TransAction Task Force the best in your work together towards this shared goal.*