



June 25, 2020

The LGBTQ+ Faculty and Staff Caucus stands with President Galligan and the rest of the LSU community in mutual outrage, disgust, and sadness over the attack on LSU-Eunice student Holden White. Another young man has been charged with second-degree murder for brutally torturing Holden and leaving him for dead this past weekend. It is believed that he lured Holden under false pretenses via the Grindr dating app.

It is clear to us and, we believe, all members of the LGBTQ+ community, that the vicious attack against Holden reflects the unique vulnerabilities we all experience. The bottom line for us is that Holden's attack occurred because he is gay. While the past several years have brought many hard-won victories for our movement in terms of marriage rights and anti-discrimination, Holden's experience is a sober reminder that ours remains a heteronormative and transphobic society. None of us are safe until all of us are safe. Just as we did in the aftermath of the 2016 massacre at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, we stand in solidarity with Holden, his family, and all LGBTQ+ people in our resolve to build a future in which all in our community can survive and thrive on our own terms.

Although it is heartbreaking in many ways that this happened to Holden during Pride Month, it is also a reminder of how powerful our community is when it comes together to lift up and defend each other. The first Pride was not a parade or party, but a raucous and spontaneous protest led by trans women of color. The 1969 uprising at the Stonewall Inn was the culmination of frustration and exhaustion from police suppression, poverty and homelessness, and other indignities of the closet. It is in this spirit of uncompromising activism that we recommit our caucus to taking concrete steps toward combating heteronormativity and transphobia throughout the LSU system and our state as a whole. To that end, we challenge ourselves, our community members, and our allies to stand in shared commitment to the following:

- Provide whatever support we can for Holden White and his family as he recovers from the physical and psychological trauma of this attack. One great way to help is by offering financial support toward Holden's medical and other expenses:
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/21o35cnd5c>
- Work as a caucus and in coalition with community members at other LSU campuses to identify and advocate for best practices for protecting LGBTQ+ students, staff, and faculty.
- Continue to nurture relationships with the LSU Black and Latinx Staff and Faculty Caucuses to ensure that such work is rooted in an intersectional ethic.
- Similarly, collaborate with student organizations such as Spectrum, Qroma, and the LSU chapter of Louisiana Trans Advocates to develop solutions that meet all of our needs.

Our caucus is founded on the hope and expectation that organizing around heinous attacks against LGBTQ+ individuals will one day be unnecessary. We also understand our history and recognize that LGBTQ+ people are safest when we are leading the conversation regarding our best interests. To that end, we invite our caucus members, LGBTQ+ students, allies, and other community members to join us as we lift up our beautiful queer kin Holden and move forward in his name.