

OUTlines

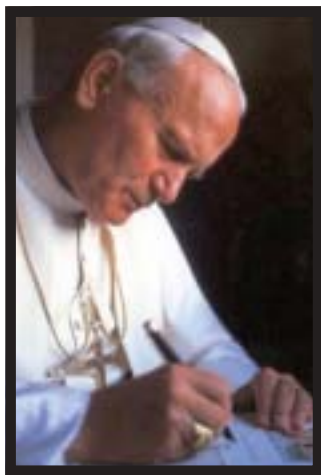
What's IN for those who are OUT (or not) at Penn

April 2005 ~ Vol. 15, No. 4

The Catholic Faith lost a Leader...

What did the LGBT Community Lose?

The news of Pope John Paul II's death spread throughout the world with a somewhat overpowering, wretched mourning. As the leader of the Catholic Church for 26 years, he devoted his life to peace and human rights advocacy. People all over adored him and enthusiastically saluted him whenever he visited foreign lands. Not only were his visits around the world aimed toward strengthening the Catholic faith, they were also to comfort the poor and the sick. His many followers worldwide feel as if a part of them has been taken away - a part they admired and held very dear.



Despite his popularity in terms of peace and human rights advocacy, the Pope was also the source of much disapproval within the LGBT community. He condemned homosexuality several times, publically claiming that the Catholic Church could not admit those in sin. His derogatory description of homosexuality as a deviant behavior disappointed many Catholic followers who, according to John Paul II, fit this de-

scription. Many opted for abandoning their Catholic faith, while others decided to form their own faith communities, where not only were they accepted, but where they could openly discuss sexuality and many other controversial issues within and the Catholic faith.

John Paul II opposed same-sex marriage, alleging it was the new "ideology of evil," which was being approved by many European countries. Same-sex marriage soon became a threat to what the Vatican held as the true essence of the holy marriage, procreation. Due to these policies, which John Paul II strongly adhered to, LGBT opposition grew worldwide.

Other topics of great importance, which the pontiff greatly criticized, included contraceptives and modern feminism. He warned the world that the use of contraceptives meant the removal of love from the sacrament of marriage. Therefore, in the age of AIDS, many HIV-prevention advocates, who include many LGBT per-

sons, firmly opposed this pronouncement by the Pope. As for modern feminism, John Paul II approved the document entitled "On the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World," which stated feminism has distorted the distinction between genders because it calls into question the family structure's reliance on both a mother and father. The pontiff's accusations against modern feminism were also furthered by the fact that feminists allow and support homosexuality and some

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Hot or Not: QPenn 2005

In an attempt to encompass everything I felt and experienced around QPenn, I decided to do an annotated list of what was hot and what was not of the week as a whole. Please regard these as my personal opinions as one of this year's co-chairs, and feel free to email me to tell me what you thought of QPenn 2005 at <cochetti@sas.upenn.edu>.

HOT

Speakers

Speakers this year came from all walks of life and many different communities within the community. I do not think we could have better speakers, as they were some of the most qualified in their fields. Highlights of such speakers are: Jasbir Puar, Rabbi Greenberg, Barbara Gittings, Frank Kameny, and Pandora. They were good with the audiences and willing to dialogue and answer questions. Events were well timed and did not conflict with one another to force people to choose between events. In addition, speaker events were dispersed well throughout the ten days of QPenn.

T-Shirts and Buttons

QPenn's t-shirts and buttons were amazing. They spread like wildfire across campus and were a welcome addition to events and the rally. The slogan "[]sexual*" was right on target with the question everything theme and made campus question what the shirt

meant on top of the questions being asked for the rest of the week. The buttons were a fun and relatively cheap way to spread awareness and became collectable. I still see people wearing the shirts as well as their buttons on jackets and bags.



Supplement

The supplement was stylish and well done in 2005. The new magazine format kept people's attention and had a professional feel. The content was hearty and meaningless filler was lacking. Also, I personally liked the expanded VoQab section instead of it being a half page filler. Penn Kinsey, Walk Talks, and the survey gave it a light feel while still hitting home the issues in articles and publicizing QPenn in general.

DP Coverage

The effort to coordinate with the *Daily Pennsylvanian* really paid

off this year. QPenn events were well covered in terms of stories and featured photographs. My hats off to the DP for taking the time and effort to focus on the LGBT community.

NOT

Low Participation

Participation seemed down for events this year compared to others. They tended to draw a small crowd interested in a particular topic and some planning committee members. Unfortunately, some of the most interesting discussion topics were held at the daily lunches, which suffered from the lowest number of participants. Although I am unclear on the exact causes of low participation, I would speculate that it may be linked to a few things: lack of interest in queer history and lifestyles, length of the "week," and/or too little advertising.

Little Advertising

Advertising for the QPenn "QBall" Dance was amazing! That said, advertising for everything else *blew*. I loved the flyers for the dance and the event postcards, but did not see them all over campus...only under my nose at the LGBT Center. Similarly, specific event posters and flyers were not used this year so were nowhere to be seen. Although this method encouraged a core group of in-

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A SPIRITUAL HOME IN RELIGION?

In an effort to continue the increasing dialogue on campus around intersections and conflicts between religion and sexuality, Hillel and J-BaGeL (Jewish Bisexuals, Gays, and Lesbians) arranged for the only 'out' Orthodox rabbi, Steve Greenberg, to speak during QPenn. I was fortunate enough to attend his address, amid the dozens of programs in the course of two weeks. Being estranged from the varying Christian traditions in which I was raised, I really did not expect to connect in any significant way to the Rabbi. I saw the event as an opportunity to explore the challenges the Jewish community faces in dealing with issues of sexuality. It was beyond me that I would leave a little bit Jewish, a little less religious and a lot more spiritual.

By challenging the Judaic rhetoric and practices that condemn LGBT peoples point by point, Rabbi Greenberg created a context for me to further understand my distaste for organized religion. Moreover, he was able to do so in a way that did not hold contempt or disdain for Judaism, but rather added to the fullness and understanding of it.

I struggle with my religion. Correction, I struggle with religion.

The problem being I ain't got one, (well as least an officially recognized and sanctioned one). I have abandoned the challenge of finding religious reconciliation; after all, why argue with the omnipotence of God's word (as handed

down to some guy thousands of years ago). There are not too many places you can go with that, so you are somewhat certain of how that fight is going to end. Instead, like so many in the LGBTQ community, I have opted for a smorgasbord religion through which I practice my ever evolving spirituality, picking up the traditions and practices of various religions here and there.

My religious struggle is not a question of faith or piety, or even the lack of affirmation for variant sexualities, but the struggle against the very nature of religion as an institutionalized force, unyielding in its rhetoric and anti-theological nature of spirituality.

"Spirituality is a two-stroke process. The upward stroke relates to

inner growth and the downward stroke relates towards manifesting improvements in the world/reality around us as a result of the inward change. Any spiritual approach, with

diligent, proper practice should manifest noticeable improvement in one's life." (Eck, D. *A New Religious America*. San Francisco: Harper, 2001)

Spirituality is about growth and self-improvement for the betterment of self, society, and humankind. This process is only successful in

the context of the free exchange of ideas, evolving discourse, and continual introspection, reflection, and contemporary analysis.

On the other hand, religion, as it has been practiced throughout history, has been about establishing social and political order and obedience to archaic and arbitrary laws, as handed down by individuals through their interpretations of morality. As Rabbi Greenberg broached in his talk, too often religious debate stalemates at "because God said so," never requiring or allowing for further discussion or exploration, but demanding submission and compliance in fear of retribution and damnation.

Although he is from the Orthodox tradition, Rabbi Greenberg

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"MY RELIGIOUS STRUGGLE IS NOT A QUESTION OF FAITH OR PIETY, OR EVEN THE LACK OF AFFIRMATION FOR VARIANT SEXUALITIES, BUT THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE VERY NATURE OF RELIGION AS AN INSTITUTIONALIZED FORCE..."

OUT & IN-FOCUS:

Kim Acquaviva, C'94, SW'95, GED'00

Kimberly Acquaviva is becoming used to being spotlighted by the media. Around the year 2000, she and her fiancé were voted the “couple of the millennium” on <TheKnot.com>. Because of their history and emotional story they easily won the majority of votes over four other heterosexual couples. After this momentous and happy event, Kim soon learned her first lesson about the media — people remember.

Kimberly and her former partner were married late in 2000 but like many before them, they separated from each other. Because of her situation Kimberly has to laugh as people still give her congratulations and question how everything is going with married life. Even yesterday, as her new partner was telling her about my voicemail message congratulating and questioning about the couple of the millennium, Kim must have been asking, “how many more times will this happen?” People do remember.

In reference to such a hot topic in the today's media, her experience with marriage also reminds us how “getting married as any couple can show equality – but also we still have human frailties...gay people get divorced too.” From her experience, she has learned a very valuable lesson: “as a person, you change.” Kimberly, however, had some forewarning about life in

the public eye as her father is a conservative Republican from Texas who “was big on staying out of the media” in general. But, Kimberly feels “no shame or embarrassment” about her life or her choices.

Kimberly does not regret her choice to go to Penn. In fact, she earned her B.A. in sociology, M.S.W., and Ph.D. in Sexuality Education, all at Penn. Now, in addition to her work as an Assistant Research Professor at The George Washington University's Department of Health Care Sciences, Kim is doing work for LGAIN (Lesbian and Gay Aging Issues Network) Leadership Council for the American Society on Aging (ASA), and is one of the chairs for the LGBT track at the annual ASA conference. She is also on the editorial board for the *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services*.

Along with these experiences, Kim lectures around the country concerning LGBT health care issues, focusing on equality and professionalism. She explains, “in a professional role you need to treat [your clients] with dignity and respect” regardless of their differences. In communicat-

ing her message, she believes it is good for faculty or speakers to identify themselves as members of the LGBT community. In fact, when giving a lecture Kim identifies herself as a lesbian, “not as a

revelation but as a matter of fact...to show that it's no big deal.”

When thinking about her place as a role model for other people in the LGBT community,

Kimberly believes it is important to be mindful of the message you are trying to convey because to some people you may represent the entire community. She starts her speeches on a level ground where all people can agree, as “we agree we are all human beings and we deserve dignity...this makes the focus on a subject that everyone can agree on, not the politics.” Kim is reminded by people who hear her speak that what she presents may be the only representation of LGBT issues they will ever hear.

An example happened recently at the Iowa Department of Elder Affairs “Growing Old with Dignity and Grace” conference. A woman from A.A.R.P. (American Association of Retired Persons) asked Kimberly about her LGBT



Kim (left) & her partner, Kathy.

group and stated, “you must get a lot of dues.” Confused, Kimberly asked her what she meant. The woman explained she has seen the LGBT organization everywhere, on signs, newspapers, on the news. “You all must get a lot of dues from your members,” she said again. Kimberly laughed as she began to understand the woman believed the acronym ‘LGBT’ was the name of a large organization working for equality in the same manner as A.A.R.P.

Earlier in the day, the same woman had said to Kimberly, “Thank you for coming to talk today; normally you people are always so angry.” This showed the woman’s

impression that gay people were always angry and screaming. Because of the filter of the media, her only real life exposure to people in the LGBT community had been through irate speakers and protesters. This incident reinforced Kimberly’s awareness of the sensitivity that must be taken when presenting oneself as part of the LGBT community.

In her own role as a representative of the LGBT community in her speeches and interactions with people, Kim “keeps the overall goal in mind.” She says, “people want to know we aren’t trying to change their beliefs. I can’t win that fight; instead I focus on our intended goal and not let anger get

in the way.” In her talks she tries to convey it is okay that people have different ideas of what is right, but they must respect others’ views as well.

With all her lessons learned from living as a public LGBT figure, Kimberly uses her knowledge to support her goals. The lesson that has proved especially true, useful, and for her sometimes annoying, is one she thinks about when she is in the public eye: people remember. Kim says, “I don’t want to change your beliefs...It’s your right to have your own beliefs,” and “if you let people know they don’t have to give up their beliefs, they hear you!”

~Gregory Sparks

Help the LGBT Center!

One lucky person will receive an iPod Shuffle just for filling out the survey!!!



We need your feedback to better serve you. So take a few minutes, go to the Center’s site, and click on the “Take the LGBT Center’s survey” link.

www.vpul.upenn.edu/lgbtc

Needing Encouragement

QPenn is a unique week of celebration and awareness for the LGBT community. It includes panels, discussions, rallies, demonstration, lectures, and more on LGBT issues. This year was the first time I had heard of the tradition and had the chance to participate in the events. I was able to obtain one of the highly demanded QPenn shirts, be on a panel about identity, experience a leather demonstration, and hear a lecture about gay athletes. They were all very interesting and eye opening experiences.

However, I feel like I might not have gone to or participated in the events without the encouragement and a little pressure from my fellow staff members. Reflecting back on the week, I am glad I had that push, but I wonder if it is the lack of such encouragement that keeps other members of the LGBT and general Penn community from attending QPenn events as well.

Ever since I began working at the LGBT Center, I have been comfortable letting my sexual identity be known around people I know are in the LGBT community or are allies. Acknowledging it

around others whose opinion about homosexuality was unknown to me was a little scarier. I was worried about being judged. Thus, I was hesitant about simple things like having my picture on the Center web site. Over the course of the year, I have become more comfortable and even allowed my picture to be used in the QPenn supplement along with my name.

On the other hand, beside working at the LGBT Center I have rarely gone to any public events sponsored by LGBT groups...except for the parties. In a sense, I told myself I was too busy for any of them and that working while an event occurred in the Center was good enough. I soon came to realize I was worried about who would see me at an event and how they would judge me, hence, my reasons for not attending the first few days of QPenn events.

Nevertheless, after I got over my worries the first QPenn event I attended was a lecture by Eric Anderson on athletics and gay athletes. It was very interesting and I could relate and understand much of what he said. The lecture made me realize something I had not

before: LGBT issues do not simply concern LGBT people, but all people. For instance, Anderson said the problem in society facing LGBT communities is that non-members and members alike are afraid to support the community because of fear that they will be called gay or queer. Ironically, that was my fear. Regardless of its validity, I was worried about being labeled. That fear is what kept me from attending any LGBT sponsored events. Is this fear what keeps others from attending QPenn events, too? Yes, it is part of the problem.

Honestly, I believe most of the QPenn events had a nice turn out, some people did not attend because they simply were too busy, or they did not know it was happening. I do know, however, that fear plays a major role in the lack of attendance as well. But how can we reduce that fear? What changes in society will it take? Encouragement? Communication?

My suggestion is more lectures, panels, and general LGBT sponsored events throughout the year. Sometimes it simply takes time to build up the courage to go such events. Therefore, more events through out the year equals more time and chances to attend. As a result, I believe there will be more attendance by the end of the year. This would also lead to a more constant source or ways of

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"...the problem in society facing LGBT communities is that non-members and members alike are afraid to support the community because of fear that they will be called gay or queer."

À BIENTOT



I remember walking to the Center for the first time during my sophomore year. It had just moved into its new home at the Carriage House, and I was trying to get a work-study job there as some sort of librarian (or at least I thought). It was raining and the person I was at the time refused to use an umbrella because I liked to experience the weather to its fullest. I came in the doors and shook off my jacket before I headed up to Erin Cross' office for my interview. I wasn't sure what to expect from the experience, and I didn't think the interview went well, but I got a work-study position helping out with the alumni organization, PennGALA, and the Center's development work.

Almost three years later, and who could have imagined I would be where I am. The Center, as many people know, is my home (not my home away from home). I spend more time here, working, eating, sleeping, and hanging out than I do at my house in West Philly or in Delaware County. (They really just need to install a shower and a washer and dryer so I can take up residence in the attic.) I used to be amazed that my ex was one of 14 brothers and sisters, but my family over the years at the Center has become much larger (hell, I even have a dog here).

I cannot help but wonder what would have happened if I had not jumped at the opportunity for a

job here. I am pretty sure I would still be confused by what "boy-type" means. I would definitely be a lot skinnier. I would for sure have a lot more free time. I would not think that the back side of a piece of paper was still useful. My collection of buttons, pins, and stickers would be much less eclectic. I would not know what it means to freeze in the middle of a record breaking heat and humidity wave in July. I would not have been hog tied, flogged, and spanked (well maybe). I would not know how to use Photoshop, Illustrator, PageMaker, or FileMaker Pro. I would not recognize the names of 1000+ alumni. I would not be a Jonathan Lax Scholar. And most importantly, I do not think I would be the 'me' I am now.

That said, here are a few thank yous:

Vic (the person): For being my favorite regular/breaking up the afternoon, teaching me more than you know, and always piquing my interest with some yummy new smell from your kitchen.

Amanda: For proving me wrong, sharing your secret crush on Justin Timberlake (I mean Daniel Bedingfield), and reassuring me Voldemort was fictitious.

Suhail: For crazy smiles, Latin stepping it, and getting my back when I needed to run and get some food.

Le: For keeping Jonathan in my life (jk), being the craziest (in a good way) guy here, for taking up some of my slack, and making me laugh.

KeAndra: For always keeping me up on the newest internet networking sites; shaking your groove thing with me; and being able to talk to about basketball, the Midwest, and life in general.

Greg: For being at the Center randomly on Friday nights, forgetting me when you get food on Thursdays, and just being darling!

Karrie: For saying it how it is, knowing the love-hate dynamic of athletics, introducing me to Sisters, and for knowing that you need to plug your iPod into the computer to make them even worth their existence.

Phil: For being a strong support and tough critic, wanting to kill VPUL computing as much as I do, fighting over space with me but always being able to figure something out, and for loving SGI.

Nikki: For being my older sister, spending the summers together becoming Flash video designers, bitching about French classes, and leaving me goodies to munch on.

Ninah: For always being able to kick and laugh with, making the

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What did the LGBT Community Lose?

...from p. 1

have advocated for women to be ordained as priests.

Although John Paul II's policy was of love and respect, he did not share that with the LGBT community. Instead, he proved to be influenced by the Catholic Church's ideology and closed doors for further dialogue between the two groups. Now that he is gone, the LGBT community can only hope that the next Pope will support LGBT issues.

~Suhail Torga

A SPIRITUAL HOME IN RELIGION?

...from p. 3

concedes the necessity for religion to stand ready for change and that to question doctrine and tradition to create space in one's religion for an evolving humanity is not blasphemy, but vital to the strength and life of that religion, as well as its members. By recognizing the need for this course, religion is no longer a top-down practice, but closer to the two-step process intrinsic to spirituality. This possibility gives me hope that religion can be redeemed; that it does not have to be a tool wielded for political influence and authoritarian control to marginalize select members of society to the detriment of humanity. By doing this, not only can spirituality find a home in religion, but LGBT people can, too.

~Ninah Harris

À BIENTOT

...from p. 7

long nights seem that much shorter, bending over backward to accommodate me, being an ear for my bitching, and having quite a few words of wisdom.

Erin: For always being able to catch my typos, always encouraging me to see the other side, sharing dog stories, and being there for me when I thought I was lost.

Bob: For making sure that "mm good" and EVERYTHING.

Home really is where the heart is, and I cannot think of a better place to kick off my shoes (or flip flops). In a few months, I will have to move on. Where to? I wish I knew. I cannot imagine leaving, almost as much as I could not imagine where a walk in the rain would take me years ago. I know for sure, though, that a part of me will always be at home with my friends and family at 3907 Spruce Street. Now for the Francophile in me, this is not adieu, it's merely à bientôt.

~Eric Boschetti

Needing Encouragement

...from p. 3

spreading information about events. Lastly, I think more quality forums are needed to talk about LGBT issues; hence, an increased amount of events outside of QPenn could do no harm.

~KeAndra Dodds

The editorial staff of *OUTlines* seeks submissions from all members of the Penn community. Poetry, stories, essays, artwork, and articles are welcome. Inquiries and/or submissions should be sent to:

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dolphin.upenn.edu>

OUTlines is published by the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Center at the University of Pennsylvania. *OUTlines* is a forum for reporting news and expressing thoughts of interest to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and allied community as well as the general Penn community.

Archived editions of *OUTlines* can be found online at:
<www.vpul.upenn.edu/lgbtc/outlines>.

Gumby's 'PATH'

The latest PATH (Penn's Athletics and their Allies Tackling Homophobia and Heterosexism) event, part of QPenn week, was "Whose Game Is It?" with Dr. Eric Anderson. "Gumby," as most know him, is a dynamic speaker and a professor at the State University of New York, Stony Brook. He is a leading expert in homophobia in sport with a focus on men's sports. Anderson drew a large crowd, including members of at least four varsity Penn teams.

In his talk, Anderson spoke about the conditions that allow homophobia to exist on teams and the power coaches have to stop it before it even starts by creating an open and accepting atmosphere from the beginning. Such conditions seem to allow athletes to come out to their teams and the fact is that the most important factor in this is the coach. Anderson thinks the source of many problems in sport is that coaches

need no formal schooling or training in order to become a coach, just a whistle. Moreover, he discussed the 'generation gap' between current athletic administrators and the students they serve in terms of accepting queer athletes and levels of homophobia and how such a gap in beliefs must change sooner than later. Finally, Anderson also talked about how students need to enact change in university athletic departments to force them to be accepting of all athletes.

Anderson shared his experience about coming out as the first openly gay high school coach in ultra-conservative Orange County, California. His first book, "*Trailblazing: The True Story of America's First Openly Gay Track Coach*," is about exactly that. Anderson elaborated on the controversy his coming out caused and told the story of one of his straight runners being beaten almost to death by a foot-

ball player for having a gay coach. In the end, the students made the difference.

In his second book, "*In the Game: Gay Athletes and the Cult of Masculinity*," Anderson chronicles the individual experiences of openly gay and closeted males who play team sports. Through interviews, he examines how homophobia is manifested on men's teams, how out athletes are able to navigate through it, and the power out athletes have to change the environment on their teams.

Currently, Anderson is researching and writing a new book about the changing face of heterosexual masculinity in response to society's lessening homophobia and the growing popularity of metrosexuality.

For information about PATH or to be on PATH's listserv, email me at <karriemo@sas.upenn.edu>. ~Karrie Moore

Hot or Not: QPenn 2005

...from p. 2

volved people, it kept outside curiosity and intrigue down from a true lack of awareness instead of a lack of interest.

Pigeon-Holing

Although the programs offered were diverse, many of the events were only interesting to people

who belong to the community being addressed. I am guilty of this myself, especially with the leather and bear events this year. In comparison, I remember a GUIDE panel during last year's QPenn that cross-cut LGBT communities (although weak on the L and T). The best event to fight pigeonholing this year was the QSA Identity Forum which highlighted what I would consider to be the most diverse set of speakers to share their stories. It should

be noted, however, that other events did have diverse speakers in terms of race and gender within communities.

Okay, now count down backward from ten slowly and re-read the HOT section. I know criticism can be biting, but I also think it is good to keep in mind to ensure QPenn's success next year. In the meantime, have a hot summer and see you next fall.

~Phil Cochetti

Graduating in May?

CELEBRATE

**with
the
LGBT
Center!**

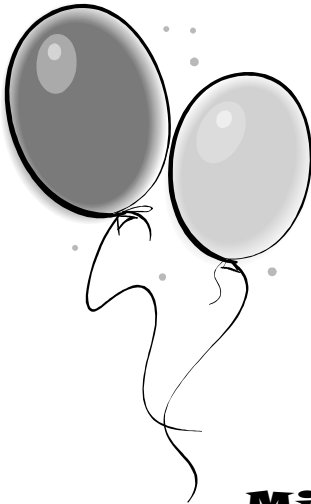
Wear a rainbow tassel!

- to reserve one and allow us to keep in touch, send the following information to center@dolphin.upenn.edu by Fri, April 22: *Name, School, Email, Permanent Address, and Permanent Telephone Number (cell)*
- tassels will be available for pick-up at the LGBT Center the week of May 8



Enjoy graduation dinner!

- join PennGALA (gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender alumni) for a free meal at their 25th Anniversary Dinner
- 7-10p on Fri, May 13 in 200 College Hall
- featuring President Gutmann and Evan Wolfson, Exec. Director of Freedom to Marry
- meet other LGBT alumni and see how you can become involved
- RSVP to Ronald ronaldr@ben.dev.upenn.edu and say you are in the class of '05



Mix and mingle at the Center post-commencement!

- bring your friends and family to the LGBT Center for a light lunch
- immediately after Penn's university-wide commencement ceremony on Mon, May 16 at the LGBT Center
- RSVP to Ninah ninah@pobox.upenn.edu by Fri, May 6



Questions? Please contact the LGBT Center at center@dolphin.upenn.edu or 215-898-5044