

Esteemed SFRB Board,

The LGBTQ Resource Center has had a long, successful relationship with the Student Fee Review Board. It was through the guidance and support of the SFRB that the LGBTQ Resource Center was created ten years ago. Each year, we do our best to address the recommendations put forth by the SFRB. One of the consistent recommendations received is to secure outside funding. The funding that is available through most grants for LGBTQ programming often falls outside of the mission of the LGBTQ Resource Center or requires more labor than our one professional staff person office can provide. We do not receive RPSF funding, nor does our I&G funding cover anything beyond professional staff salaries. We acknowledge that there is a large carry forward in our I&G account, however, those funds are reserved for hiring professional staff.

1. Briefly explain the areas that you intend on prioritizing and allocating the SFRB funding towards (after 18.36% cut).

Our current budget of \$71,000 (with \$22,439 additionally in SFRB reserves) will afford us two graduate student staff members and funds for operational expenses such as: phone lines, copier/printer, Safe Zone materials, and replacing two computers that were stolen when the Resource Center was broken into in April (during the stay-at-home orders) with the remainder allocated towards student programming. Our graduate student positions are essential to the functionality of the Center as not only do they provide office support, but they lead our Café Q (a platform for students, staff, and faculty to share their research as related to LGBTQ topics), peer student support groups, Safe Zone trainings, and they also help develop programming for the academic year. The Resource Center was already in the process of reconfiguring student programming as well as student employees to accommodate the initial cut of our SFRB request.

2. What areas will not receive funding due to the budget cut? Why are these critical to your operations?

This additional \$15,972 cut will eliminate our emergency scholarship program as well as all of our undergraduate student positions. This past academic year, the LGBTQ Resource Center awarded 20 scholarships to both graduate and undergraduate students. This was in addition to the scholarship funding provided by ASUNM and GPSA. The Resource Center receives generally 30 scholarship applications an academic year from both undergraduate and graduate students but due to COVID-19, there has been a significant increase in requests. It is important to note that many of our LGBTQ students do not receive family support and we have students who are not able to file FAFSA applications because they are not in contact with their families or their families withhold tax information as punishment for their identity. This makes scholarship opportunities for the students we serve even more crucial.

The cuts will also directly impact students by eliminating student staff positions that are not just a source of income but also provide professional development opportunities that are rarely afforded to LGBTQ people, particularly BIPOC (Black, Indigenous People of Color) LGBTQ people. Unemployment rates for Transgender people have been reported as double those of

cisgender people. Additionally, only 10% Transgender individuals access higher education with less than half of that receiving degrees beyond a bachelors. By creating job opportunities and providing scholarships, we are directly changing those numbers and creating equitable access for LGBTQ people.

The LGBTQ Resource Center is asking for funds to employ undergraduate students and for our scholarship program. These funds will provide opportunities for students to be gainfully employed and also receive financial support which to meet the needs exacerbated by COVID-19. Although our programming is going to be mostly online, we need students to run these programs. As was mentioned previously, there is only one professional staff person at the LGBTQ Resource Center. We were in the process of hiring additional professional staff when the pandemic hit. There was a hiring freeze that disallowed any hire to be made however, we are in the process of working with HR to get allowance to hire another professional staff person in Fall 2020.

3. How will you use the emergency funding (if awarded), to address your critical needs?

To give a brief snapshot of our student engagement, we had 3800 service visits to the Center in Academic year 2018-19. With the hit of COVID, our student groups went online, and we shifted our programming to address the needs of students. For two of our online programs, we had 500-600 people attend these events virtually. We plan on expanding these programs, because we know that all people are feeling even more alienated and alone. We are committed to creating programs that support holistic student well-being, which we feel is imperative in times of unrest and fear.

The LGBTQ Resource Center acknowledges that cutting budgets is essential to keeping the university afloat. We understand that all organizations received less funds in FY21, however it appears that the while the LGBTQ RC received a cut of 13% other student services and resource centers only received an average of a 5% cut. Our proposal also reflected an increase in students served and programs offered. The rationale we received indicated that it was due to a surplus in our I&G funding, however, these funds are earmarked for professional staff hires and not used for programming.

We have known that we are not exempt from these harsh realities and are committed to ensuring that UNM remains a beacon of learning and moving our society forward by developing leaders. We ask that the SFRB consider supporting our LGBTQ students who historically have faced higher barriers to accessing higher education. As we enter our ten-year anniversary, we are looking ahead not only how LGBTQ students survive but thrive in this next decade.