



GREEN LIGHT

Volume 8, Issue 2 *Newsletter of Dartmouth's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Alumni/ae Association* November 2003

Alums Enjoy Summer Reunion Breakfast

D-GALA held its annual breakfast on Saturday, June 14, 2003 in Hanover at the Faculty Lounge in the Hopkins Center. About 50 alums gathered to meet other D-GALA members as well as members of the Dartmouth administration, faculty and staff. Even though the reunions take place between terms, a few undergraduate and graduate students also attended. Director of Alumni Relations, Nelson Armstrong '71, welcomed everyone and emphasized how nice it is to be able to greet alumni in person in Hanover. Nels has been a strong supporter of D-GALA over the years and we appreciate all his efforts on behalf of LGBT alums.



D-GALA Alums and Friends at June Reunion

Nels introduced President James Wright '64A who made time in his busy schedule again this year to speak with us about concerns to our members. D-GALA President David Eichman '82 summarized the activities of D-GALA over the past year. Other D-GALA Board members in attendance included Garrett Hornsby '87 and Yuval Ortiz-Quiroga '02. Assistant Dean of Student Life and Advisor to LGBT students Pam Misener gave everyone a campus

BIG TURNOUT SOUGHT IN COLLEGE ELECTION

A crucial vote of all Dartmouth alumni/ae is scheduled to take place at the College at noon on Saturday, December 6, 2003. The vote is critical to how the College will be governed in the future, and the vote has major implications for LGBT alums. Thus, the D-GALA Board of Trustees urges all members and friends of D-GALA to attend the meeting on the 6th (and, as described later in this article, the Board is planning a fun weekend to encourage attendance).

Technically the meeting and subsequent vote will be of the Association of Alumni. The Association is composed of all Dartmouth alums, and so all alums are members, even if many of us did not know that. The vote is to ratify a new constitution that will in essence combine the Association with the Alumni Council and will eliminate the Association's executive committee's current substantial role in connection with elections to the College's Board of Trustees. Instead, the Alumni Council will manage Trustee elections. In connection with this merger, the Alumni Council is to be enlarged and made more representative of the alumni body as a whole.

D-GALA strongly supports the proposed merger because (1) it enhances the role of the Alumni Council, which already has one D-GALA "seat" and has supported D-GALA in the past, (2) the new constitution provides that all affiliated groups, including D-GALA, will get two seats on the "new" Council, and (3) the new constitution eliminates the current supervision by the

CAMPUS UPDATES

The fall term continues to be very active at Dartmouth. Among a few of the highlights are:

Widely-published writer Michael Bronski is teaching a new course, "Plagues and Politics: The Impact of AIDS on U.S. Society."

Many events have been held during National Coming Out Month, including:

- On October 13, professional baseball player and author of "Going the Other Way: Lessons Learned from a Life In and Out of Major League Baseball" presented a talk entitled "Diversity in the Major Leagues".
- On October 21, Liz Miller from Smith College, screened her documentary "Novela, Novela", which studies a new Nicaraguan soap opera that presents a gay character on prime time television.
- On October 22, Episcopal Bishop-elect Gene Robinson spoke at Rollins Chapel about his own ministry as a priest, the experience of coming out while working in the church, his vision of his future role as a bishop, and some of his views on the controversy concerning his election. Bishop Robinson's appearance, which was well-received by a large student audience, was favorably reported in *The Boston Globe*.

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update. In addition, other members of the Dartmouth administration in attendance included Stan Colla '66, Michelle Meyers '83, Sylvia Racca, Ozzie Harris '81, Peggy Parsons, Maria Higuerey-Birgisson and Janet Rebman. ❖

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Association's executive committee of the Trustee election process.

Conservative members of the Association are mobilizing in opposition to the proposed merger, as it will diminish their perceived power. Since the new constitution requires a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote by those personally in attendance, it is essential for D-GALA alums to come to Hanover for the meeting on the 6th. D-GALA is arranging joint transportation with other affiliated groups from the New York City area (for more information contact D-GALA director Garrett Hornsby at garrett@garretthornsby.com). We may also coordinate transportation from the Boston area (for more information, contact director Steve James at stevenjames978@comcast.net).

The meeting begins at noon at

Alumni Hall in the Hop. A buffet lunch will be served. Later on Saturday, D-GALA will sponsor an LGBT reception, with food, drinks and a surprise speaker, beginning at 6 PM at the Top of the Hop. For those arriving on Friday, there will be a reception for affiliated groups Friday evening (details to follow; watch our website or e-mail us for more). And on Sunday morning we will have brunch and begin planning for next October's all-class reunion.

Hillary Smith Goodridge '78 Sues Massachusetts for Right to Marry

Hillary Smith Goodridge '78 and her partner Julie are the lead plaintiffs in the widely publicized gay marriage case now pending before the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. In the case, Hillary and Julie and six other same-sex couples have sued the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, challenging its policy denying marriage licenses to same-sex couples. They contend that Massachusetts' marriage statute contains no prohibition of same-sex marriages and in any event such a prohibition would violate the Massachusetts Constitution's guarantees of equality and liberty. The Massachusetts Supreme Court evidently is struggling with the case, as in July it gave notice that the case would not be decided within its customary 130-day period for decision of fully submitted cases.



Hillary, whose name was Hillary Smith during her undergraduate days (she and Julie changed their names when their daughter Annie, now 8, was born), now lives in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, with Julie and Annie. (In photo above, Hillary is at top right, with daughter Annie, then 6, and Julie.) Hillary is Director of the Unitarian Universalist Funding Program, Julie is President of NorthStar Asset Management and Annie is in the third grade. "Green Light" caught up with Hillary (via e-mail) at her home recently, where she kindly agreed to answer a few questions about the case.

Q. Why did you choose to bring this lawsuit?

A. Just over eight years ago, anticipating having a child sent Julie and I to our lawyer where we tried to piece together protections in the event of any number of things - death, disability, and so on. We did health care proxies and wills, we had durable powers of attorney, we paid lots of money to

have a stack of papers several inches high that (as our lawyer and we realized) did not come close to what marriage provides. With all the papers, and even though I adopted Annie after Julie gave birth to her, Julie and I are legal strangers to each other, basically roommates.

When Annie was about 5 she asked Julie if we were married, probably to compare us to the other parents at

school, and Julie had to be honest and explain to her that we weren't, and why, which is not easy to do with a 5-year-old.

Soon after that, Annie and I were listening to the Beatles and talking about "love" and I asked her whom she knew who loved each other. She started reeling off names, and the pattern was clear - all heterosexual couples. I said "How about Ma and Mommy?" and she replied "You two don't love each other, if you loved each other you'd be married". That was it for me. Soon after that, we decided to go to city hall to see what would happen if we

applied for a marriage license.

Q. What are your feelings about the case today?

A. While waiting for the SJC to decide our case is somewhat stressful, it has been such an honor to be a part of this process. No matter what the outcome, I find it so encouraging that people are talking and thinking about the role of the institution of marriage in our society in ways many of us could not imagine several years ago. Many heterosexual couples are not aware of the huge benefits attached to marriage (such as access to family health care coverage, social security, pension, inheritance rights), or that gay and lesbian people cannot access these. We have had total strangers, straight and gay, come up to us on the street and write us letters saying thank you for doing this. It also speaks to how important it is to come out because without that, these debates over marriage, children, healthcare, job security could not take place. Once people know a gay person, couple, family it becomes a lot harder to deny us basic equality and civil rights. I think it's also been important to illuminate the difference between civil marriage and religious marriage, this has been a source of great confusion for people. Our case has nothing to do with religious marriage or how any religion may address the issue. Many people are unaware that marriage is also a civil institution, the government grants licenses for it, it comes with a tremendous architecture of supports and protections that have nothing to do with the church. Personally, it has been amazing to have my family (my father and brother both are Dartmouth alums, and far more conservative than I) go from being mildly shocked about the issue to being incredibly supportive. A few years ago my father, a lifelong Goldwater Republican, wrote Julie a valentines day card saying he considered himself to be her father-in-law and hoped she felt the same way. That gives me great hope.

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Q. Any other Dartmouth-related thoughts or reflections?

A. My experiences at Dartmouth have a lot to do with how I respond to issues of social justice and equality. I came to Dartmouth in the very early days of coeducation (I think the male/female ratio my first year was something like 6:1) and we were told in subtle and not so subtle ways by alumni, faculty and other students that women were not welcome, that we would ruin the institution. "Cohogs go home" was a rally cry and displayed in banners and T-shirts. I am reminded of those voices when I hear televangelists, politicians and others assert that our case will "ruin the institution of marriage", that we will "ruin the family". The environment at Dartmouth was so disruptive that I chose to leave on the exchange program for my sophomore year. When I returned, we faced tremendous struggles over equal access (whether the college would limit the number of women accepted), around women faculty receiving tenure, affirmative action, the Indian symbol, Seabrook nuclear power plant and South Africa divestiture. I am so grateful to have had wonderful faculty members and other students there from whom I learned so much. Among alumni, Beth Robinson '86 is one of my heroes. Her courage and conviction have been a great inspiration to me. ❖

D-GALA UPDATES

D-GALA's next Board of Directors Elections will take place early next year. As usual, four Board seats will be open (plus a fifth this year to fill a vacancy). We encourage interested alums to learn more by contacting us at DartGALA@aol.com. Entries are due by December 31st.

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D-GALA now has **on-line membership registration and contributions!** Thanks to technologically-proficient director Susi Kandel '00, you can now fill out the annual D-GALA membership form and make a contribution (using PayPal) on our website by clicking **Join D-GALA** at <http://www.dartmouth.org/affiliated/dgala/>.

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The second **All-Class LGBT reunion** will take place in Hanover October 1-3, 2004. More details to follow.

Our support of the Dartmouth College Fund (DCF) is garnering some serious attention. In the year end report to the Board of Trustees, Carol Pelzel, the Vice President for Development, wrote "Seeking to help in the effort to improve alumni participation, the Dartmouth Gay and Lesbian Association of alumni (sic) (D-GALA) approached the Dartmouth College Fund with a plan to improve the participation level of D-GALA members. Even though D-GALA did not begin fund raising until May, with minimum effort, participation for the group rose from 27% to 35%. This will serve as a good model for the future as the Dartmouth College Fund explores fund raising through affinity groups.

Please help our effort to increase our participation level this new fund year to the college-wide level of 45.4% by giving to the DCF today. We plan to present President Wright with a ceremonial check at our October 1-3, 2004 reunion for the amount that our members have contributed this fund year -- just as the reunion classes do each June. ❖