We’re Different!

Please visit the Institute’s new and improved website, which has a whole new look (and a brand new logo) thanks to our graphic designer and webmaster John Polle. We’ll be building out the site and adding fresh content on an ongoing basis.

Those of you who’ve visited our offices in the past know that whoever coined the phrase “gay ghetto” had us in mind—but no more! UA Facilities Management gave us a makeover this summer, and now we’re ready for our close-up. Please come visit!

Cuts to our state funding allocation forced us to say goodbye to longtime program coordinator Caren Zimmerman, whom we thank for her many years of service. But we welcome Tucson native Laura Caywood Barker as our new administrative assistant, whose background in educational enrichment programs will help us launch our planned summer study program in San Francisco in 2013.

A Message from the Director

It’s been an exciting and challenging first year on the job, as I’ve taken over direction of the Institute from my able predecessor, professor Eithne Lubheid. While we’ve built on past successes, we’ve also embarked on many new ventures.

Our new motto, “a difference engine,” highlights our emphasis on change. An engine is a device that converts energy into movement. And while the term “difference engine” playfully repurposes the name of the hand-cranked mechanical calculating machines of the industrial revolution that presaged modern electronic computers, it’s also our metaphor for the Institute for LGBT Studies: we see ourselves as a motor for change that both runs on difference and makes a difference.

“Queer” is a compact word but complex concept meant to encompass the vast range of gender and sexual diversity. Queerness is fundamentally about differing from norms. Queer difference can sometimes become the target of violence, oppression, discrimination, and marginalization directed at that which exceeds the norm, but at the same time it can open a new space for critical reflection, deeper knowledge, sharper insights, and new visions of society rooted in the wisdom and experiences of non-normative lives. Queer difference itself is a source of power that can be harnessed to many worthwhile ends. Turning the power of queer difference into movement towards a better society is what it means to be a difference engine.

We hope that in the years ahead you’ll plug your own energy into the Institute. Together we can make a world of difference.

Susan Stryker, Ph.D.
Director, UA Institute for LGBT Studies
Thank you all for your generous support!

Funders

Tucson philanthropist James J. Leos bequeathed the bulk of his estate to the Institute earlier this year—a gift that, when we receive it sometime in the (hopefully distant) future, is expected to be worth several million dollars. In the nearer term, Mr. Leos has also begun contributing $40K a year to support the Institute’s community-oriented programs, and is giving us other tangible assets that will total $1,000,000 over the next five years. Thank you, Jim, for your incredible generosity!

Thanks to Ellen and Larry Joseph, parents of professor Miranda Joseph, a founding-figure in LGBT Studies, and to the rest of the extended Joseph family, for endowing a lecture fund in Miranda’s honor. The Joseph Lecture is the institute’s signature annual event; it brings internationally acclaimed scholars to Tucson to address cutting-edge topics at the intersections of sexuality, race, and globalization. Development Director Tom Buchanan successfully completed the $100,000 endowment campaign in less than two years, with major support coming from the Joseph family and the bulk of his estate to the Institute earlier this year—a gift that, when we receive it sometime in the hopefully distant future, is expected to be worth several million dollars. In the nearer term, Mr. Leos has also begun contributing $40K a year to support the Institute’s community-oriented programs, and is giving us other tangible assets that will total $1,000,000 over the next five years. Thank you, Jim, for your incredible generosity!

Thanks to Ellen and Larry Joseph, parents of professor Miranda Joseph, a founding-figure in LGBT Studies, and to the rest of the extended Joseph family, for endowing a lecture fund in Miranda’s honor. The Joseph Lecture is the institute’s signature annual event; it brings internationally acclaimed scholars to Tucson to address cutting-edge topics at the intersections of sexuality, race, and globalization. Development Director Tom Buchanan successfully completed the $100,000 endowment campaign in less than two years, with major support coming from the Joseph family and the bulk of his estate to the Institute earlier this year—a gift that, when we receive it sometime in the hopefully distant future, is expected to be worth several million dollars. In the nearer term, Mr. Leos has also begun contributing $40K a year to support the Institute’s community-oriented programs, and is giving us other tangible assets that will total $1,000,000 over the next five years. Thank you, Jim, for your incredible generosity!

Many other individuals, organizations, and university units have helped us carry out our mission over the past year. Thank you to all of our donors!

2011 - 2012 Highlights

September: Community leaders Jim Leos and Peter Bramley each hosted receptions to honor outgoing Institute director Eithne Lubheid and welcome incoming director Susan Stryker. We also ran a series of workshops on “Building Better Websites” as part of our own upgrade process, bringing in Mano Marks from Google and Kim Klausner from the University of California-San Francisco to talk with the campus community about geographical information systems and digital archiving.

October: We brought award-winning German lesbian filmmaker Monika Treut to Tucson to screen her latest film, Ghosted, as part of the Lesbian Looks film series.

November: With the Confluencer for Creative Inquiry, we co-hosted the Virtual Divides mini-conference on biometric surveillance, which brought keynote speakers Joseph Pugliese and Ben Muller from Australia and Canada, and featured a panel on “Transgendering the Border.”

January: We kicked off the new year with our weekly Deep Dish LGBT Lunchtime Lectures, a successful new program coordinated by the Institute’s graduate assistant Lisa Logan, which features scholars from across the campus giving short informal talks on their research; free and open to the public.

February: The Institute continued preparations to host two exciting new interdisciplinary academic journals—TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly, and Somatechnics, which explores the queer connections between embodiment and technology.

March: The Institute re-grants some of the funds it receives to support reading groups, research clusters, and curriculum development. This year we offered support to a project that bridges LGBT and anti-racist activisms, a graduate seminar on contemporary queer French novels, an online course on sexual identity over the lifespan, and reading groups on “Queering Economic Development” and “Queer Indigeneity.”

April: Acclaimed Performance Studies scholar José Esteban Muñoz delivered the 2nd Annual Miranda Joseph Endowed Lecture, on the topic of “The Sense of Brown,” followed by a special screening of Wu Tsang’s film Wildness, which had been the focus of Prof. Muñoz’s talk.

Summer: As part of our facilities improvement project, we set up an archival storage vault in preparation for one of our major undertakings—an LGBT archive that documents, preserves, and celebrates the proud histories of Arizona’s queer communities.