

THE GUSTAVIAN WEEKLY

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ISSUE 6

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Interfaith
organizations**

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Queers and Allies kicked off Coming Out Week by painting the rock rainbow colors on Monday night.

Katie Mattinen

Gusties celebrate Coming Out Week with pride

Queers and Allies hosts annual Coming Out Week celebrations and events

Emily VanGorder
Staff Writer

This Monday marked the beginning of Coming Out Week, a weeklong celebration of LGBTQ+ students and allies focused on education, understanding, and acceptance, sponsored by Queers and Allies, also known as Q&A.

Coming Out Week has existed in many forms since it officially began in 1994.

"The LGBTQ+ organization on campus has gone through many transformations and name changes over the years of course, so there have been a few different sponsors," Q&A President Senior Quinn Peterson said.

"The Drag Show first began around 15 years ago, in par-

ticular, [it] is something that lets people look beyond the rigid gender binary," Peterson said.

On Monday Oct. 7, students were invited to paint the rock to kickoff Coming Out Week. A mixer was held on the following day in the Womyn's Awareness Center (WAC), which "is a great way to meet other Queer and allied students and to learn about one another's identities. It's educational, safe, fun, and it is a relief from personal and academic stressors," Risk Manager and Diversity Leadership Council (DLC) Rep. Mary Nyhus said.

"The mixer is probably my favorite event after the drag show. We eat frost-your-owns, drink 'respect trans women' juice, like the meme and play Cards Against Humanity, which promptly got out of hand. As

this occurs early in our fall semester, it provides us with a great opportunity for the new students to meet the existing members," Assistant Professor in Physics and Q&A Advisor Darsa Donelan said.

Students were invited to go to the DLC Fall Fest on Wed. Oct. 9, followed by the Bi Banter and Trans Talk discussions in the Courtyard on Thursday at 6:00. The week culminates in the eagerly-awaited Drag Show, which will take place in Alumni Hall at 8:30 p.m., and is hosted by Victoria DeVille.

"One of my favorite things about the drag show is seeing how confident students are with their self-expression. It can be difficult to truly be yourself, yet dressing in a costume and performing as a character can give you more confidence, this can be

contagious for some students. They are then able to be proud of who they are," Donelan said.

"I also very much enjoy when I get to jump on stage and perform as my alter ego, Tomboy Cruise. Last year I performed as Tom Cruise from Top Gun. This year, if time allows, I will be performing as Tom Cruise from the 1981 drama T.A.P.S. What can I say? I am a King," Donelan said.

Q&A hosts multiple events throughout the year, but Coming Out Week is the longest. Other events include Queers-giving, poetry readings and a Halloween event in which students dress up and collect nonperishables for a local food pantry. We "hope to do film screenings and [participate in] The Day of Silence," Q&A Secretary Sophomore Emily

Seppelt said.

Q&A meets once weekly at 6:00 p.m. in the WAC. "We discuss current events, share our experiences as a queer person or an ally, and generally try to create a fun and welcoming space for LGBTQ+ students and their allies at GAC," Seppelt said. "Everyone on campus is welcome to participate in any of our events, whether they be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, pansexual and ally, or anything else. We value and support everyone on campus," Donelan said.

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Campus Safety Report

Monday, Sept. 30

- Campus Safety and the SPPD searched the Arboretum for a missing student who left a suicide note.
- Campus Safety was called for medical assistance in the stairwell of Uhler Hall.

Tuesday, Oct. 1

- Campus Safety was called to Norelius for an underage drinking violation.

Wednesday, Oct. 2

- No incidents reported

Thursday, Oct. 3

- Campus Safety responded to a medical assist at Schaefer Fine Arts Music. Student was taken by ambulance to the hospital.
- Campus Safety responded to an employee that fell in the Schaefer Fine Arts Music building.

Friday, Oct. 4

- Campus Safety responded to a student of concern in Pittman Hall.

Saturday, Oct. 5

- No incidents reported

Sunday, Oct. 6

- No incidents reported

Note: Case dispositions are available online by viewing the daily crime log on the Campus Safety web page: <https://gustavus.edu/safety/incidents/index.php>

Tip of the Week:
Trick or Treat! Halloween Safety Tips!
Watch out for your Friends! Don't be afraid to intervene if you see something scary. If a friend seems too intoxicated, get them to a safe place im-



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Students attend the Queers and Allies Mixer and play Cards Against Humanity and eat Frost-Your- Owns.

Katie Mattinen

Continued from page 1

Coming Out Week is “the main way that LGBTQ+ voices are projected on campus. With Q&A being the only organization focused on LGBTQ+ issues at GAC, it is vital that our voices be heard and that students know that they are supported and have a place on campus. The main goal of Q&A on campus is to create a safe space for LGBTQ+ students and their allies and to support understanding and acceptance,” Seppelt added. “I hope students feel welcomed and know that they can always come to me for

advice and friendly conversation. Seriously, I have the best office on campus. It is a great safe space to relax in and has plenty of tea,” Donelan said. “The executive board [of Queers and Allies] are the ones that really put Coming Out Week together. They work incredibly hard to make the events for the week happen. I think it is very important for the students in our queer community and our allies to know that they have support beyond their fellow classmates in Q&A, but also from the faculty and the staff,” Donelan said.

Counseling Center rolls out “Let’s Talk” program



Students can attend Let's Talk sessions in the library basement A/V room.

Nate Habben

Marie Osuna
Staff Writer

This school year, the Gustavus counseling center started offering free “Let’s Talk” services, held from 1:30-2:30 p.m. Monday-Friday in the library A/V rooms. This service is offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Let’s Talk offers a fast, convenient service for students needing a consultation with a mental health therapist.

“Let’s Talk is a great way to get information about what therapy looks like. A lot of times people come into our office when they are confused or upset and want to see someone right away, but when the appointment comes around that issue has passed. Let’s Talk is a way to talk to a licensed therapist to get pointed in the right direction—either the Dean of Students Office or academic counseling or back to the counseling center,” Counseling Center Administrative Assistant Rachel Maccabee said.

As convenient these appointments may be, the Counseling Center staff stresses that these sessions are not meant to replace therapy. Those participating in ongoing counseling or experiencing a life-threatening crisis should continue going to their regularly scheduled sessions or contact the counseling center to schedule an immediate appointment as needed.

The purpose of implementing Let’s Talk at Gustavus was to reduce waiting times by providing immediate, confidential

access to a licensed counselor five days a week.

This need is critical. Last year, the counseling center saw thirty percent of the student body, and wait times for appointments were up to a month.

“Let’s Talk allows students to meet with someone without waiting. It’s available every single day students are on campus, whether students have classes or not—someone is always down there. We’re hoping that it cuts down on our waitlist and gives more accessible, immediate access to a therapist, and gives students advice and guidance on issues that might not even be about themselves,” Maccabee said.

So far, student reception to the program has been positive.

“Though small, there is a social stigma around going to counseling, and it can be scary to make an appointment. For those who don’t know what to do, are intimidated by going, or just need a quick check in, I think this is a really cool and great option for people to have,” Junior Katie O’Brien said.

Maccabee echoed a similar sentiment.

“Sometimes you don’t realize how helpful it can be to have a friendly, kind, trained person to talk to for 10-15 minutes,” Maccabee said. “That can really help calm you, redirect you, and regulate your emotions.”

Gustavus modeled the Let’s Talk program after a similar program at Cornell University under the same name. This program has been adopted by

hundreds of other colleges in the country.

“This is something that has worked very, very well in other campuses across the country and we are hoping it’s successful at Gustavus this year. We are hoping we have as many students as possible check it out,” Maccabee said.

Let’s Talk sessions are available with no appointment necessary. When students arrive in the library basement A/V room, there will be a sign on the door inviting them to either come in or to wait ten minutes. Each session is in a private room, with one of the counseling center’s therapists.

The counseling center recommends Let’s Talk for students concerned about issues such as stress, academics, depression and/or anxiety, relationships, trouble adjusting to college culture, family problems, financial concerns, or concerns about someone other than yourself, such as a friend.

“Sometimes people just need a professional to tell them how to handle a situation, and going to a small, low commitment time could be the first stepping stone for them making an actual appointment and getting the help they need,” O’Brien said.

Maccabee also noted that she hopes having Let’s Talk available for students will help to send a positive message to the campus.

“We care. And we know how hard it is to get in [to the counseling center],” Maccabee said. “Let’s Talk will alleviate wait

times for folks. It’s immediate access and it’s consistent—that can be a comfort and stabilizing force in our campus community.

“There’s someone for you every single day, even if you can’t get into the counseling

center. It benefits the campus by creating trust in the counseling center, and consistency in access to a confidential and caring therapist, and knowledge that Gustavus cares about you and all of us,” Maccabee said.



Signs let students know if there is a Counselor available.

Nate Habben

Flu Shot Clinic reinforces Gustie health

Health Services and Nursing majors administer vaccines to fight the flu



Gustavus nursing majors like Senior Bridger Pavelka administer the flu shots.

Katie Mattinen

Elsa Beise
Staff Writer

On Wednesday, Oct. 9 and Thursday, Oct. 10, Health Services and the Nursing Department worked together to host the annual Flu Shot Clinic. This clinic has been around since before the current Director of Health Services Heather Dale started at Gustavus in 2008. Dale is excited to offer this clinic to students, faculty and staff.

"Flu shots (aka influenza vaccines) have long been the gold standard in preventing the spread of this common infection. Offering a Flu Shot Clinic allows a quick, convenient way for students, staff and faculty to get vaccinated annually as recommended," Dale said.

This clinic promotes the protection of patients and the community against illness this winter. As a Nursing major, Senior Ingrid Bassinger was excited for the opportunity to administer shots to patients and be a part of the clinic she has attended in previous years.

"I have gotten my flu shot

through Gustavus the last four years and I am excited to be a part of it. It started to encourage Gusties and other members of our community to help protect themselves and others against the flu," Bassinger said.

The clinic itself is an impactful event on campus. Students and employees can receive their shots at the clinic or in Health Services after the event, while supplies last.

"Each year, over five hundred students and two hundred employees receive their flu shot during our two days of the Flu Shot Clinic. An additional two hundred to three hundred people receive the vaccine in our office either before or after the Flu Shot Clinic," Dale said.

Department Chair of Nursing Heidi Meyer commented on the importance of receiving a flu shot as a college student and/or employee working on a college campus.

"It is extremely important to offer this opportunity on a college campus because of the many shared spaces used by residential students as well as employees. These close quarters make it ideal for the flu virus to

circulate rapidly and the more students and staff are protected, the better outcomes for us as a community as a whole...The clinic also demonstrates the commitment the College has toward maintaining health and wellness of all its members," Meyer said.

Meyer was instrumental in communicating with other departments and ensuring that the students were comfortable with administering the shot.

"My role as the Department Chair of the Nursing Program is to collaborate with the Public Health course faculty and/or clinical faculty to make sure our students are able to participate with implementing the flu shot clinic. The flu shot clinic allows our nursing students to have the opportunity to implement primary prevention measures and health education to members of the Gustavus community. I would also say my role is to promote the clinic to all members of the Gustavus community, not only as an educator, but a contributing member of the community as well," Meyer said.

Being the director of the office that helps to put on the

clinic, Dale had the main role of ensuring the clinic ran smoothly.

"I'm the Director of the Health Service, so ultimately it is my responsibility to make sure the clinic goes well each year, but I work with amazing colleagues and we have a great partnership with the Nursing department. It is through the hard work and dedication of the Health Service staff and the student nurses that we are able to vaccinate [about] seven hundred people in two days. It takes a lot of planning and coordination, and I cannot take credit for any of that," Dale said.

Bassinger and her fellow nursing majors had been preparing for this clinic and were excited to actually get hands on experience of what they have been learning in the classroom.

"My classmates and I are hoping for a great turn out. We gave each other our flu shots last week and have been doing various immunization clinics around St. Peter, so now we are ready for our fellow Gusties to get vaccinated," Bassinger said prior to the event.

One myth that Dale invalidated was the idea that the flu

shot can make patients sick, at least not the type that Gustavus is offering.

"This is simply not true. The vaccine we administer is inactivated. It is not a live vaccine. It cannot make you sick. We administer a vaccine that protects against four viral subtypes. Some places still offer a vaccine that only protects against three subtypes," Dale said.

"While we think we might be invincible or able to handle the flu, we are not aware of all our peers and colleagues health issues. Let's help protect ourselves and our community," Meyer said.

The Flu Shot Clinic may be over, but students and employees who were unable to make it to a session are able to receive a flu shot in Health Services while supplies last.

Interfaith programs foster acceptance on campus

Michaela Woodward
Staff Writer

Gustavus strives to be an interconnected and accepting community, and one of the ways this is accomplished is through the interfaith organizations on campus.

Though the college is rooted deeply in its Lutheran history, there are resources for students of all faiths, backgrounds and denominations.

Inclusivity and education are priorities for all of the religious organizations and they work to create spaces and opportunities that are open for all.

Interfaith Program Coordinator Marian Broida elaborates on the goals of her position, saying that her purpose is to "support students in practicing their own religions or worldviews while on campus, with a particular focus on non-Protestant students; and to promote knowledge and appreciation of different religions among the student body as a whole."

This connection between education and acceptance makes these programs important and accessible to all students, regardless of their personal experiences with spirituality.



Students attend Proclaim, a music-centered Christian worship group.

Students are encouraged to explore their own backgrounds and beliefs, as well as those of their peers through interfaith organizations in a casual environment with resources they are comfortable with.

Not only can faculty members be resources, but student leaders are as well.

Senior Anna Duong-Topp, Co-President of the Gustavus Interfaith Forum, invites students to see student leaders as a resource as well, either for getting involved

with the interfaith organizations or simply having a chat.

"We also encourage students to grab coffee, lunch, or a quick walk with one or both of us if they ever want to talk about life. Life talks are definitely our forte," Duong-Topp said.

The Gustavus Interfaith Forum is resource for students who simply want to have a place to discuss how faith relates with their life.

"[It] is to create a space where students can explore their spiri-

tuality, whether it be through direct dialogue or actively listening to others. We do our best to foster relationships, cultivate knowledge, and work toward common goals across worldviews," Duong-Topp said.

The themes of education and acceptance are reinforced and anyone who wants more information is encouraged to reach out.

The meeting times for the Gustavus Interfaith Forum change every week so that everyone has a chance to attend, no matter how busy of a schedule they have.

The other interfaith based organization is the Multifaith Leadership Council.

"[The Multifaith Leadership Council] supports unique religions and spiritual practices of people from other traditions," so that everyone has a space to openly practice their faith, Chaplain of the College Siri Erickson said.

"We to create spaces that are easy for students to access. There can be a lot of fear or uncertainty around religion in general. People don't really know what to expect. I think the student interfaith groups are always trying to figure out how

we can lower those barriers and create spaces where even if students are uncomfortable at first, they are engaging in religious diversity and making those connections," Erickson said.

Erickson points out that the purposes of educating and making connections creates a cycle in which appreciation of different traditions leads to more curiosity and seeking out connections.

The work done in these organizations is not the same as activity-based clubs.

Interfaith organizations lead themselves to intellectual and social curiosity, creating more knowledgeable and accepting individuals.

While the current interfaith programs are active and inclusive, there is still work to be done.

"The college is working on an interfaith strategic plan in which faculty, staff, and students are working together. We are currently conducting listening sessions and gathering feedback on how we can do interfaith work better," Erickson said.

Interfaith understanding is being supported and cultivated on campus, fostering the development of the inclusive and educated community Gustavus strives to be.

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GUSTIES of

Sarah Hinderman

Elsa Beise
Staff Writer

Senior Sarah Hinderman, an involved and friendly face on campus, is our Gustie of the Week. Hinderman is a Communication Studies major from Fairfax, Minnesota and has made an impact on campus.

Hinderman is involved in many student organizations on campus; she is a Marketing Executive for the Campus Activities Board, Public Relations chair for the Alpha Sigma Tau sorority, an employee in the Office of Marketing and Communication and an intern for the Center for International and Cultural Education, all while helping her peers as a Digital Arts Lab tutor.

Being around people is what Hinderman loves to do, whether it be through her life as a student or in her social life.

"I'm an extroverted extrovert...so I always have to be around other people. I usually drag my friends along to try new food/restaurants or take a spontaneous trip somewhere," Hinderman said. All that's to say, when she finds herself with time alone, she can be found doing a variety of activities.

"For the rare occasions when I'm forced to be by myself, I love making new playlists on spotify, cooking and baking or watching Shane Dawson conspiracy theory videos on YouTube," Hinderman said.

Senior Emily Scroggins has been impacted by Hinderman since the beginning of her time at Gustavus.

"Sarah and I met our first semester at Gustavus in our

Spanish class. She is always welcoming and open and makes you feel like a good pal. We have studied abroad together (and survived being around one another for that long), we've joined a sorority together, and have both served on CAB since our sophomore years. She even talked me into being a Communication Studies major," Scroggins said.

Scroggins went on to mention how humble Hinderman is.

"Sarah seems to fly under the radar and is not typically recognized for all of the hard work that she does. She loves the attention but is really humble about how skilled she is and how much she has accomplished," Scroggins said.

Associate Professor in Communication Studies Patricia English has had Hinderman as a student in many courses and also acts as her advisor. English has noticed Hinderman's ability to apply what she has learned in her courses to other areas of her life.

"I think that Sarah's genuine interest in her field of study and her ability to see how things connect to it make her a unique recipient. She has applied her classroom learning through study abroad, internships, CAB and in so many other contexts. She is well rounded and uses her varied talents in ways that make Gustavus, the community, and the world a better place," English said.

Hinderman reflected on her thankfulness for the opportunities and experiences that Gustavus has provided her since the beginning.

"I'm just really grateful for the personal growth opportuni-

ties that Gustavus has provided me. I've been surrounded by active leaders and achievers since my first year that have inspired me to invest in my passions," Hinderman said.

Not only did the college provide Hinderman these experiences, but the support and inspiration of her peers has helped Hinderman to grow and learn not only as a student, but also as a person.

"My friends and fellow Gusties have created such a supportive environment where I feel eager to learn and do my best to make the world a better place. I've been pushed to find my strengths and use them to get [things] done...It's been amazing to see others do the same. We're all growing together and making some really amazing things happen," Hinderman said.

In terms of next year, Hinderman hopes to either be in the cities or abroad, working in a field of one of her academic interests. "I'm hoping to land a position up in the Twin Cities (or abroad...London is my dream city) in either magazine publication, graphic design, or marketing agency consulting. We'll see where the wind takes me," Hinderman said.

Hinderman's peers were not surprised to find out that she was Gustie of the Week.

"Sarah is the embodiment of what it means to be a Gustie. She is super involved on campus... while also excelling in leadership and service in various other organizations. Sarah never ceases to amaze me with how easily she makes friends and how welcoming and inclusive she is," Scroggins said.



Katie Mattinen

Hinderman is the Public Relations chair for Alpha Sigma Tau sorority.

Do you have a suggestion for a Gustavus student, professor, or staff member who could be our next Gustie of the Week?

If so, send us an email with their name, position on campus, and a short description of why you think they should be recognized to

weekly@gustavus.edu

for a chance to have them featured!

If your suggestion is selected, a representative from the Weekly will be in contact with them to move forward with the interview process.



Katie Mattinen

Hinderman looks forward to a career magazine publication, graphic design, or marketing.

the WEEK

& Maggie Falenschek

Anh Tran
Staff Writer

As a Chaplain and the Director of Campus Ministries, Reverend Maggie Falenschek finds her job's purpose in caring, supporting, and promoting what the Gustavus community builds and values.

"I provide care and support for students and staff from any or all philosophical worldviews or religious backgrounds. I also oversee all Christian programming on campus, which often means being head cheerleader for all of our talented student leaders," Falenschek said.

Before coming to Gustavus, Falenschek served as pastor of a congregation in Illinois.

Early on, she found a sense of belonging among campus communities and now considers her role at Gustavus her dream job.

"However, when I first saw the job posting and applied, I thought the chances of getting the job were slim. I'm young (this is relative, I realize), I had only been a pastor for 3 years, and I really don't look or act like the typical image of a pastor or college chaplain. The advantage of feeling like an underdog, though, is that I entered the interview process being one hundred percent authentically myself, feeling like I had nothing to lose. That resonated (I think), I got the job, and I am so

thankful every day I get to show up on campus and do what I get to do," Falenschek said.

"I appreciate the values of community, service, and justice that underline the college's mission as these are also things that I value as a person of faith navigating life in a messy world."

According to Falenschek, her journey as a Gustie has been "wild," as it is constantly challenging her to adapt yet simultaneously rewarding her with enriching knowledge and experience.

"I recently added a 'three crowns' tattoo to my collection. This statement is less of a 'rah rah, yay institution of Gustavus' kind of thing and more in the spirit of immense gratitude that I feel daily to be able to do

this work, with these people, in this place called Gustavus," Falenschek said.

Reverend Falenschek said that there are "no typical days" in her work at Gustavus Adolphus College.

One can find the Chaplain working at different places on campus, as well as getting involved with and supporting various student organizations and departments.

"I really like to do my job in the spirit of community organizing. That means that I often find myself around campus partnering with different divisions and departments, listening to students and student needs, and adjusting my day and work accordingly. I plan and oversee a lot of programming, meet with students one-on-one, can often be found on campus 'after-hours' supporting various student orgs, especially the United Christian ministries," Falenschek said.

Falenschek emphasizes the importance of openmindedness towards different individual worldviews, which Gustavus integrates in its education.

"I appreciate the values of community, service, and justice that underline the college's mission as these are also things that I value as a person of faith navigating life in a messy world. I love working with students and seeing you share your unique strengths and gifts for the betterment of our world. I am



Falenschek enjoys running and spending time with her dogs. Nate Habben

honored and humbled anytime a student wants to meet with me to share their struggles or joys," Chaplain Falenschek said.

Falenschek considers building connections with students her number one goal.

Besides her focus on helping students, she is looking forward to Christmas in Christ Chapel and Sunday worship.

"Christmas in Christ Chapel is coming and it's going to be amazing. My talented colleague Siri is the artistic director this year, and we're doing some really cool stuff in Sunday worship that I'm excited about," Falenschek said.

Another important part of her plan for this semester is self-care.

"I do this by running abnormally long distances for fun, going to therapy, spending as much time outdoors as I can, smothering my two dogs with love, going to concerts with my spouse, and learning and creating as much as I can," Falenschek said.

The Director of Campus Ministries finds her most recent

favorite Gustie memory so far in weekly Sunday worship.

"There are probably a lot of big memories I could share but this is a small thing that feels big. I think of weekly Sunday worship, when we're all gathered around the giant communion table in the chapel, sharing what we're thankful for in that moment. That is a gift that I get to experience every week and it never gets old," Falenschek said.

Falenschek would like to send an encouraging message to the Gustie community.

"I value authenticity and try to embody that in my life. I live with mental illnesses and I proudly admit that I need both Jesus and medication and professional help to thrive. I care deeply about the students at Gustavus, even the ones I've never met. If you see me working around campus, please interrupt me. I love to talk about life and am a good listener if you need to rant. I'm here to help and I want you to succeed," Falenschek said.



Nate Habben

Falenschek works with student leaders to support the Christian programming on campus.

COMING OUT DAY: SIGNIFICANCE & SOLIDARITY

Kyara Craven
Staff Writer

Imagine this: you're walking through the halls of your institution. There is nothing particularly special about the day, but nonetheless you're in a good mood. As you pass a group of people, you catch the end of the end of a sentence that throws you into shock. The phrase "That's so gay" bounces around in your head like a ping pong ball.

Your good mood is completely shattered and quickly overshadowed by the storm brewing inside your chest. You feel the weight of that statement as it sits in the pit of your stomach. Different scenarios race through your mind and you can't help but to panic. Are they talking about me? Did someone find out? What if everyone already knows? Will I lose every friend I have?

Dread and fear threaten to shut you

down, and sheer willpower is the only thing that allows you to keep going until you can find an appropriate place to react. Your vision blurred, you rush to the nearest bathroom. Like a crack spreading through a clay pot, you proceed to break down once you are within the confinements of the stall.

Every day, people live with this fear; they worry that if their true self were to be revealed, they would lose everything that they hold dear. To survive, they have to hide who they are from those they love, and sometimes, even themselves.

For years, the LGBTQ+ community has fought hard to do what the majority of people are allowed to do every day: to simply be. They fight for equality and acceptance, they fight so young kids struggling to understand themselves don't feel alone, and



Q&A members painted the rock in rainbow colors on Monday.

they fight so every human, regardless of their sexual orientation, can live and thrive peacefully. Did you know that 42 percent of the LGBTQ+ youth say that they live in a neighborhood that doesn't accept them?

National Coming Out Day is today, Friday, October 11, and this is an important day for those who are a part of the LGBTQ+ community.

"For those who are coming out, National Coming Out Day can be an opportunity to feel united in an act that can sometimes feel lonely and isolating. Coming out is not an easy process, and the day itself can even spark personal realizations regarding sexuality in the first place, not just an opportunity for those who understand their orientation and desire to share. After coming out this past year as bisexual, events like these

continue to make me feel included and stoke a sense of pride as I see the courage displayed by my community," Sophomore Maria Schirado said.

Treating others the way that you want to be treated is a staple statement in households, cultures and religions across the world. Yet, simply treating others with the respect that you would want someone to bestow upon you is easier said than done for many. This week, the best way to follow this rule is to show your friends and loved ones the support and acceptance that you would want; and this can be done in any way that you know how. It could be anything from providing them with a safe environment to speak freely about their struggles, or simply being a silent listener. While this time can be difficult for many, this is also a time for

personal growth.

"Coming out, in general, gave me a whole other level of self-worth and respect for myself. Not recognizing that I was pan caused a lot of negative thoughts for me and dreams I didn't know how to comprehend, but in this past year when I came out because of my friends, I realized that there was nothing wrong with the dreams and thoughts I had. I was me, finally able to just be myself," Sophomore Madisen Black said.

For all those who are celebrating coming out day, and for all of those who can't, here is some advice that your fellow Gustavus students want you to have:

"Coming out is just the beginning of your journey. You will be confronted with the reality that there may be people who support you yet cannot respect or understand

the developments in your self awareness.

There is a lot to process, yet along with that struggle there is the potential for finding community and acceptance. Your own realizations bring color into the world--and those that truly support you will stand beside you," Junior Brianne Douglas said.

"You matter. It shouldn't matter what someone else thinks of you. If they can't support or honor what you want and who you are as a person, they don't belong in your support system... Coming out, even partially, has a lasting impact on the rest of your life. Being present as your true self and not hiding behind a mask. Also, knowing that the people around truly love you for you and will support you no matter what," Sophomore Madisen Black said.



Students at the Q&A Mixer, an on-campus event held for Coming Out Week, on Tuesday night.



Faculty enjoyed the Q&A Mixer just as much as Gustavus students did.