

Pride and Pancakes: Three Decades of Celebrating Inclusion

LGBTQIA+ event turns 30, commemorates 50 years since formation of UNH Gay Students Organization

Monday, April 3, 2023



WAYNE APRIL '74 ADDRESSES THE CROWD AS PAUL TOSI '74 LOOKS ON AT THE PRIDE AND PANCAKES BREAKFAST.

UNH's annual Pride and Pancakes breakfast commemorated two significant milestone anniversaries Tuesday morning – the 30th year of the event and the 50th year since the founding of the Gay Students Organization on campus – with a program that featured several pioneering figures in UNH's LGBTQIA+ community and

 [SUBSCRIBE TO THE UNH TODAY NEWSLETTER](#)

 [SUBSCRIBE TO UNH TODAY RSS](#)

honored the recipients of this year's Bill Kidder LGBTQIA+ Awards.

The celebration – formerly known as the LGBTQ+ and Ally Pancake Breakfast – filled the Granite State Room in the MUB and was streamed online for additional virtual attendees.

The breakfast and the formation of the Gay Students Organization (GSO) are somewhat intertwined historically despite origins that were decades apart. It took a very public – and, ultimately, legal – battle for the GSO to be officially recognized in 1973, with Gov. Meldrim Thomson notably providing the staunchest opposition.

Thomson would later infamously deny the GSO a chance to have a pancake breakfast with him following a controversial fundraiser in 1974, unknowingly providing the inspiration for the annual celebration of the LGBTQIA+ community at UNH that would be born nearly 20 years later.

UNH President Jim Dean kicked off Tuesday's celebration with a brief nod to that history before noting that UNH is proud to be a "community that celebrates all identities."



**2023 KIDDER AWARD WINNERS
EVAN ENGLAND, CARI MOORHEAD,
BRADY BARRE, WAYNE APRIL,
EVAN BEALS AND JOHN ORCUTT.**

Among the featured speakers were Wayne April '74 and Paul Tosi '74, two prominent figures in the GSO's fight for recognition in 1973. Tosi, then student body president, spoke fervently in defense of the GSO in front of the university's board of trustees that year, and it was April who ultimately sued for the group's right to organize.

Both have since been inducted into UNH's Diversity Hall of Fame (Tosi in 2019 and April last fall).

April described the outcome and lasting impact of the battles as “mind blowing” before imparting some words of wisdom to younger LGBTQ people.

“Number one, and the most important thing, is when it comes to what’s right, listen to your heart, not your head,” April said. “Fifty years ago, my heart told me there was nothing wrong with me and it was the world that needed to change. My head, and many, many people told me that I was putting myself in personal danger from bigots as well as jeopardizing my relationships with family and friends and torpedoing any chance of a meaningful career if I came out. But I went with my heart, because the status quo made me miserable.”

Tosi followed with an impassioned thank you to April and the founding members of the GSO for surviving “an onslaught of hate” to fight for inclusion, a fight that ultimately encouraged Tosi to come out.

“You set an example for me and opened my heart to the person I was,” Tosi said. “I now have a lifelong partner – we’ve been together 42 years. My husband, Joe, and I were married on our 27th anniversary. And had it not been for Wayne April, I don’t think that ever would have happened.”

Two of the Kidder Award recipients also had a chance to address the crowd during the proceedings. Brady Barre – president of TransUNH and chair of the Diversity Support Coalition – delivered the student address and later received the Undergraduate Student Award, while Cari Moorhead, dean of the UNH Graduate School, was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award and offered some brief words, as well.

Jason Green, deputy director of the ACLU of New Hampshire,

delivered the guest address, and Nadine Petty, associate vice president and chief diversity officer (and interim Title IX coordinator) at UNH, offered the closing remarks.

The following is a complete list of this year's Kidder Award recipients:

2023 Kidder Award Recipients

True Colors – Pink Triangle Award

For reimagining the LGBTQIA+ student group (formerly Common Ground) to create a more vibrant presence at UNH-Manchester, leading the way for increased engagement amongst other student groups across campus.

John Orcutt – Faculty Award

For ensuring Lambda Legal Society has a strong and growing presence on the Law campus, through consistent LGBTQIA+ inclusion & advocacy efforts as well as steadfast advising support.

Evan Beals – Staff Award

For meaningful support of inclusion efforts at UNH through advocating for a more inclusive admissions experience, collaborating with other departments to improve campus climate, and engaging in genuine conversations from the alumni & community member perspective with prospective LGBTQIA+ students.

Evan England – Graduate Student Award

For groundbreaking research, through the NH Disability and Health Program, into the experience of Trans patients in the NH medical system and helping to found and co-facilitate the UNH Graduate Student Non-Binary Support Group, a Stonewall Grads initiative.

Brady Barre – Undergraduate Student Award

For exemplary leadership & persistent LGBTQIA+ awareness building efforts throughout many academic & student support spaces across campus, including Alliance, The Aulbani J. Beaugard Center for Equity, Justice and Freedom, Diversity Support Coalition, SafeZones, Social Work Department, TransUNH, and Women's and Gender Studies Department.

Cari Moorhead – Lifetime Achievement Award

“[She] has, for over 30 years, been part of the march toward equity and justice, using whatever power, influence, or connections she had to improve the lives of those in our community. All progress takes a village ... but she has been there on the front lines of every fight, reliably and consistently, for more than three decades. That is the very definition of Lifetime Achievement.” - Anonymous Nominator

WRITTEN [Keith Testa](#) | Communications and Public Affairs |

BY: keith.testa@unh.edu

PHOTOGRAPHER [Jeremy Gasowski](#) | Communications and Public

Affairs | jeremy.gasowski@unh.edu | 603-862-4465

COMMUNITY

RELATED ARTICLES



May 2, 2022 | COMMUNITY

Serving up a Celebration



June 14, 2022 | UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Commemorating Juneteenth



April 14, 2022 | UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Bringing Cuts to Campus



University of New Hampshire

UNH Today is produced for the UNH community and for friends of UNH.

The stories are written by the staff of [UNH Marketing](#).

Email us: unhtoday.editor@unh.edu.

[MANAGE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION](#) [CONTACT US](#)



UNH Today • UNH Main Directory: 603-862-1234
Copyright © 2023 • TTY Users: 7-1-1 or 800-735-2964 (Relay NH)

[USNH Privacy Policies](#) • [USNH Terms of Use](#) • [ADA Acknowledgement](#)

