



LGBTQ+ discrimination

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Jacob Wenger says discrimination on campus is not common when regarding the LGBTQ+ community, but discrimination in the surrounding Ashland community is.

“After only one year at Ashland University, I wanted to transfer because the community is not very accepting of the LGBT community,” Wegner, sophomore nursing major and member of Eagles for PRIDE, said.

Wenger is not the only student who has noticed this discrimination. Students recently created the organization Eagles for PRIDE (Promoting Respect for Individual Dignity Everywhere), an LGBTQ+ focused organization not affiliated with Ashland University, in response to the discrimination they have faced.

The group recently spoke out on what happened in Charlottesville and discussed harassment and discrimination that they have noticed around the community of Ashland.

“I think what happened in Charlottesville was coming for a long time. These people haven’t only just popped up, they’ve been around forever,” Joe Farber, senior intervention specialist education major and founder of Eagle for PRIDE, said.

“What’s changed is that they’ve become emboldened by the current political climate and have now decided that it’s their time to move in and let themselves be known. Before, they knew that they were the minority and that their views were unacceptable in our society. Now, there are some in the political

sphere who have given their views credence and they have taken this as their permission slip to do whatever they want,” he said.

Farber believes implied permission that the hate groups perceive from the current national climate will put people, not only in the LGBTQ+ community but in all minority groups, at more risk of harassment and discrimination.

“Now that people with these views have been emboldened, they are more likely to act upon them, and we’ve seen that over the past year with the turbulent political climate,” Farber said.

Believe it or not, the hateful groups of people Farber talks about can be found in the little, quiet town of Ashland, he said.

“This is more of the surrounding community than the campus itself, however it does play a role in living at Ashland. Not having a PRIDE/LGBT organization on campus made me feel like I had no one to go to and that I was on my own,” Wenger said.

Wenger and many other members of the LGBTQ+ community say they decide to take the high road when faced with hate groups and discrimination.

“Personally, I ignore the person who is discriminating against me. The reason for this is because I am not aware of what their intent might be. I do not want to put myself at risk of any harm just by standing up for myself. It will not change their opinion about me or any other person of the LGBT community,” Wenger said.

To help prevent narrow-mindedness, the answer might be as simple as educating those who are not very knowledgeable on the subject,

a mission at the core of the PRIDE organization

“I think discrimination is rooted in ignorance and a lack of empathy in regard to where the other person is coming from,” Farber said. “To me, the answer to discrimination has always been education. People can’t change if they aren’t presented with new information and new experiences. Thus, I think that it’s peoples’ jobs to educate others and themselves on issues that are so prevalent in our society today,” he said.

Farber says Eagles for PRIDE is a place to be educated on the subject of their culture and history along with how to deal with those who are intolerant of the LGBTQ+ community. It’s mission is to welcome everyone and to work together to make AU a safer and more accepting place for everyone.

“It’s my way of creating a space on campus where LGBTQ+ students can build their own community and have a voice which, historically, they haven’t had at Ashland,” Farber said, “I’m hoping we can use that voice to educate our peers who maybe don’t understand the LGBTQ+ community and empower our peers who maybe need a little help accepting themselves.”

Wenger believes Eagles for PRIDE even has the potential to help some people who are struggling with depression due to the limited support they have with being apart of the LGBTQ+ community.

“We can do this by allowing them to be who they are with no worry of judgment. Many LGBT youth suffer from depression and Eagles for PRIDE can provide that safe place



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY JAKE WENGER
Karman Dioxide (Jake Wenger) poses for a photo with Ming Vaz (Sam Murphy)



KAITLYN MOORE
Eagles for PRIDE members use their first meeting of the year to plan educational and fun events for the campus and community.

for people to vent their emotions in a safe environment,” he said.

Follow Ashland University Eagles

for PRIDE on Facebook for updates on upcoming meetings and events.

The cost of belonging on campus

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Colleges have a variety of sports, clubs, and other social activities for all types of students to meet people with similar interests and make friends, but the consumption of time and the cost of these activities are sometimes more than the student can afford. Some students, however, claim that these activities are still worth it because it gives them a sense of belonging.

Long hours for meetings or other activities come with any organization. Students dedicate a lot of time to their social events when their time could be used doing homework, working, or even catching up on sleep.

According to assistant dean of student affairs Nicole Dyer, “The more you get involved with student organizations, clubs and honoraries, the more value you’ll get from your college experience.”

But it does not mention how much time and money these organizations will cost students, and many students claim expenses can be high.

Ashland University offers a multitude of activities and does their best to make sure they are student friendly and affordable.

Intramural Sports and Sport Clubs:

On the AU Intramural Sports webpage, it states that intramural sports are available to all AU students, faculty and staff members. Annually, the Intramural Sports program involves over 2,750 participants and offers a comprehensive recreational sport schedule of 17 different sports leagues and tournaments.

Intramural sports include traditional sports, such as basketball, flag football, soccer, volleyball, and softball as well as non-traditional activities such as the Snowman Team Challenge, the NCAA

Bracket Challenge and the Sibs-N-Kids Cornhole Tournament.

Intramural sports are particularly popular on campus because they are all free, with the exception of the golf scramble.

Junior Jerry Gaydos has been participating in co-ed sports for two years now.

“It’s nice to be a part of a laid-back team where we just play for fun,” Gaydos said. “We even set up practice times but they aren’t mandatory, so if someone is too busy with homework to come practice then it’s no big deal”

Naturally, the students are always welcomed to buy specific shoes for the sports, but since these games are mostly just for fun many students simply save their money and wear any kind of shoe they would like.

In addition to intramural sports, sport clubs are also available for any students, faculty and staff members. It provides competitive and non-competitive sporting opportunities on and off the Ashland University main campus.

There is a total of 15 sport clubs that are all ran by students and serve as a way to become involved with other Ashland University students who share similar interests within recreational and competitive sports. These clubs provide the Ashland University student an opportunity to play at a competitive level against other universities outside the realm of varsity athletics.

Any new sport club may be started by a current Ashland University student. All students, faculty and staff members can participate.

“More people like to buy the proper stuff for the competitive sport clubs, but even then not everyone does,” Gaydos said. “It just depends on the sport, I guess.”

Sport clubs are student-led, student-run organizations which typically compete with other university or town sponsored sport clubs or teams and travel to differ-

ent events/games throughout the year. The level of competition and time consumption varies from club to club, and some clubs are purely recreational in nature.

Students who want to get involved in intramural sports or the sport clubs on campus can contact the students in charge. Their emails can be found on Recreational Services Website.

Varsity Sports:

Senior Haley Gregory is a RA, a member on the varsity track team, and helps with FCA but still insists that sports take up the most amount of time than any other organization activity that colleges offer. They can also be one of the most expensive too, depending on the sport.

“Athletes just seem to be more likely than the average student to get hurt and if they do not have the insurance that AU offers, or if they need medical attention that the insurance does not cover, then that is easily a few hundred dollars they are expected to pay or else they can’t continue on with their sport,” Gregory said.

The cost of participating in sports range in price depending on how much the athlete is expected to buy. The amount of time that the sport takes up also differs depending on the sport, when it is in season, and how long it is in season for.

Senior Marie Hammer is a heptathlete on the track and field team. During the outdoor season of track, she participates in seven events in a single track meet. These multiple events require different types of shoes that can easily cost \$100 or more per pair.

“I typically use my same shoes from year to year but they each costed anywhere from \$50-\$100,” Hammer said. “I’m always buying new workout clothes and tennis shoes though.”

The amount of practice time that Hammer has per week is also drastically different than some of her

own teammates.

“Some days I have three to four practices because of the coaches’ different schedules.”

Many student athletes have multiple practices throughout the day, such as a morning practice and then an afternoon practice, which causes more stress when it comes to time management.

“It can be stressful and stuff but when it is something you love and you are good at it just doesn’t matter anymore because you’re happy doing it, especially when it’s with such uplifting teammates,” Hammer adds.

Clubs:

Ashland University has countless clubs that are available to all students.

If a group of students would like to create their own club then they simply need to have the required number of members and fill out a form to get it approved.

“Joining clubs at college is a quick and easy way to meet people whose interest are most similar to their own,” Dyer said.

“Finding out that there was a Chem club here was probably one of the most exciting things ever,” AU alumni Makayla Arnold said. “It’s tons of fun and fits perfectly with my major.”

Many of the clubs meet once a week, causing the clubs be extremely convenient for students who want to be involved but have a busy schedule.

To make these clubs fun and help keep them cost-free, students in the clubs come up with fundraising ideas. Some of the ideas include bake sales, craft sales, car washes, or simply accepting donations.

“A signup sheet is sent out to everyone through a google doc to sign up for a time to sit and sell baked goods,” Laurena Shick, officer in the anime club said. “Everyone in the club is asked to try and bring at least one thing to contribute.”

The money is used for various things such as supplies for the clubs, trips, and even club t-shirts to make the club a more memorable, fun and worth-wild experience Shick said.

Greek Life:

With chapter meetings, recruitment, and events that the chapters hold, Greek Life clearly comes with a lot of responsibilities. Every Sunday, each chapter is expected to have a meeting to go over upcoming events and talk about their philanthropy.

Many students who get involved in Greek Life also use it as a way to combine school and their social work.

“At least once a week a couple of my brothers and I get together at our house and I help them through some stat homework or anything else like that,” Phi Delt senior Will Fowler said.

Greek Life requires its members to pay annual dues which then covers the cost of any supplies or clothing that the chapter uses.

For some events, a chapter may require its members to dress alike, in those cases it is up to the member to go out and purchase whatever items are needed.

There are many rules and regulations a member must remember to follow.

If a member does not follow all of their chapter’s set rules, then they will have fees added onto their annual dues.

“I have met my bestest friends through Greek Life,” AU alumni Brooke Morgan said. “I have absolutely no idea what I would do without them so the price to pay will always be worth it to me and if I had the chance then I would join all over again!”

For more information on how to start getting involved visit Assistant Director of Student Life

Dustin Hargis at Hawkins Conrad Student Center in room 230.