

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN LAW SCHOOLS
SECTION ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY ISSUES

SOGI NEWSLETTER

FALL 2007

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SECTION HOSPITALITY SUITE AT AALS HIRING CONFERENCE

LGBT candidates attending the AALS Faculty Recruiting Conference are invited to visit the Section's Hospitality Suite, where they can meet LGBT law professors and other candidates. The hospitality suite has become one of the section's important projects. It provides a central location where faculty candidates can discuss questions including how to "come out" on a resume or during a job interview, how to ask about a law school's domestic partnership policies, and what to ask schools about the measures they take to ameliorate the negative effects of the Solomon Amendment. Conversations have also helped candidates to focus their scholarship on issues involving sexual orientation and gender identity.

Volunteers are needed to spend an hour or two in the hospitality lounge, to help answer questions and help candidates prepare for interviews. D.C.-area faculty and members of hiring teams attending the conference are needed to help out in the hospitality suite. The conference runs from October 25-27 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, 2660 Woodley Road, N.W., Washington, D.C. The hospitality suite (in the Harding Suite on the Mezzanine Level) will be open from **10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday, October 26 (with a Question and Answer Session at 3:00 p.m. on Friday)**. The suite will be open from **9:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday, October 27**. Please contact the Section Chair Danielle Kie Hart (or another member of the leadership listed on page 4), or simply come to the suite if you can help. Contact information is on the last page of this newsletter.

AALS ANNUAL MEETING IN NYC

The section's substantive program at the upcoming annual meeting in New York will focus on the subject of "Outside Looking In: The (Dis)enfranchisement of LGBT Law Students." Sat. Jan. 5, 2008, from 1:30-3:15 p.m. The section's business meeting will be held at the conclusion of that program.

The section will also hold a breakfast meeting on Saturday morning, from 7:00 to 8:30 a.m. This is a ticketed event and you should purchase a ticket for it when you register to attend the AALS Conference.



EVENTS OF INTEREST AT AT THE AALS ANNUAL MEETING IN NEW YORK

New Voices in Human Rights, Fri. Jan. 4, 2008, 10:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Law and the Interpretation of Sex and Gender, Fri., Jan. 4, 2008, 4:00-5:45 p.m.

SOGI Section Breakfast. Sat., Jan. 5, 2008, from 7:00-8:30 a.m.

Outside Looking In: The (Dis)enfranchisement of LGBT Law Students. Sat. Jan. 5, 2008, from 1:30-3:15 p.m.

SOGI Section Business Meeting



NALP HAS PUBLISHED A GUIDE TO THE **BEST PRACTICES** THAT LAW SCHOOLS CAN USE TO AMELIORATE THE SOLOMON AMENDMENT

BEST PRACTICES IN AMELIORATION

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Rumsfeld v. FAIR* that the Solomon Amendment did not violate law schools' First Amendment freedoms of speech and association, rejecting arguments that conditioning university funding on allowing military recruitment on campus forced schools to endorse the military's policy of discriminating against gay and lesbian persons.

Although the Supreme Court effectively invited law schools to increase the level of protests against the policy (see the quote below from the Supreme Court decision), there has been doubt as to whether law schools took any additional steps to respond to military recruiters on campus.

The National Association for Legal Career Professionals (NALP) has now published an *Amelioration Best Practices Guide*, compiled by a working group

of the GLBT Section of NALP. The *Amelioration Best Practices Guide* is a user-friendly, practical guide that student groups and law faculty can use and share with law school administrators.

The *Guide* contains information on why schools should ameliorate. It surveys responses led by law school faculty, administration, and students. It provides sample letters from law school deans and statements on military recruiting. And it contains practical advice such as these three tips (which are summarized here, and presented more fully in the *Guide*):

1. Law schools should convene faculty, staff, and students on an annual basis to evaluate the relevancy and weight of the law school's ameliorative and protest practices to see if new, different,

or additional strategies are needed.

2. Law schools should actively engage students, faculty, and staff for individual and collective efforts to repeal the military's ban on lesbian, gay, and bisexual military personnel. "If Congress does not hear from the legal academy on this issue, then we will have abdicated a historic responsibility."
3. Law schools should ask LGBT students what sort of support they would like in the face of discrimination.

Copies of the *Amelioration Best Practices Guide* are available at www.nalp.org.

Click on the link for GLBT resources, or go directly to http://www.nalp.org/assets/860_07ameliorationbestpractice.pdf

"The Solomon Amendment neither limits what law schools may say nor requires them to say anything. Law schools remain free under the statute to express whatever views they may have on the military's congressionally mandated employment policy, all the while retaining eligibility for federal funds."

Rumsfeld v. Forum for Academic and Individual Rights (FAIR),
547 U.S. 47, 60 (2006).

SAVE THE DATE, AND TELL YOUR STUDENTS TOO!
20TH ANNIVERSARY OF NLGLA'S *LAVENDER LAW*
TO BE HELD SEPT. 4-6, 2008 IN SAN FRANCISCO

More than 1,000 lawyers and law students attended the 2007 Lavender Law Conference in Chicago. Lavender Law is the now annual conference sponsored by the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association (NLGLA).

An important part of the conference has become the hiring conference on the day before the formal conference, during which law firms and government agencies actively seek out LGBT attorneys and law students. At the Chicago conference more than 150 recruiters and 500 law students and lawyers took part in the Career Fair. The event has become so important that many law schools now send their LGBT students to Lavender Law as part of their school's amelioration of the Solomon Amendment.

Plan now to attend the 20th anniversary conference of Lavender Law, which will be held September 4-6, 2008 at the Hyatt Regency Embarcadero in San Francisco. The first Lavender Law Conference was held in San Francisco.

Please also share this date with your law school's student organization (and also the career service office), so that your students can plan to attend the conference and Career Fair. Get more information about Lavender Law at www.nlgl.org. You can also contact the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association for information on membership and on how to submit proposals for possible presentation at the 20th anniversary conference.

NALP Amelioration Best Practices Guide

http://www.nalp.org/assets/860_07ameliorationbestpractic.pdf

“DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL” LOBBY DAY TO BE HELD
MARCH 6-7, 2008 IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Servicemembers Legal Defense Network is organizing a Congressional Lobby Day on **March 6-7, 2008** (which is two days—but they are still calling it Lobby Day). This event may coincide with the spring breaks at many law schools. It provides an opportunity for law student groups and other interested individuals to ask Congress to repeal the military's “Don't Ask, Don't Tell” policy.

In lobby days held in previous years, some student groups organized car-pools, and some law schools or-

ganized bus transportation for students who wanted to attend. The schools' support of students attending the Lobby Day was seen as part of the law schools' amelioration of the negative effects of the Solomon Amendment. For law schools too far away to attend in person, it may be appropriate for student groups to organize post card or letter campaigns to coincide with the event.

More information about the 2008 Lobby Day is available at www.sldn.org or by contacting Jill Raney at jlr@sldn.org.



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