

CENTER FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

WE

ARE

OHSU



CELEBRATING
PRIDE MONTH

June is dedicated to Pride Month to commemorate and celebrate the contributions made by the LGBTQ+ community throughout history and cultures worldwide. Pride Month was born to honor the June 1969 Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan that paved the way for LGBTQ+ activism in the United States. It is important to note that there were many pre-Stonewall uprisings for LGBTQ+ activism, but they had not received as much attention and media coverage. A year after the Stonewall Uprising, the initial Pride Parade was held in New York to commemorate the Stonewall Uprising in Manhattan.

Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) is committed to ensuring that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender patients, employees, and their families are welcomed, respected and given culturally competent care. OHSU's goal is to provide healthcare services that offer quality care for all of our patients. OHSU continues to strengthen its services and programs to ensure that they are inclusive and culturally appropriate to serve the needs of Oregon's diverse patient population.

WE ARE OHSU

OHSU is a diverse campus with members with different identities. Diversity is one of our core values, and we strive to create an environment of respect and inclusion. We acknowledge that diversity is not always seen, and we want to be intentional. The Center for Diversity and Inclusion started an initiative to highlight OHSU members in an interview series named We Are OHSU. This will go on all year long, where we can uplift and celebrate members of all communities, highlighting their impact on campus and their daily lives and showing everyone the wonderful communities we belong to.

WE ARE OHSU BADGER CHISHTI

Badger is a Program Technician in the facilities department. In her role, Badger focuses on driving the process of RFPs, identifying vendors, and creating a scope and minimum qualifications specific trades. Badger has been with OHSU for over 5 years.

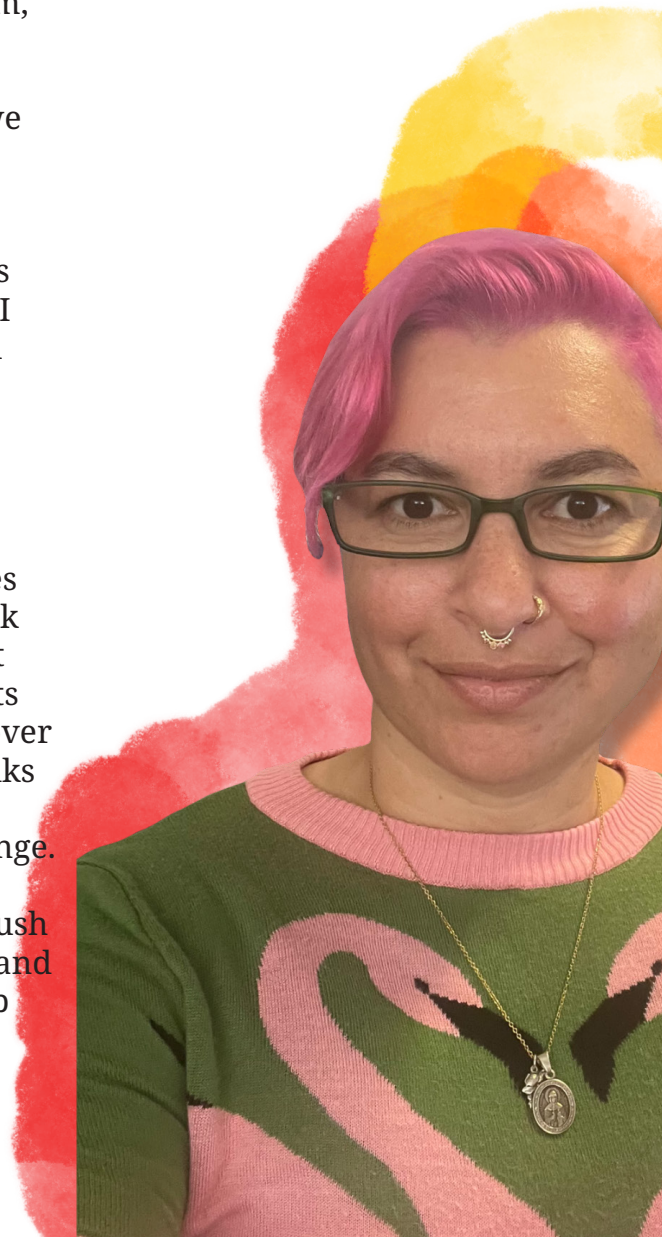
What is your favorite thing about your role and working at OHSU?

Every job is a job, but people make it an incredible place you want to come back to. My job is very paperwork heavy; I do not think anyone wakes up and it is like “I love to do paperwork,” but I like to do paperwork with my friends I get to work with every day. Everyone is so supportive of facilitating growth, and I feel fortunate to be working for a not-for-profit institution where we provide so much affirming care for people in our community. We provide free menstrual products in both men’s and women’s restrooms and OHSU’s forthright statements on social issues like abortion and trans rights make me feel really grateful every day.

How do we create a safe space for our LGBTQ+ coworkers at the office and create a safe, inclusive workplace?

I would like to shout out to my manager, Erin Corbett, specifically for proactively being a leader in this. We have had a good handful of queer folks on our team, and she is so supportive. She takes proactive measures to make sure we are comfortable at work and have the resources to directly shut down uncomfortable comments and lines of questioning. I have never been closeted at OHSU and I never felt like I had to diminish the queer part of my identity to have a voice. I think there is a misconception about working in facilities departments, people think of old-guard boomers but one of the incredible parts of having been here for over 5 years is seeing those folks walk themselves out the door and welcoming change. I do not think change happens fast but if you push for positive change here and have the fortitude to keep pushing, it does happen.

How can people be better allies to other marginalized groups within the LGBTQ community?



Broadly speaking, I think that we need to first address classism as the root cause of a lot of social evils in this country. It is very broad and how do you just make a better world at work? You can do this by using affirming language, using the pronouns people ask you to use, and being aware that people have different looped experiences. Being able to do this in your work groups, family, and social circles is impactful. It is important to interrupt oppressive comments when you feel safe to do so. It is crucial to have leadership that drives change and provides a safe umbrella for all here.

How do you celebrate Pride month and celebrate yourself?

Going back to leadership, working under Skai Dancey makes me feel like it is pride month all the time; he's got a great vision for a better world and leverages his privilege to bring about positive change. To me, pride means that you do not have to hide or diminish any part of you and just show up. Our dress code here does not have gendered language anymore and I really appreciate that.



WE ARE OHSU SYLAS MARTIN

Sylas is a Business Data Analyst with quality improvement at Dernbecher. In their position, Sylas works alongside nursing staff to identify any quality improvements or safety concerns they may have and work towards finding solutions while also submitting data for the Peds Cath Lab. Sylas has been in this role for the past year and a half but has worked at OHSU for over 5 years.

Is there something favorite that you have about your job or and working at OHSU?

I think my favorite thing about my job is the number of complex cases I get to see every day. It's just mind-boggling how some babies are born with almost half a heart and their anatomy kind of fixes itself in a way for them to live long enough until we can do palliative care. But that's probably my favorite part of the job. Seeing that there's these kids who are fighting so hard to live. Even though they only have a single ventricle or some other congenital heart disease.

My other favorite thing about working at OHSU is the team I work with. They're my second family, if it were possible, I would choose them to be my first family. They are an amazing group of folks who have so much love and compassion for one another, and it is amazing. They accept you for who you are. I recently came out to them

as transgender and it was the best coming out, I've ever had. They were teary-eyed and giving me hugs later, it was exactly what I had always wanted.

Why is it important to have LGBTQ representation in healthcare research and education?

It gives us a sense of security even though it is not always perfect. Representation really matters, especially when it comes to healthcare because if you don't have people that look like you or go through the same experiences, you're not getting the care or the resources you really need. It is crucial to have people who understand you and advocate for you. It is very important to make sure everyone is welcome here and that they are taken care of, especially in today's climate.



How can people make an impact to support their communities?

I think it depends on what kind of bandwidth you can give, especially things being a little strange post-COVID. There are different ways for people to be involved. I know some people who make donations to organizations and people who foster trans youth, and much more. I think what's important is just giving your time, even if it just means talking to your fellow queers and making

sure they are doing ok. Listening and being attentive to those who need it right now is a good way to make an impact. If you can give more, obviously give more. I think just lending an ear right now is good enough.

There are trainings on Compass now, that help coworkers learn how to properly talk to someone who is transgender or part of the queer community as well as resources. Just having that open communication with those who are part of the community and checking-in regularly.

This is why my team is so great because when I came out, one of the directors pulled me aside for a specific thing that involved a patient who is transgender that we got to talk to. I got to meet this brilliant kid who was going through some very similar things I had gone through, and I was like "Wow, this is an amazing moment." Meeting that kid really opened my mind to how important it is to be seen, especially for trans youth. I think just making sure there's a safe space for those who want to come out. I know for me it was very nerve-wracking, I was shaking, red like a tomato and trying not to cry. There are a few times I've come out in my personal life, and it was not received warmly. If I could have my team be the team that everyone comes out to, that would be amazing,

they are so compassionate, reached out to me afterwards, and had no judgments or anything.

How do you celebrate Pride month and celebrate yourself?

This is my first Pride month I've gotten to celebrate socially as a trans man. I've been going to as many social outings as I can; connecting with other trans folk. I am going to the Pride Parade next month. I try to make as many connections as I can with people. Outside of Pride Month, I celebrate pride by being my authentic self. I'm trying my best now not to think so much about what other people think of me. I want to celebrate pride and for everyone else to celebrate pride, if possible. Just because someone doesn't have the same origin story, that doesn't mean that we are less human. Pride is about love and acceptance and that is what we need to focus on. Now more than ever.

Anything you got to add?

My ending message is just for everybody to have a happy pride. Be safe out there.