



Cornell University

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Cornell University believes strongly in supporting community members who are LGBTQ and recognizes the wide range of similar and differing experiences of LGBTQ students, faculty and staff. When VP Lombardi started, in 2015, one of the first steps he took was to double the staffing of our LGBT Resource Center. More recently, in the summer of 2017, VP Lombardi and VP Opperman met to assess and discuss how Cornell can better support LGBTQ staff and faculty in the workplace. As a result, it was agreed that, to provide more comprehensive support, the Department of Inclusion and Workforce Diversity should play a more defined role in supporting LGBTQ faculty and staff.

Historically, LGBTQ faculty and staff have participated in activities, or simply spent time, in the LGBT Resource Center. This engagement, by faculty and staff, at the LGBT Resource Center is still fully welcomed and supported. However, being that the LGBT Resource Center is one of the identity and cultural student support centers in the Division of Student and Campus Life, it is not best positioned to address the unique workplace and employment-related issues and concerns of LGBTQ faculty and staff. To address this, a new position, the Diversity and Inclusion Programs Lead, was created in the Department of Inclusion and Workforce Diversity within the Division of Human Resources. This position, currently occupied by Cornell Woodson, allows us to more robustly support faculty and staff diversity efforts, including LGBTQ faculty and staff. This position is actively engaged with supporting LGBTQ staff and faculty, including doing educational workshops for departments and units in order to increase their awareness of inclusion and justice issues connected to the LGBTQ community. VP Opperman has invested in the Department of Inclusion and Workforce Diversity and the new Programs Lead is a major addition to how we support our diverse workforce, and how we work to change the overall climate on campus.

The decision to shift supporting LGBTQ faculty and staff to a focused HR unit represents a move towards better aligning expertise with need. When employees have issues, HR is the division best positioned to get them the support, advocacy, or other assistance that will help improve their work experience. The LGBT Resource Center is primarily-focused on supporting students, as are most units within the Division of Student and Campus Life, but remains a safe space for our LGBTQ faculty and staff to attend programs, relax, and build community. This redistribution and clarification of services is one small step toward ensuring the needs of the Cornell LGBTQ community, as a whole, are better served.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vijay Pendakur".

Vijay Pendakur, Ed.D.  
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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Angela C. Winfield".

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