

**Cornell University**  
**Graduate and Professional**  
**Student Assembly**

1                   **GPSA Resolution 9: In Support of E.A. R8: Institutional**  
2                   **Commitment to All LGBTQ+<sup>1</sup> Members of the Cornell Community**  
3

4                   **Sponsored by: out in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (oSTEM); Elena**  
5                   **Michel, Biological Sciences Voting Member and Co-President of oSTEM; Manisha**  
6                   **Munasinghe, Executive Vice President and member of oSTEM; Joseph Anderson, Chair of**  
7                   **University Assembly Campus Welfare Committee; Eugene Law, Chair of GPSA Diversity**  
8                   **and International Students Committee, Breanne Kisselstein and Nicholas Carre, Co-Chairs**  
9                   **of GPSA Student Advocacy Committee on behalf of SAC**  
10

11                   **Whereas,** the Cornell Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center (LGBTRC) was  
12                   founded in 1994 and was originally run by two full-time staff members<sup>2</sup> to be “the central  
13                   hub of LGBTQ life at Cornell” and to specifically support students, faculty, and staff  
14                   across the LGBTQ+ spectrum<sup>3</sup>; and  
15

16                   **Whereas,** the LGBTRC provides a myriad of services to the LGBTQ+ community including  
17                   but not limited to the LGBTQ Mentorship Program, the First Year Queer Peer, and  
18                   Lavender Graduation<sup>4</sup>; and  
19

20                   **Whereas,** the LGBTRC also provides support and guidance for numerous LGBTQ+ student  
21                   organizations on campus such as Haven: The LGBTQ Student Union, MOSAIC, and Out  
22                   in STEM (oSTEM); and  
23

24                   **Whereas,** the LGBTRC supports the functions and inclusion of the LGBT Colleague Network  
25                   Group for all faculty and staff, which raises awareness about workplace issues faced by  
26                   LGBTQ+ faculty and staff, provides professional networking opportunities for LGBTQ+  
27                   faculty and staff, and supports recruitment and retentions efforts for LGBTQ+ faculty and  
28                   staff; and  
29

30                   **Whereas,** the LGBTRC supports the inclusion of LGBTQ+ issues in the academic setting by  
31                   providing resources for the incorporation of LGBTQ+ issues into the classroom, made  
32                   available to all faculty members; and  
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34                   **Whereas,** the LGBTRC supports a set of general services to all LGBTQ+ faculty and staff,  
35                   including but not limited to: advocacy, advising, consultation and referrals, and

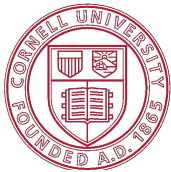
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<sup>1</sup> For the ease of reading, the resolution will use the acronym LGBTQ+ to refer to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning, and others, unless referring to a specific entity or being

<sup>2</sup> <http://cornellsun.com/2013/03/10/university-reflects-on-shift-in-lgbt-presence-on-campus/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://dos.cornell.edu/lgbt-resource-center>

<sup>4</sup> <https://dos.cornell.edu/lgbt-resource-center/signature-programs-annual-events>



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36 community development; and

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38 **Whereas**, the LGBTRC is instrumental in advising and advocating for Cornell’s LGBTQ+  
39 community, which includes students, faculty, and staff; and

40

41 **Whereas**, in 2017 the Dean of Students Vijay Pendakur issued a directive for the LGBT  
42 Resource Center (LGBTRC) to no longer serve staff and faculty due to being  
43 understaffed; and

44

45 **Whereas**, on November 30th, 2017, the Employee Assembly conveyed Resolution 8: Furthering  
46 the Institutional Commitment to LGBTQ+ Inclusion (EA: R8) to Cornell University  
47 President Martha Pollack<sup>5</sup>; and

48

49 **Whereas**, EA: R8 states “Be it therefore resolved, The Assembly urges the Division of Student  
50 & Campus Life and the Office of the Dean of Students to rescind the directive for the  
51 LGBTRC to no longer serve the ongoing support and educational needs of staff and  
52 faculty”; and

53

54 **Whereas**, EA: R8 continues with “Be it further resolved, The Divisions of Human Resources  
55 and Student & Campus Life shall identify the resources to fully fund and staff (3)  
56 additional full-time, long-term professional staff positions in the LGBTRC”; and

57

58 **Whereas**, on January 2nd, 2018, President Pollack acknowledged EA:R8<sup>6</sup>; and

59

60 **Whereas**, President Pollack rejected the EA’s recommendation that the directive for the  
61 LGBTRC to no longer serve the needs of staff and faculty be rescinded stating “to  
62 provide the appropriate levels of service, separating educational and support services for  
63 students from faculty and staff allows Cornell to meet the unique needs of our LGBTQ  
64 students, as they pursue their degrees”; and

65

66 **Whereas**, President Pollack also rejected the EA’s recommendation that The Divisions of  
67 Human Resources and Student & Campus Life should identify the resources to fully fund  
68 and staff (3) additional full-time, long-term professional staff position in the LGBTRC  
69 writing “At this time, there will not be any additional long-term professional positions  
70 added to the center’s staffing”; and

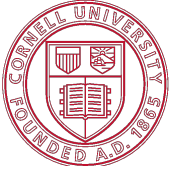
71

72 **Whereas**, we strongly support all LGBTQ+ members of the Cornell Community, including staff  
73 and faculty; and

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<sup>5</sup> <https://assembly.cornell.edu/resolutions/ea-r8-furthering-institutional-commitment-lgbtq-inclusion>

<sup>6</sup> <https://assembly.cornell.edu/resolution-actions/ea-r8-furthering-institutional-commitment-lgbtq-inclusion-3>



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74  
75 **Whereas**, we dismiss the notion that, in order to “provide the appropriate levels of service...[for]  
76 our LGBTQ students”, the LGBTRC must no longer support faculty and staff;  
77

78 **Whereas**, President Pollack states: “Further, the LGBTRC will continue to serve as resource to  
79 the Division of Human Resources as it provides education and support for our LGBT  
80 staff and faculty colleagues;” and  
81

82 **Whereas**, this statement acknowledges the fact that the Division of Human Resources is not  
83 fully equipped to provide support for LGBTQ+ staff and faculty; and  
84

85 **Whereas**, this statement contradicts the purpose behind the directive issued to the LGBTRC to  
86 stop providing support and education for LGBTQ+ staff and faculty as it indicates they  
87 will still be doing so, just with the added burden of passing this support through the  
88 Division of Human Resources before it gets to the staff and faculty; and  
89

90 **Whereas**, we believe that finding additional resources to increase the number of full-time staff  
91 members working at the LGBTRC to support all LGBTQ+ community members,  
92 including faculty and staff, would be more effective in supporting the “unique needs of  
93 LGBTQ+ students”; and  
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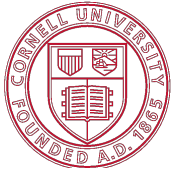
95 **Whereas**, all LGBTQ+ Cornell Community members, including faculty and staff, should be  
96 served by the LGBTRC as it is the hub of LGBTQ+ life at Cornell; and  
97

98 **Whereas**, the LGBTRC was founded to serve LGBTQ+ students, faculty, and staff, and we  
99 reject any attempt to alter its initial founding purpose that would fracture the LGBTQ+  
100 community at Cornell; and  
101

102 ~~**Whereas**, a refusal to rescind this directive negatively impacts the LGBTQ+ community and is  
103 antithetical to Cornell’s “promise to support the LGTBQ+ community”; and  
104~~

105 **Whereas**, sponsors of this resolution met with Vice President for Student and Campus Life Ryan  
106 Lombardi, Dean of Students Vijay Pendakur, Director of Inclusion and Workforce Diversity in  
107 Human Resources Angela Winfield, Diversity and Inclusion Programs Lead in Human  
108 Resources Cornell Woodson, and Interim Director of the LGBTRC Aiden Cropsey on March  
109 16<sup>th</sup> to clarify changes to the LGBTRC charge; and  
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111 **Whereas**, they clarified that while faculty and staff are still encouraged to utilize the LGBTRC  
112 for programming and support services the Division of Human Resources will be responsible for  
113 staff diversity and inclusion training and handling bias incidents; and  
114



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115 **Whereas**, consultation and engagement with LGBTQ+ community members across  
116 constituencies would have allowed early feedback and assistance in disseminating this  
117 information effectively;  
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119 ~~**Be it therefore resolved**, that the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly reiterates the~~  
120 ~~recommendation from the Employee Assembly for the Division of Student & Campus~~  
121 ~~Life and the Office of the Dean of Students to rescind the directive for the LGBTRC to~~  
122 ~~no longer serve the ongoing support and educational needs of staff and faculty;~~  
123  
124 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly requests that a  
125 campus wide communication to be sent out clarifying changes to support services for the  
126 LGBTQ+ community so that all faculty and staff can receive clarification; and  
127  
128 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly requests that a  
129 University Council on LGBTQ+ Affairs be convened with LGBTQ+ representatives from the  
130 undergraduate student, graduate student, professional student, faculty, and staff communities to  
131 review Cornell's support infrastructure for the LGBTQ+ community and advise the  
132 administration regarding future changes; and  
133  
134 **Be it finally resolved**, that The Division of Human Resources and The Division of Student &  
135 Campus Life, in consultation with students, faculty, and staff, should pursue the strategic  
136 planning of the expansion of the LGBTRC.