



## OUTLaw Finishes Successful Year

The past year was a very successful one for OUTLaw. Starting during orientation and running through mid-April, OUTLaw sponsored a host of successful events. Highlights included OUTLaw Week in October and the new "Tea with..." series inaugurated this spring.

### Fall Semester

OUTLaw Week started a bit early with a button campaign on National Coming Out Day, the Friday before. The "Who's Gay?" game show, which focused on revealing and debunking stereotypes, started off the week itself with a bang. Luncheon panels throughout the week featured speakers and panels discussing immigration reform, "Outlawing Orgasms" (analysis of a Eleventh Circuit decision permitting criminalization of the sale of sex toys), and employment discrimination. We also hosted a "study break" showing of *Fresa y Chocolate*, a lively Bar Review at Spin, and a small reception where LGBT students talked with representatives from our firm sponsors. Thank you to our firm sponsors, co-sponsors and volunteers, who made such a great week possible!

Other fall events included an orientation reception for all of the 1Ls to meet LGBT and allied 2Ls, 3Ls and staff, and an OUTLaw-sponsored "best drag king" and "best drag queen" contest at the SFIPIF Halloween Party.

### Spring Semester

We kicked off our "Tea with..." series, in which OUTLaw invited professors to join small groups of students at a local coffee shop to discuss legal issues affecting the LGBT community. In Febru-

ary, we met with Professor Redish to discuss *Lawrence v. Texas* and Congress's authority to remove same-sex marriage cases from the courts' jurisdiction. In April, we met with Professor Koppelman to discuss the right of non-association and *Boy Scouts of America v. Dale*.

We also participated in Diversity Coalition's Global Village, sharing our fabulousness with the student body by serving fruit kebabs, rainbow Jell-O and rainbow-frosted cupcakes. Finally, we set up a table for prospective students at Day at Northwestern Law, and were delighted to have about a half-dozen future Northwestern 1Ls stop by and express interest in joining OUTLaw next year!

### Thank You, Ronit & Lopie!

Huge thanks to our outgoing executive board, Ronit & Lopie, for doing such an outstanding job in 2007-08. We also want to congratulate them for securing five firm sponsors and leaving us in a great position going into 2008-09.



## Introducing OUTLines

Welcome to the first edition of OUTLines, OUTLaw's new newsletter. We're hoping to publish OUTLines a few times a year, to keep everyone informed about OUTLaw goings-on. If you have a relevant article you'd like us to include in our next edition, which we expect to put out in late August or early September, please send it to Joe at [j-busnengo2010@nlaw.northwestern.edu](mailto:j-busnengo2010@nlaw.northwestern.edu). We also welcome feedback. Please let us know if this is useful, interesting, informative or whatever.

OUTLaw is Northwestern Law's social and advocacy organization for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning members of the law school community. Our membership also includes many non-LGBT allies. All members of the Northwestern Law community are welcome to join our efforts to maintain the law school's welcoming environment and to plan awareness-raising events on LGBT legal issues and professional development and networking initiatives with LGBT lawyers, law students, and others in Chicago and elsewhere.

### 2008-09 Executive Board

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## Help!

The OUTLaw board consists of two members, and we can always use additional assistance in a number of areas, including planning for OUTLaw week and following up with firms after our solicitation letter goes out. If you're in Chicago this summer, we'd greatly appreciate it if you could let us know how you could help. Thanks!

**See back for info on our 2008-09 plans and how you can help.**

## Logo Contest

The executive board has decided that OUTLaw needs a logo. But since neither of us is anything resembling a graphic artist, we're going to be holding a contest for its design. Watch your inbox for details.

## Coming Events

- Aug 28\* Orientation meet-and-greet for new LGBT students
- Aug 31\* OUTLaw Barbecue
- Sep 4-6 Lavender Law '08 (San Francisco)
- Sep 8\* OUTLaw general membership meeting
- Oct 11 National Coming Out Day
- Oct 13-17 OUTLaw Week

\*Tentative date

## Opinion

### An Uneasy Fit

By Joe Busnengo

How many times has it happened to you? You're attending a "diversity" event. You walk in and take a seat. You notice other attendees staring. Finally, you get the question: "Why are you here?" It can come a few different ways. Sometimes, it's a purely innocent question, prompted by simple curiosity. Other times, there's a suspicious or hostile tone and a your-skin-is-far-too-light-to-be-here undertone. Still other times, there's a sudden realization, complete with a knowing look. However the question is posed, though, it usually leads to the same result: forced self-outing.

If you're not visibly a member of another minority group, situations like these are probably not infrequent. This circumstance is a symptom of the fact that the LGBT community is the only minority group, the majority of whose members cannot be identified as such on sight. For many years in this country, diversity was shorthand for racial and ethnic diversity. People got used to identifying others as "diverse" simply by looking at their skin color. Diverse simply became a synonym for non-white. Despite the growing acceptance of LGBT individuals as a welcome part of a diverse community over the past few years, many people's attitudes toward diversity have not changed.

Where does all of this lead us at Northwestern? It's hard to say. Take a program like Diverse Admit Day, for example. Do we continue on as we have been doing, forced self-outrights, awkward, embarrassing situations and all? Do we ask not to be included, end up feeling isolated and abandon the recognition that the LGBT community has fought so hard for? Is there another choice?

I don't claim to have all of the answers, or, for that matter, any of them. What I am hoping to do, however, is to start a conversation about how such issues can better be handled here at Northwestern.

*Want to speak your mind to the OUTLaw community? E-mail your opinion piece to Joe at [jbusnengo2010@nlaw.northwestern.edu](mailto:jbusnengo2010@nlaw.northwestern.edu). Articles and responses will be printed at the editors' discretion on a space-available basis.*

## Plans for 2008-09

The new executive board is hard at work planning for 2008-09. We're hoping to have two events before classes even start: a meet-and-greet during orientation an off-campus barbecue during Labor Day weekend. We'll keep you posted as plans develop. Our biggest task at the moment, though, is planning for OUTLaw Week, which gets its own whole separate article.

Other plans for 2008-09 include continuation of the popular "Tea with..." series, a session with the Center for Career Strategy focusing on



LGBT-specific employment issues, a cocktail mixer for faculty, staff and students, and a spring semester lunchtime program on a topic which is yet to be determined. Got ideas or suggestions? Please send them our way!

In addition to on-campus programming, we'd also like to hold monthly social outings so there are more opportunities for LGBT students at Northwestern to hang out and get to know each other. Some possibilities include picnics, bowling, improv comedy shows, LAGBAC Meet the Bar evenings, Dave & Buster's, and traditional dinner/drinks outings. Please let us know what you think about these ideas, and please pass along other suggestions. We're trying to keep costs down by limiting the subsidies to stuff like OUTLaw buying your first drink of the evening, for example.

## OUTLaw Week: October 13-17, 2008

OUTLaw Week is scheduled for October 13-17. Once again, we're planning to start early by celebrating National Coming Out Day on Friday, October 10. For the week itself, we've got loads of ideas, but **we need your help** to bring them to fruition. Some preliminary ideas for panels and speakers are:

- **Same-sex marriage:** Keynote speech from Melanie Rowen, an attorney from the National Center for Lesbian Rights, who represented several plaintiffs in the recent California Supreme Court same-sex marriage case.
- **LGBT family law issues:** Featuring same-sex couples discussing legal issues relating to adoption, parenting, hospital visitation rights, and wills.

- **Transgender rights:** E.g., employment discrimination issues or issues facing transgendered prison inmates.

- **LGBT politicians:** We'd like to invite Tom Tunney, the openly gay alderman of the 44<sup>th</sup> Ward, which includes Boystown.

If anyone has any ideas for speakers or contacts on any of the above topics, or if you have other topic ideas, please let us know! We'd greatly appreciate it.

Finally, it wouldn't be OUTLaw week without some fun and social stuff. We plan to show an LGBT movie or two. (Suggestions, anyone?) Bar Review, of course, is a staple. Finally, we'd like to end the week with an event that's light and celebratory on Friday afternoon. Please send us your thoughts and ideas!

## Lavender Law '08

"Every year, the sharpest legal minds in the LGBT community gather at the National Lesbian and Gay Law Association's annual conference and career fair. Hundreds of practicing attorneys, dozens of scholars, over 500 students and many leading members of the judiciary are expected to attend over the course of this year's events." This year, Lavender Law is being held in San Francisco. If you're interested in attending, Northwestern will pay your registration fee, as long as you register by July 31. See <http://www.lavenderlaw.org/> for more details.

**Thank you to all of our 2007-08 partners for making possible a great year.**

Paul Hastings

Neal, Gerber &  
Eisenberg LLP

Sheppard Mullin

Proskauer Rose LLP

Additional thanks to McDonnell Boehnen Hulbert & Berghoff LLP, who provided supplemental support.