

# Resources and Programs for LGBTQ+ Physicists

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**RUTGERS**

UNIVERSITY | NEW BRUNSWICK

RHIC / AGS Annual  
Users' Meeting 2019

Wed, June 5, 2019

# Many of You Know Me...



## OVERVIEW

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I am a theoretical nuclear physicist specializing in QCD at high energies. My research interests include the strong gluon fields achieved in hadrons at high energies, which saturate to the most intense fields allowed in nature; the multi-dimensional structure of hadrons in position, momentum, and spin space; the modification and quenching of jets in a QCD medium; and the role all of these play in particle production in heavy ion collisions. My research emphasizes observables which can be accessed experimentally through the collisions of protons, electrons, and nuclei at accelerator facilities like CEBAF, RHIC, and the LHC. I am also active in the planning, research, and advocacy for the construction of a future electron-ion collider (EIC) in the United States, which is designated by the Nuclear Science Advisory Committee as “the highest priority for new facility construction” and “absolutely central in its ability to contribute to world-leading science in the next decade.”

# ...But Let Me Re-Introduce Myself



## My name is Matt; I go by “he.”

- “...**he** works at Rutgers University.”
  - “...I have collaborated with **him** in the past.”
  - “...**his** recent paper on Shrinking the Quark-Gluon Plasma”
- Most people refer to me this way by default.
  - In my case, you would be right.
    - *...But you wouldn't know for sure unless I tell you.*

## ...But Let Me Re-Introduce Myself



My name is Matt; I go by “he.”

I am a **cisgender**, **bisexual man**.

- **Cisgender:** “Cis” = “same”
  - I identify with (and really am) the gender I have been considered since birth
- **Bisexual:**
  - I am attracted to both men and women

## ...And This is My Family



This is my husband, Jesse  
He is a **gay**, **transgender** **man**.

- **Transgender:** “Trans” = “across”
  - He identifies with (and really is) a different gender than he was considered at birth
- **Gay:**
  - He is attracted exclusively to other men

## ...And This is My Family



This is my husband, Jesse  
He is a gay, transgender man.

- Growing up, he was **assumed to be a girl** based on his **anatomy**
  - His **birthname**, baby **clothes**, **socialization** all reflected that assumption
  - But that has **never been who he really** was as a person
- As an adult, he chose to **transition**: to change his name, appearance, and pronouns

# ...And This is My Family



**This is our son.**

He is a rambunctious 3-year old.

- He is attracted to **Hot Wheels cars** and **cupcakes**

## ...And This is My Family



- Our son is our biological child, conceived in the usual way
- Jesse was prescribed testosterone for four years, but stopped when we got serious
- “Aside from a little facial hair, you’re no different from any of my other patients”

## Why Am I Telling You All This?

## Why Am I Telling You All This?

- Even if we are colleagues, this is a side of me you may never have known
  - I have the **luxury** of being able to **factorize** my personal and professional life.
  - I **can** and **do** keep people at **arm's length**, until I choose to **invite you in**.
  - Many queer people do not have this **privilege**.

## Why Am I Telling You All This?

- Even if we are colleagues, this is a side of me you may never have known
- To introduce terminology, in context, which may be new to you
  - Much of the **terminology** is **not fully settled** in the community
  - I come here, **not as an expert** with the answers, but to **start a conversation**

## Why Am I Telling You All This?

- Even if we are colleagues, this is a side of me you may never have known
- To introduce terminology, in context, which may be new to you
- To convey that all discussions about LGBTQ+ inclusion are deeply personal
  - This is both a **bug** and a **feature**
  - By coming out publicly, I am **inviting you in** to a personal and honest conversation

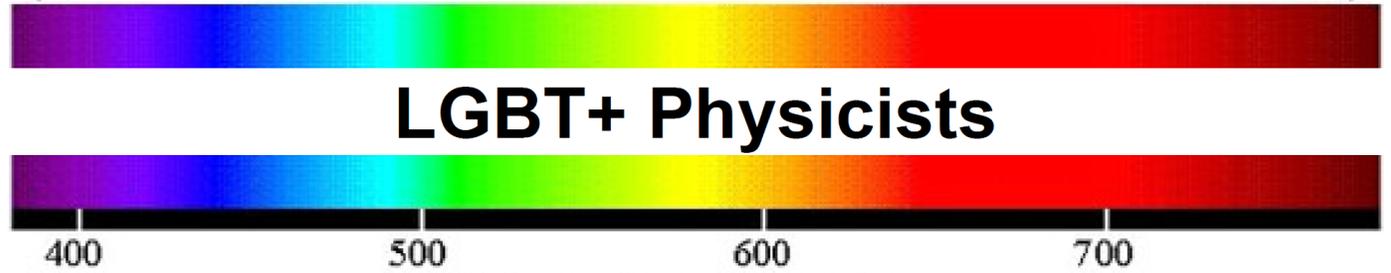


# **LGBTQ+ Organizations And Partners With Whom I Have Worked**

I don't have all the answers.  
But I do have some connections.

Visit our **web page**:

[lgbtphysicists.org](http://lgbtphysicists.org)



## LGBT+ Physicists

We are physicists committed to:

- Building a **scientific environment free from prejudice and discrimination**,
- Advocating for **sexual and/or gender minorities in physics**, and
- Acknowledging the **intersectionality of sexual, gender, and racial identity**

A vertical spectral color bar showing the visible light spectrum. The colors transition from red at the top to yellow at the bottom. To the left of the bar, numerical markers indicate wavelengths at 600 nm and 700 nm.

## lgbt+physicists

### Serving Sexual and Gender Minorities in Physics

About

Awards

Projects

OutList

Physics

Resources

Other LGBT+

Resources

Talks Articles

Welcome to the first website for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning, asexual, pansexual, not-cisgender and not-straight (as well as friendly cis and straight) physicists. This resource website has come out of a need for resources for gender and sexual minority (GSM) physicists. We serve as a networking resource for young GSM physicists and students to find mentors, a place to find resources for laboratories and universities to make their physics departments more GSM friendly, as well as a hosting of information of get togethers of GSM physicists and allies.

In collaboration with the [AAS Committee for Sexual-Orientation and Gender Minorities in Astronomy](#), we are proud to announce a major revision of our Best Practices Guide, now titled [LGBT+ Inclusivity in Physics and Astronomy: A Best Practices Guide!](#) It includes a list of suggestions that your department can enact to make it more inclusive and welcoming towards LGBT+ students and faculty.

# Los Alamos National Laboratory

Delivering science and technology to protect our nation and promote world stability

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# PRISM

LGBTQ+ PRIDE ALLIANCE

**Culture of inclusion**

Prism, the Lab's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer+ (LGBTQ+) Employee Resource Group (ERG), fosters an inclusive workplace culture that supports the LGBTQ+ employee base.

> Our WHY

Our Laboratory understands the importance of an inclusive work environment and we are proud to support our LGBTQ employees who have made great contributions to our mission.



<https://www.lanl.gov/careers/diversity-inclusion/erg/lgbtq/index.php>

# Build Synergies; Don't Re-Invent the Wheel

- At LANL, as at many institutions, several **small pockets of dedicated people** are working **independently** on ways to **improve diversity**
  - Human Resources
  - Multiple employee resource groups
  - Theory Division leadership
  - Computational Sciences Division leadership
  - National Security Division diversity working group
- Building networks lets you **pool resources, ideas**, and build **shared trust**

# Partner Organizations

## National Society of Hispanic Physicists



National Society  
of Hispanic Physicists

[Home](#)

[Our Mission](#)

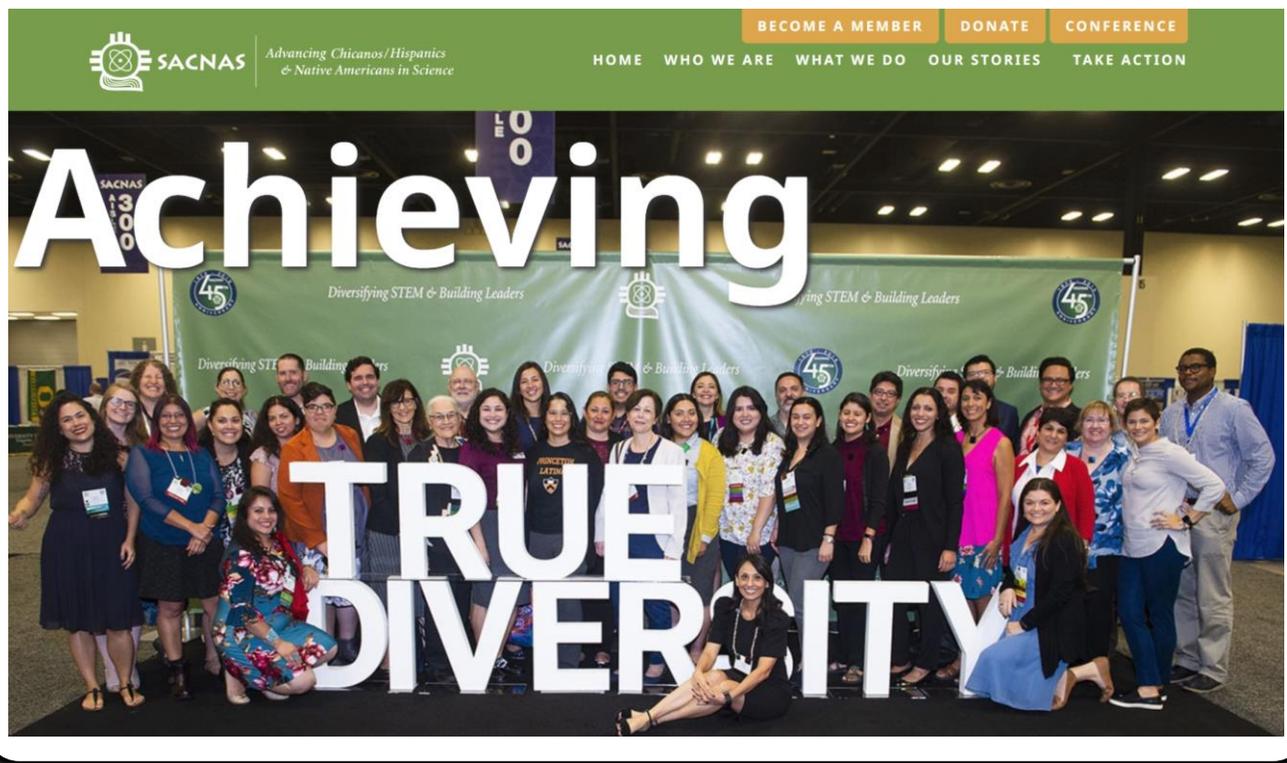
[Meetings and Events](#)

### The Mission of Our Society

The purpose of this society is to promote the professional well-being and recognize the accomplishments of Hispanic physicists within the scientific community of the United States and within society at large.

The Society seeks to develop and support efforts to increase opportunities for Hispanics in physics and to increase the number of practicing Hispanic physicists, particularly by encouraging Hispanic students to enter a career in physics.

## Society for the Advancement of Chicanos / Hispanics and Native Americans in Science



# Intersectionality

- An important aspect of building partnerships and improving diversity is recognizing the role of **intersectionality**
  - **Nonlinear interactions** between facets of identity (race, gender, sexuality, etc.)

Gay Hispanic Woman  $\neq$  Gay + Hispanic + Woman

- **Not a simple superposition.** Mixing of cultural expectations around *machismo*, etc.
- These voices and experiences are **not represented by single-issue groups.**

# Our Most Powerful Partner: the APS



American Physical Society Sites | [APS](#) | [Journals](#) | [PhysicsCentral](#) | [Physics Magazine](#)

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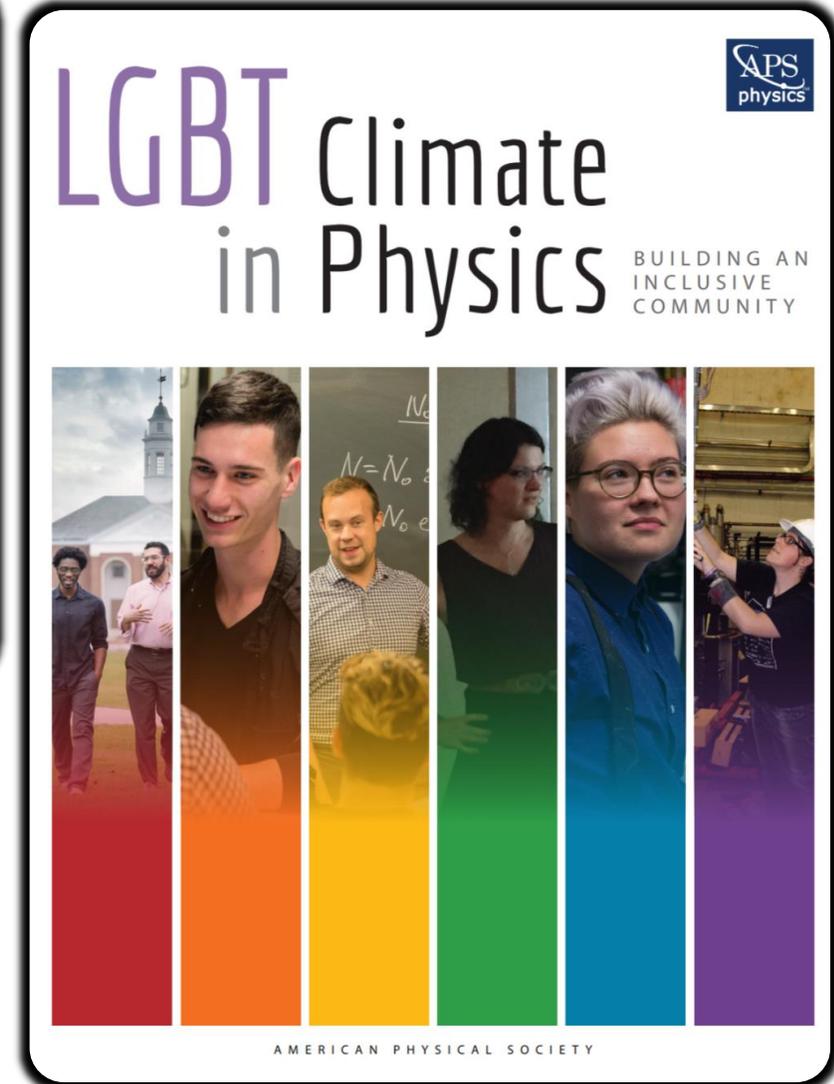
## LGBT+ Physicists

Harassment is a serious issue in academia — including the sciences — that negatively impacts climate, retention, and productivity. Anyone can experience workplace harassment but some individuals, such as those who identify as LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, as well as other sexual and gender minorities), are more vulnerable.

The American Physical Society's Ad Hoc Committee on LGBT+ Issues (C-LGBT), formed in 2014, is charged to:

Advise the APS on the current status of LGBT+ issues in physics, provide recommendations for greater inclusion, and engage physicists in laying the foundation for a more inclusive physics community. More specifically, the committee will investigate LGBT+ representation in physics, assess the educational and professional climate in physics, recommend changes in policies and practices that impact LGBT+ physicists, and address other issues that affect inclusion.

- 2014 Ad Hoc Committee on LGBT+ Issues
- LGBT Round Tables at APS Meetings
- Commissioned 2016 LGBT Climate in Physics Survey



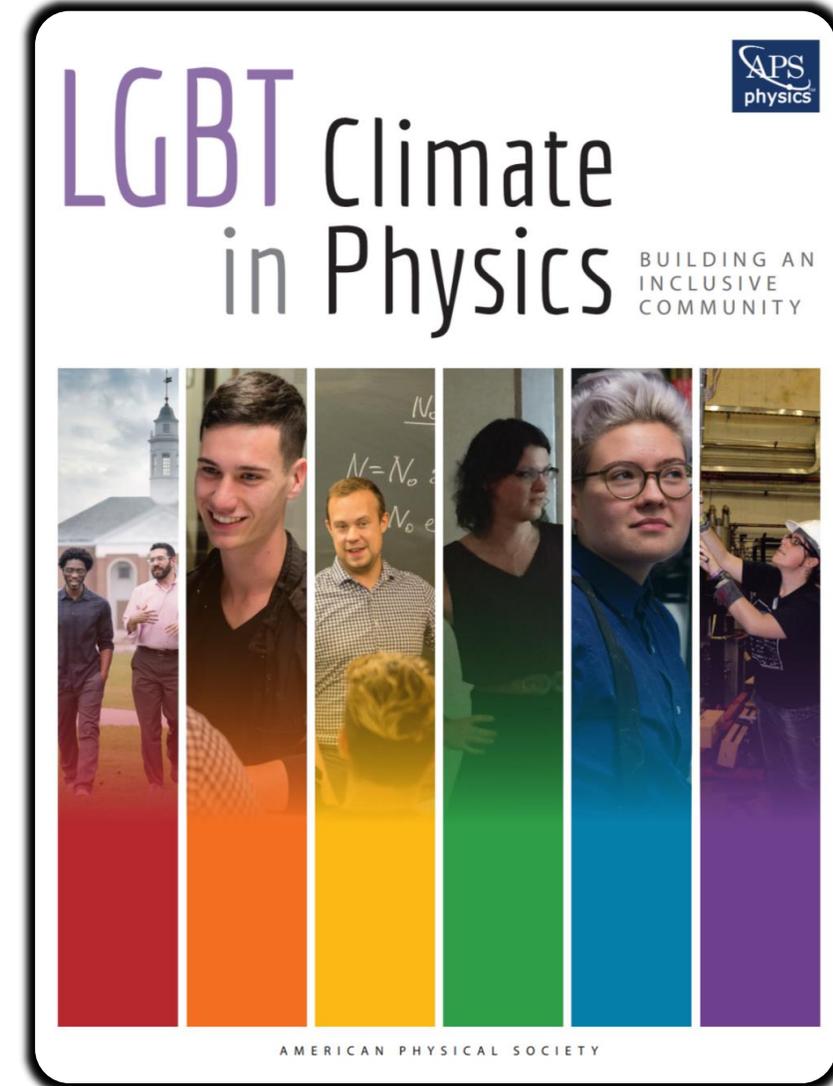
# **Barriers and Challenges Facing LGBTQ+ Physicists**

It's Not Just Outright Discrimination.  
That Would Be Too Easy.

# The 2016 LGBT Climate Report in Physics

<https://www.aps.org/programs/lgbt/upload/LGBTClimateinPhysicsReport.pdf>

- To date, the **only physics-specific survey**, using established methodology, of the **LGBTQ+ community**
  - Targeted **survey** with “snowball sampling.” N = 324
  - **Interviews** with a cross-section of respondents. N = 5
  - **Focus groups** at APS Mar. / Apr. Meetings 2014 - 2015
  - **Demographic survey** of APS membership. N = 2596





# The US Transgender Survey: The New Mexico Example



## New Mexico State Report

<http://www.ustranssurvey.org/>

- Legal same-sx marriage since 2013. **Prohibited discrimination** on the basis of **sexual orientation** and **gender identity** since 2003
  - In particular as applied to **employment** and **housing**
- And yet:
  - **26%** reported being **fired, not hired, or denied promotion** for being trans
  - **36%** reported being **evicted, denied housing**, etc. for being trans

# Executive Summary: Pervasive Isolation

In many physics environments, social norms established expectations of closeted behavior.

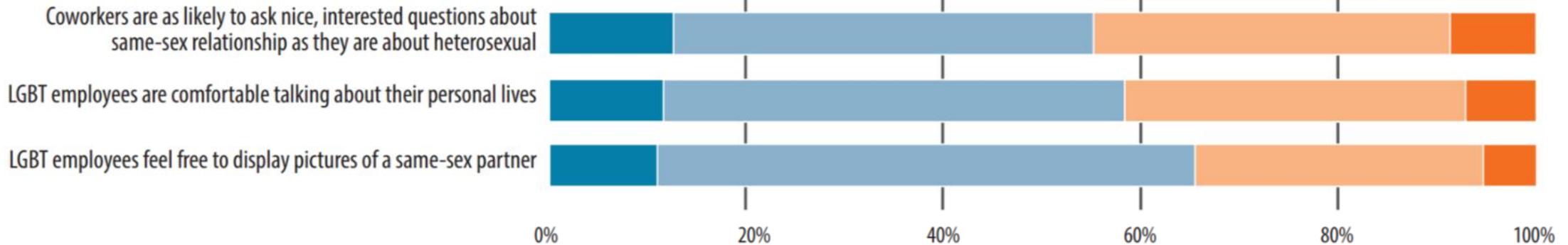
Isolation was a common theme for many LGBT physicists.

LGBT physicists reported trouble identifying allies to help mitigate isolation, exclusion, or marginalization.

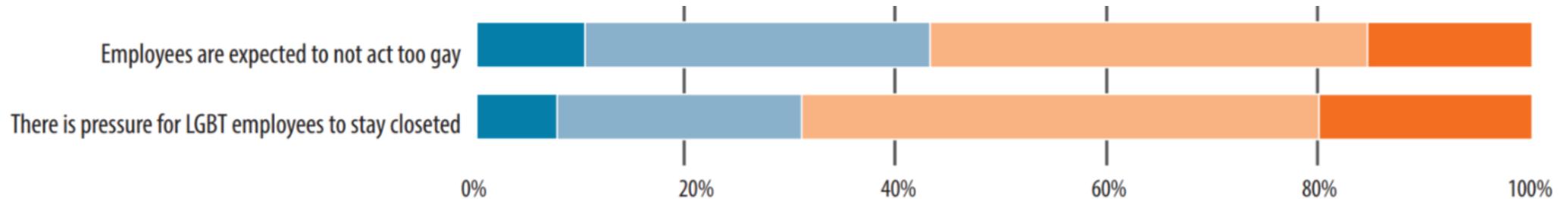
# Executive Summary: Pervasive Isolation

Strongly Agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

## LGBT CLIMATE – AGREEMENT WITH POSITIVE STATEMENTS



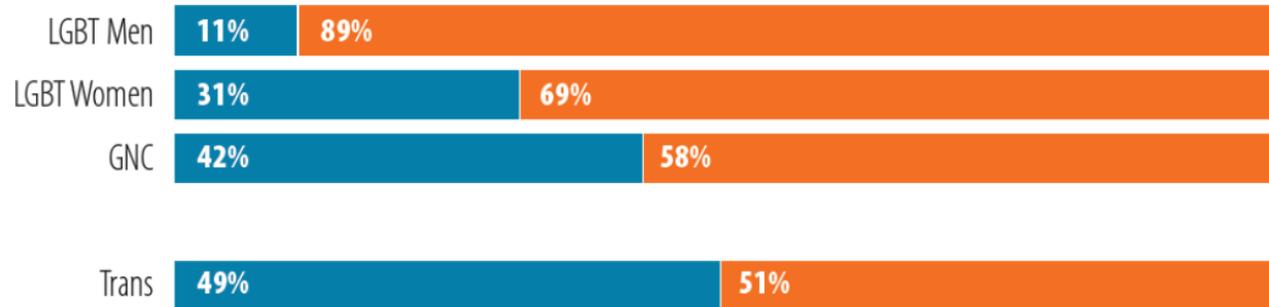
## LGBT CLIMATE – AGREEMENT WITH NEGATIVE STATEMENTS



# Executive Summary: Substantial Hostility

## EXPERIENCE OF HARASSMENT

■ Yes ■ No



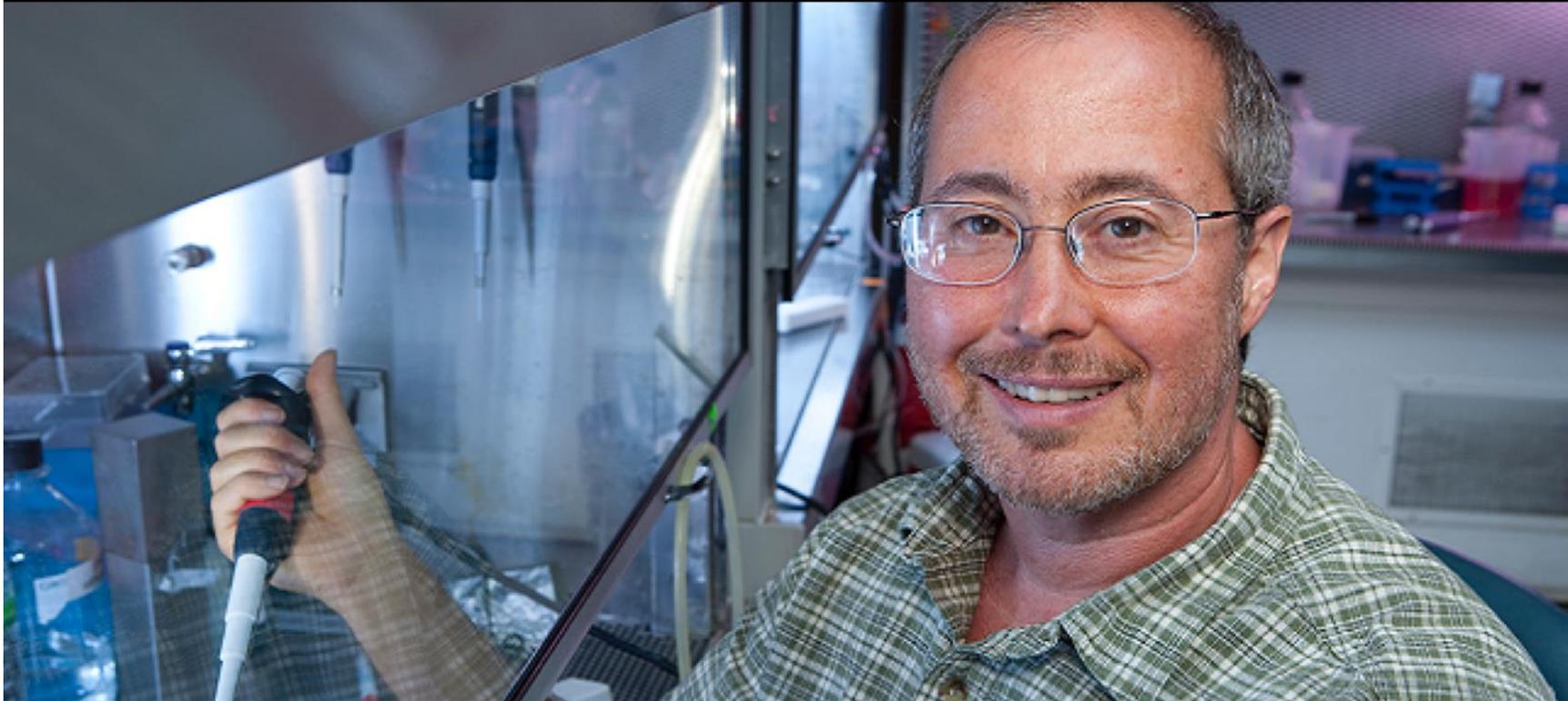
A significant fraction of LGBT physicists have experienced or observed exclusionary behavior.

LGBT physicists with additional marginalized identities faced greater levels of discrimination.

Transgender and gender-nonconforming physicists encountered the most hostile environments.

As the applause died down after his seminar at MIT, one scientist turned to another and remarked what a great seminar it had been, adding,  
"Ben Barres's work is much better than his sister's."

-BEN BARRES, CHAIR OF NEUROBIOLOGY AT  
STANFORD



**This slide  
courtesy of  
Ágnes Mócsy**



<https://www.agnesmocsy.com/>

# My Experience as an Advocate

- At one point in my career, I was **approached by a student** because I was **out and visible** as a safe space and LGBTQ+ advocate.
- The student was a **trans man** whose work was being **systematically sabotaged by his advisor** ever since he had been forced to reveal that he was transgender.
- Drawing on **supportive relationships within and without the department**, we were able to get the **student safely reassigned** elsewhere and his **sabotaged work published** under supervision.
- ...But, the **disciplinary process for the advisor** was concluded **without a satisfactorily thorough investigation**.

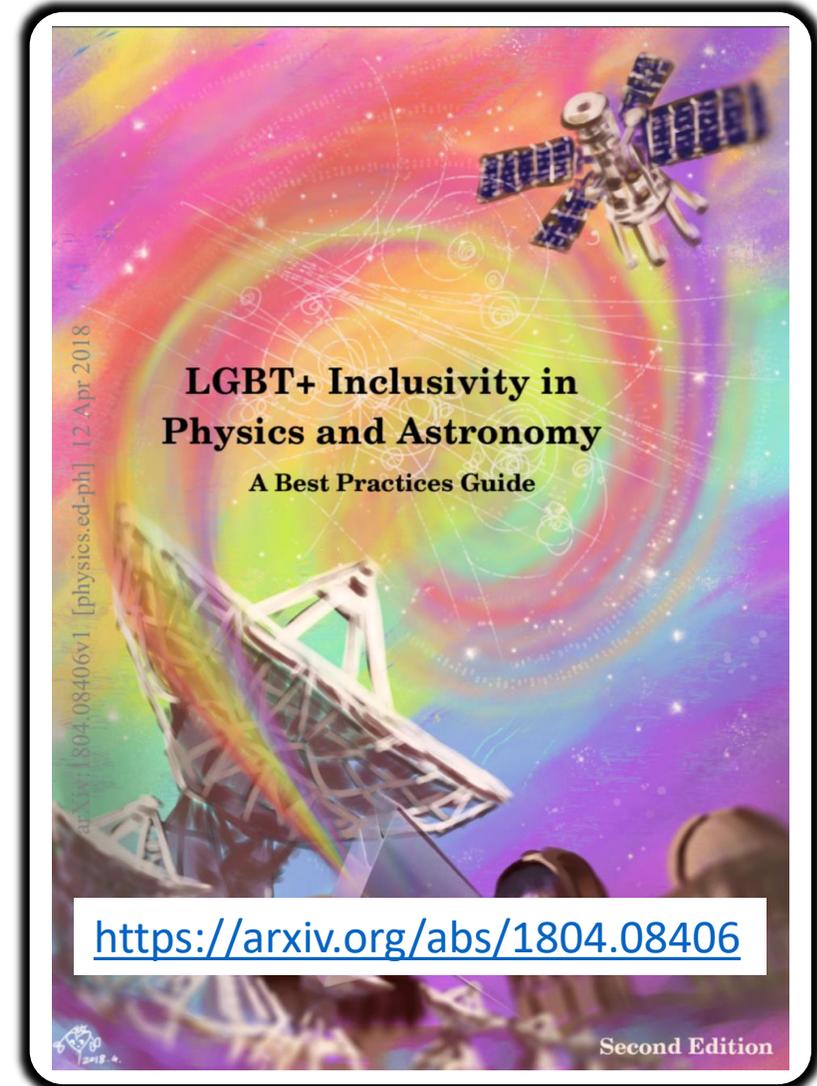
A large rounded rectangular box with a rainbow gradient background, transitioning from red on the left to blue on the right. The text is centered within this box.

# **Steps Forward: What We Can Do, and What You Can Do**

After the storm comes the rainbow.

# A Starting Point: The Best Practices Guide

- A years-long collaboration between **LGBT+ Physicists** and **SGMA** in astronomy
- Catalogue of **strategies and practices** which can help **ameliorate** some of the **barriers to inclusion** facing LGBTQ+ physicists



# Executive Summary: Establish a Framework

**Assess and address:** Seek to determine the climate for LGBT+ members of your department through participating in or conducting a climate survey (1.1.1, 6.1.3), collecting demographic information (6.1.1), carrying out classroom climate assessments (2.4). Respond by establishing a departmental climate committee and/or liaison (1.4.2) and explicit LGBT+ supportive policies.

- Most effective when you can build a network to combine existing efforts

# Executive Summary: Visibility is Empowerment

**Break the silence and invisibility:** Initiate department-wide discussions of LGBT+ concerns (3.1.4), highlight the scientific contributions of LGBT+ department members at all levels (1.3.3), include welcoming language and non-discrimination policies in your syllabus (2.2.1) and on your departmental website (1.2.2), join an “Out List” as an ally or LGBT+ scientist (1.3.1), identify LGBT+ supportive mentors (3.1.1), invite LGBT+ speakers to campus (5.5).

# The BNL Leona Woods Award



## BNL Physics Department Leona Woods Distinguished Postdoctoral Lectureship Award

The Leona Woods distinguished postdoctoral lectureship award is sponsored by the BNL physics department to celebrate the scientific accomplishments of outstanding female physicists, physicists from under-represented minority groups, and LGBTQ physicists -- and to promote diversity and inclusion in our department. Lecturers will visit BNL for at least a week and give a general interest colloquium and a technical talk in their area of expertise. The laboratory will provide travel and local support, along with a \$1000 honorarium.

Applicants should be current postdocs within 7 years of the Ph.D. and have achievements in broadly-defined areas of interest to the BNL physics department: experimental and theoretical nuclear and high energy physics (including astrophysics and cosmology).

### Announcement of Fall 2019 Leona Woods Award

The requirements for each applicant are

- From the applicant: A CV and a short description of the two talks
- A nomination by a colleague, by email
- A primary recommendation letter, ideally a PDF sent by email
- Besides the primary letter, we will consider additional letters the applicant wishes to arrange

# LGBT+ Physicists Acknowledgment of Excellence



## | 2017 Acknowledgement of Excellence Award

Chanda Prescod-Weinstein

You can't spend any amount of time doing Diversity work in Physics without hearing the name of Dr. Chanda Prescod-Weinstein.

Along with a distinguished career as a Theoretical Cosmologist with degrees from Harvard, UC Santa Cruz, and the University of Waterloo, and positions held at the Perimeter Institute, NASA, MIT, and currently the University of Washington, Dr. Prescod-Weinstein has taken every step of their career with the mindset that the fields of physics, astronomy, and cosmology must be open, accessible, and ethical to people coming from many backgrounds and identities.

Dr. Prescod-Weinstein's work includes fighting for the rights of native Hawaiians to their lands in opposition to the Thirty Meter Telescope; educating and holding accountable many physicists on issues of race, including multiple of us within lgbt+physicists; Co-Chairing the Annual Meeting of the National Society of Black Physicists and the National Society of Hispanic Physicists, and is a founding member of the AAS's Committee on Sexual Orientation and Gender Minorities in Astronomy.

Her writings on science and the scientific culture always shine light through an intersectional lens that highlights how issues around race, sexuality, gender, gender identity, class, disability, and others are issues that have an important impact on the profession and professional lives of physicists, and they have spread that message of inclusiveness from her blog at Medium, including the Decolonizing Science Reading List, to the pages of Bitch Magazine, Black Perspectives, the Black Youth Project, and the introduction to "Hidden Human Computers: The Black Women of NASA." Dr. Prescod-Weinstein has also directly included their voice on inclusivity in science to PhDivas and MSNBC.

For Years of Dedicated Effort in Changing Physics Culture to be More Inclusive and Understanding Toward All Marginalized Peoples, Dr. Chanda Prescod-Weinstein is presented with the 2017 lgbt+physicists Acknowledgement of Excellence Award.

# Voluntary “Out” and “Allies” Lists

- Purpose: To **help LGBTQ+ physicists find support** at their institutions  
To **enhance visibility** of LGBTQ+ physicists

- Some shout-outs:

Raju Venugopalan	Senior Scientist and Head of the BNL Nuclear Theory Group	Physics	Brookhaven National Laboratory	USA, NY	<a href="#">Website</a> , raju [at] bnl.gov
Jack Shlachter	Division Leader	Theoretical Division	Los Alamos National Laboratory	USA, NM	shlachter [at] lanl.gov

- You have the **support of senior people** in your institution

- To view or **add yourself**:

<http://lgbtphysicists.org/outlist.html>

[http://lgbtphysicists.org/outlist\\_request.html](http://lgbtphysicists.org/outlist_request.html)

# Executive Summary: Gather Resources

**Educate and advocate:** Participate in LGBT+ friendly climate and anti-bias training (1.1.4, 4.1.2), identify LGBT+ support services on campus and in the broader scientific community (1.4.1), work for campus-wide LGBT+ supportive practices such as supportive first responders (6.2.4) and gender-inclusive restrooms and accompanying signage (1.4.4, 5.3).

**A proactive choice of signage for  
a unisex bathroom at LANL**



# Executive Summary: Start a Conversation

**Set the example and expectations:** include preferred pronouns in your email signature, invite students and/or meeting participants to share their preferred pronouns (1.1.2, 1.2.2, 2.2.2), articulate classroom environment expectations on the first day of class (2.3.1), speak up in response to discriminatory behavior and report where appropriate (1.4.7, 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 6.1.2).



My name is Matt;  
I go by “he.”

Jack Shlachter  
Division Leader - [Theoretical Division](#)  
Unclassified Mail Stop [REDACTED]  
Los Alamos National Laboratory  
Los Alamos, NM 87545  
Phone [REDACTED]  
Fax [REDACTED]  
Mobile [REDACTED]  
e-mail: [shlachter@lanl.gov](mailto:shlachter@lanl.gov)

Pronouns: he/him/his

# Executive Summary: Make LGBTQ+ People Welcome

**Support and include:** Plan gender-neutral and inclusive social events (1.2.1), create LGBTQ+ safe spaces in your department (1.4.3), provide equal restroom access (1.4.4), include LGBTQ+ faculty in positions of authority, e.g. as committee chairs (1.3.5), provide support for participation in LGBTQ+ networking events (1.4.5, 5.1), actively recruit LGBTQ+ students in undergraduate and graduate admissions (3.1.2), ensure LGBTQ+ needs are considered in dual-career hires (4.2.1), family-friendly policies (4.2.2), and benefits (6.3.4, 6.3.5).

## Transgender – Related Surgeries and Treatments

Effective 1/1/2017 transgender related surgeries and treatments will be covered. Treatment must be medically necessary and may require prior authorization from BCBSNM.

Services are subject to usual member cost-sharing features such as deductible, coinsurance, copayments, and out-of-pocket limits.

If you have any questions regarding Plan coverages, please contact [REDACTED]



# In Conclusion

“Hope will never be silent.” -- Harvey Milk



- When you can bring your whole self to work, the whole community thrives
- Creates investment into your institution, into your team, and into your mission
- Further reading:
  - APS Climate Survey: <https://www.aps.org/programs/lgbt/upload/LGBTClimateinPhysicsReport.pdf>
  - Best Practices Guide: <https://arxiv.org/abs/1804.08406>
  - M. Ramsey-Musolf talk: <https://www.bnl.gov/video/index.php?v=581>