Community Spotlights

PRISM
New England College of Optometry

Edited by: Benjamin Young, OD, FAAO

Coming Out Day

Parker Ayer
President:
I'm Parker (he/him) enjoy bike rides, baking, hanging with friends, and dancing at the club! Come say hi if you see me on campus or around the city.



October 11th is National Coming Out Day! Coming out is a process where people identify themselves as part of the LGBTQIA+ community. It references the phrase "coming out of the closet". Being "in the closet" refers to someone who is private about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

For many people, being private about their identity may be necessary to maintain emotional and even physical safety in a cisgender/heteronormative society that is not always accepting of those who do not fit within these boundaries. However, thanks to the efforts of many people who risked their personal safety for the cause of queer visibility, there are more spaces now more than ever where LGBTQIA+ people can express themselves openly and honestly.

Today we celebrate those who have been able to come out, we recognize the barriers that still exist for those who can't, and we work towards a more inclusive community for everyone.

Acknowledgements

Brian Bouchard
Vice President
My name is Brian (he/him). I am the Prism Vice President and grew up in Peabody, MA. I am excited to increase visibility of PRISM and the LGBTQ+ community at NECO. I look forward to hosting more engaging social and educational events for everyone!



We would like to acknowledge Eddie Perkins from the CAPA office for designing and creating pronoun pins for the NECO community to wear. These pins can be found at the front desk or in the CAPA office. This is a great way to share your pronouns while creating a safe space for others to do the same!

We also would also like to extend a thank you to Dr. Jeffrey Ho, Simone Jadczak, Shawne Gillies, Human Resources and the Facilities team for providing menstrual hygiene products in every restroom on campus. Thank you for recognizing that menstrual hygiene affects people of all genders!

Roe v. Wade

Kirstyn Horsley
Secretary
I am an OD3 student from Baltimore, Maryland. My pronouns are she/her and I identify as bisexual. Outside of NECO I enjoy spending time outside and going to concerts.



On June 24, 2022 the US Supreme Court overturned the landmark case Roe v. Wade. The case was a legal precedent that protected the right to abortion healthcare across the US. While the ruling has widespread consequences for women, it also affects all people with the capacity for pregnancy. This includes some non-binary people and transgender men.

Another impact of the ruling is the threat to marriage rights. Justice Clarence Thomas called for other landmark cases to be reconsidered, including Obergefell v. Hodges which established the right to gay marriage across the US.

For now, Massachusetts continues to protect abortion and marriage rights. We hope that long term solutions for access to abortion healthcare are created in states that have already taken action to restrict access.

Pronouns Refresher

Amanda Meinschein
Treasurer
Hey Y'all! My pronouns are They/He. I am a current OD 2 student and am so excited to join the E-Board of PRISM this year. I look forward to seeing everyone at our various events!



Gender queer, non-binary, and transgender are terms for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different than that assigned at birth. These individuals may use traditional pronouns like he/him and she/her to express their gender, or they may use they/them and other neopronouns like xe/xem/xyr, ze/hir/hirs, and ey/em/eir. You may also see people use a combination of multiple pronouns such as She/They, He/They, and They/He. When pronouns are in this combination, they can either be used interchangeably or the first one is used more than the other.

One way to determine someone's personal pronouns is to ask, "How should I refer to you?" or simply, "What are your prounouns?" after you introduce yourself and your pronouns. Identifying your own pronouns first helps the other person feel more comfortable to share theirs. Taking this one step further by sharing your pronouns in your email signature also helps others feel comfortable doing so and normalizes the process. Check out our last issue of the Queer Quarterly in the NECO Library for more information!