

# Q&A cont'd from page 1

difficult to stimulate awareness not only of issues regarding the LGBT community but also of the club itself.

The administration resisted an attempt to attach the club to the "Gay-Straight Alliance" network because it believes that the name of the club does not hinder its ability to operate successfully and that "association with any national organization could be problematic," especially if the organization supports activities which contrast with the Catholic identity of the college, according to McGonigle.

In spite of this, Simpson stated that in the past, the club has worked successfully with other college organizations, as well as with various community groups that share a similar mission with Q&A.

The King's faculty and staff have supported the group in both its founding and operation; McGonigle even mentioned the possibility of gaining a co-advisor, who would

guide the club alongside its current advisor, Director of Diversity Nathan Ward.

The majority of the club's faculty and staff supporters also participate in the ALLY Program, which is based out of the Counseling Center and is directed by Theresa DaKay.

McGonigle and Calore both stated that the ALLY Program has not had substantial training activities in recent months, leaving faculty and staff without suitable resources to assist students.

All interviewees agree with DaKay's statement that the ALLY Program must be reassessed "to determine where and how it could best fit the needs of our students, as well as to evaluate the training involved and its subsequent effects."

They also agree that the ALLY Program is vital to the college's mission, as it provides "safe zones" for students and training for the faculty and staff who participate in the

program.

Similar training for resident assistants includes a diversity presentation that once featured a Q&A forum. This presentation is sometimes duplicated within the First-Year Experience; however, the level of duplication depends upon the instructor teaching the class, according to McGonigle.

Both Simpson and Calore agree that the most common instances of homophobia, in both speech and action, occur among first-year students. This statement raises the question of whether orientation programs can successfully fulfill their goals with the resources and conditions provided by administrative offices.

These conditions are informed by the Catholic identity of the college, which seeks to affirm the dignity of the person without promoting the supposed indignity of the lifestyle. This struggle often produces misunderstanding

between students and administration – misunderstanding which can only be resolved through dialogue.

Unfortunately, most of the participants in this conversation are weary of its repercussions from administrators or outside groups, making authentic dialogue impossible.

Nearly all sources interviewed were apprehensive in sharing their testimony; but Catholic social teaching regards dialogue as fundamental to the successful resolution of conflict as well as genuine acknowledgement of human dignity.

The question of whether Q&A can conduct this dialogue successfully in the club's present form has yet to be answered.

# Autism

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A specific cause of autism has not yet been identified, although it appears to have a genetic basis.

Specialized support, training, and, in particular, early intervention can help give autistic individuals the tools they need to lead meaningful and productive lives.

"The more educated we are, the better prepared we can be to help our children be successful," said Stefanie Camoni, Director of the Early Learning Center (ELC).

When asked about the reason for her participation in WAAD, Camoni mentioned Natalie Beck, an ELC teacher who has an autistic child.

"Aiden is one of millions that was diagnosed with autism," explained Camoni. "She wanted to educate families, the community, and our staff about autism and the importance of early diagnosis. We felt that a learning center that helps children from infancy to 5 years old was a great place to start."

From Monday, March 26 through Monday, April 2, The Hildebrandt Learning Center will be collecting monetary donations that will be sent to Autism Speaks. All who donate will be able to put their names on a puzzle piece that will be displayed in the center's lobby.

In addition, the inHouse Design Club has been selling bandanas in support of WAAD.

David Castro, inHouse Design vice president, said autistic children sometimes have to wear bandanas around their necks in order to prevent harming themselves during a tantrum. Students can show support by purchasing and wearing bandanas around their necks on April 2.

All proceeds benefit the Center for Autism, an organization that operates an outpatient program for autistic children ages 2 to 5.

The Early Learning Center has invited the college community to partner with them by visiting the center the afternoon of April 2. Children's artwork will be displayed, autism pamphlets will be available, and light refreshments will be served.

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Crown cartoonist Lukas Tomasacci was awarded the Edward C. Snyder Memorial Scholarship from the Scranton Area Foundation. This monetary award was established to assist a student in pursuit of the performing arts. Tomasacci's art work can be seen each week in "The Crown." The staff would like to take the time to congratulate and recognize his achievement.