



## Meeting the Health Needs of the LGBTQ Community of Reading

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### COMMUNITY PARTNER

The LGBT Center of Greater Reading is a community center focused on helping the LGBTQ and greater Reading community thrive. They offer counseling, group support, transportation/ food services and many other resources to vulnerable people in the Reading area.

### BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

Navigating the health system can be challenging for members of the LGBTQ community in Reading as many patients feel apprehension when choosing a physician due to past non-affirming experiences. Using the LGBT Center's positive reputation in the Reading community, we hope to use this trust to help patients maintain their health.

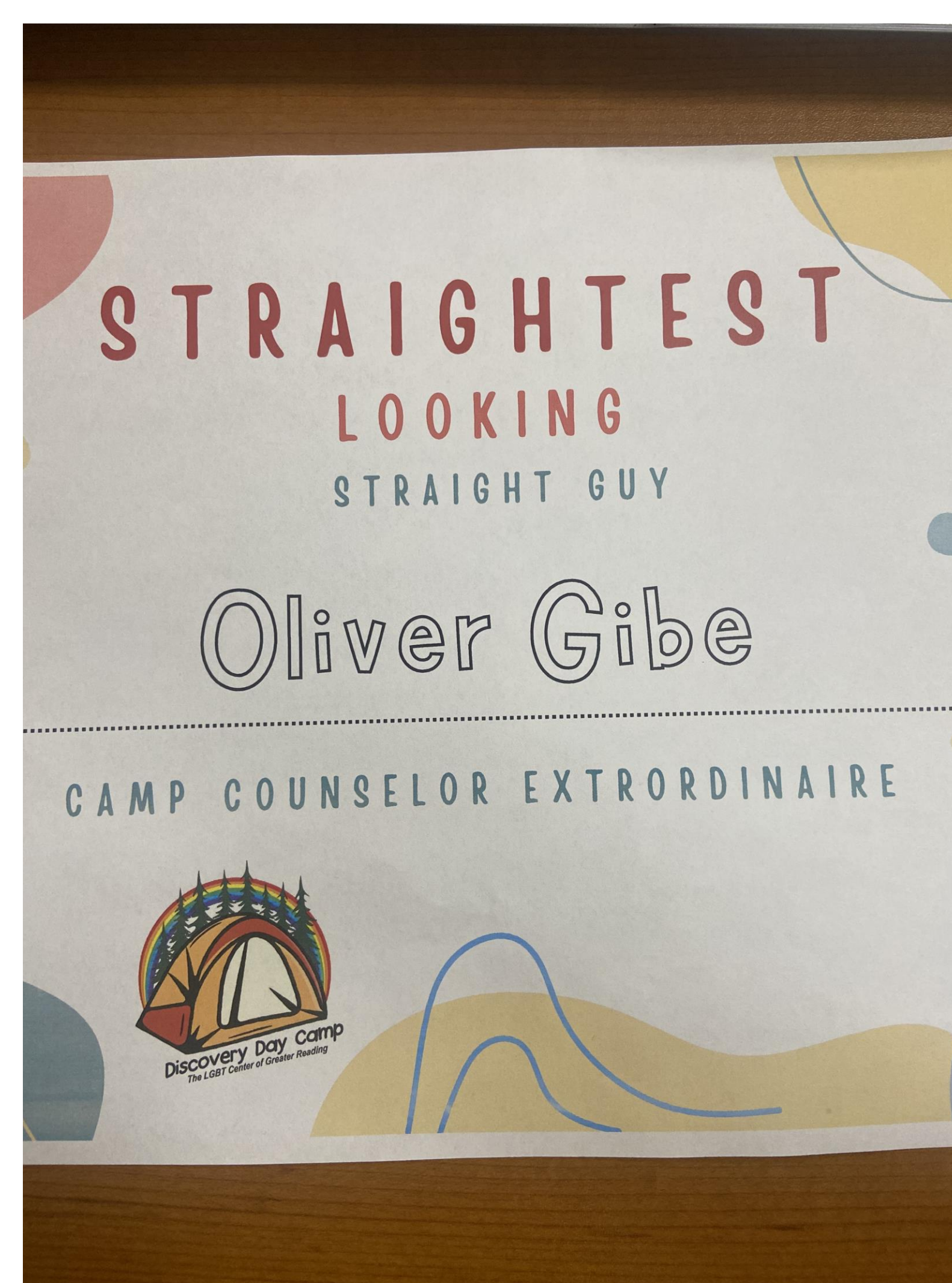


### EXPERIENCE

In order to augment the health of those that utilize the LGBT Center, I implemented two outreach projects:

1. Monthly health talks on subjects related to the LGBTQ community
2. A health fair at the LGBT Center. Patient were screened for diabetes, hypertension, vision abnormalities, and other common ailments.

I also supported normal LGBT Center activities such as aiding food pantry utilization and helping to run the summer camp.



### ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ CHALLENGES

- Developed strong relationships with members of the community
- Successfully organized health fair with over 15 attendees
- Hosted health talks related to STI prevention, PrEP, Health Risks Assessment, Trans joy
- Learned about funding challenges

### REFLECTION

My summer at The LGBT Center developed my caretaking abilities. First, I learned about the resilience of members of the LGBTQ community. Many patients had experiences of being chased, harassed, and assaulted by people because of their orientation or identity. One trans woman I worked with told me that just waking up every day feels like an act of resilience for her. Additionally, I learned how to be a better gender-affirming provider. Each day, I had a conversation with a patient and learned how they wanted to be addressed. Affirming the life experiences of at-risk populations can feel challenging, but the reward of developing relationships with marginalized communities breeds trust in medical institutions and fosters healthy communities.

