

A Guide to the VCU Gay Alliance of Students Collection, 1974-1976 M 357

VCU Gay Alliance of Students collection
1974-1976

Title Statement

A Guide to the VCU Gay Alliance of Students Collection, 1974-1976 M 357

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

M 357

Unit ID

/repositories/5/resources/173

Unit Date

1974-1976

Language

English

Creator

Gay Alliance of Students

Extent

0.5 Linear Feet

Repository

VCU James Branch Cabell Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection open for research.

Acquisition Information

Donated by Walter Foery.

Preferred Citation

VCU Gay Alliance of Students Collection, Collection Number M 357, Special Collections and Archives, James Branch Cabell Library, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va.

Historical Information

The Gay Alliance of Students (GAS) was founded as a student organization on September 1, 1974, at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond Virginia. GAS was organized to create a "unified support community for men and women of all sexual orientations, serve as an informative resource to the university and surrounding community, and assist the university in creating a positive institutional image by addressing and combating discrimination based on gender and sexual preference."

GAS was denied recognition as a student organization by the VCU Board of Visitors on October 17, 1974 on the grounds that the "existence of GAS as a recognized campus organization would tend to attract other homosexuals to the University." In October 1976, a civil case was brought to the U.S. District Court of Appeals Fourth District Circuit Court against VCU to allow for full funding and space allocations. The Federal Appeals Court ruled in favor of the student organization effectively changed existing law in ten southern states. The case, Gay Alliance of Students v. Matthews was one of the first LGBTQ+ student organizing cases to reach the federal appellate level. The ruling effectively changed existing law in the five states within the jurisdiction of the Fourth District Circuit: Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and West Virginia.

By the 1980s, the Gay Alliance of Students was known as the VCU Gay Student Alliance.

Sources: Hevel, M. S., & Cain, T. R. (2023). 'We Didn't Think It Would be Well Received': The Gay Alliance of Students' Legal Victory over Virginia Commonwealth University, 1974–1976. *Historia y Memoria de la Educación*, (18), 41–75.

Scope and Contents

The collection was compiled by the donor, Walter Foery, a founding member of the VCU Gay Students Alliance organization. The items date from 1974 through 1976 and include correspondence, court documents, newspaper clippings, and magazines. The materials in the collection help document the founding of the student organization at VCU, their efforts to be recognized by VCU as any other student organization, and the lawsuit initiated by the students. The case, Gay Alliance of Students v. Matthews was one of the first LGBTQ+ student organizing cases to reach the federal appellate level. The ruling effectively changed existing law in the five states within the jurisdiction of the Fourth District Circuit: Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and West Virginia.

Keywords

Gay activists -- Virginia -- Richmond

Gay rights -- Virginia -- Richmond

Gay college students -- Virginia -- Richmond

Gay Alliance of Students

Virginia Commonwealth University -- students

Existence and Location of Copies

These materials are also available via VCU Libraries Digital Collections.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged alphabetically.

Description of Subordinate Components

Application for Registration as A Student Organization, Gay Alliance of Students, Initial and Final Copy, 1974

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48478

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Conference Schedule-The Gay Academic Union, Third Annual Conference, 1975

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48479

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - The Advocate, Gregory Lewis, Editor, September 9, 1975, November 17, 1975

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48480

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - Blanton, Wyndham, Member of the VCU Board of Visitors, Clinical Professor of Medicine at the Medical College of Virginia, November 20, 1975

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48481

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - Byrd, Harry F., U.S. Senator - August 5, 1975

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48482

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - Foery, Walter A., Spokesperson Gay Alliance of Students, November 2, 1975

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48483

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund Inc., 1975-1976

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48484

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - Lane, Lionel E., VCU School of Social Work, March 6, 1976

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48485

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - McCarthy, John M., Attorney at Law, April 8, 1976

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48486

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - National Gay Task Force, 1975-1976

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48487

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - Reynolds, Eddie, Director of Residence Education at Virginia Commonwealth University, November 19, 1976

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48488

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - Scott, William L., U. S. Senator - August 6, 1975

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48489

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Correspondence - Tully, Carol, Social Worker, City of Richmond Department of Public Welfare, Social Service Bureau, July 2, 1976

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48490

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Court Fee Payment Record, Gay Alliance of Students, 1975-76

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48491

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Court Opinion, U.S. Court of Appeals Fourth District; Gay Alliance of Students, etc v. Alfred T. Matthews, et al, 1976

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48492

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Magazine Clippings, Time, 1975, 1979

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48493

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Memorandum, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia Richmond Division, Gay Alliance of Students etc, v., Alfred T. Matthews, et al, 1975

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48494

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Newspaper Clippings, Gay Alliance of Students (GAS), Commonwealth Times and Flyer for GAS Sponsored Dance Event, 1976

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48495

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Newspaper Clippings, Gay Alliance of Students, Commonwealth Times and Richmond Times-Dispatch, 1975

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48496

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Photography of Walter Foery, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48497

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Press Releases, Gay Alliance of Students, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48498

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Statement of Purpose, Draft and Final Copy, Gay Alliance of Students (GAS) and GAS Membership List, undated

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48499

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Subpoena for Taking Deposition, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia Richmond Division, June 10, 1975

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48500

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)

Subpoena to Appear and Produce, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia Richmond Division, June 10, 1975

Unit ID /repositories/5/archival_objects/48501

Mixed Materials [A11424376264] 1 (box)