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University to be Honored for LGBTQ+ Student Programming

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University to be Honored for LGBTQ+ Student Programming

March 3, 2017

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Illinois Wesleyan University has received another NASPA award for excellence in student programming.

NASPA's Gender and Sexuality Knowledge Community will award Illinois Wesleyan with an [Exemplary Program Award for the University's Queer Lives series of programs](#) from the 2015-16 academic year. The award will be presented March 14 at the national conference of NASPA, the professional organization of student affairs administrators in higher education.

In their nominating materials, organizers noted that one of the obstacles for LGBTQ+ student persistence is the lack of visible and available models through which students with marginalized sexual identities can see their future potential and successes embodied.



Alumnus Jason Dennis '00 spoke at the Pride Alumni Community Homecoming brunch in 2015.

The series provided opportunities for all students, but especially for LGBTQ+ students, faculty and staff to connect with role models whose lives model ignited passion, democratic citizenship and social justice activism, according to Vice President for [Student Affairs](#) and Dean of Students Karla Carney-Hall.

In Illinois Wesleyan's application for the award, Carney-Hall noted that she believes the Queer Lives Series is deserving of the award because it was "empowering, collaborative, and impactful" for Illinois Wesleyan's campus climate.

The six programs included a documentary film *God Loves Uganda*; an appearance by spoken word poet Katie Wirsing; Pride Alumni Community speaker Jason Dennis '00; selections from the Off-Broadway musical *Witness Uganda*, which were presented live at Illinois Wesleyan; a presentation on middle sexualities; and a two-week display of the LGBT Legacy Wall. Organizers said the LGBT Legacy Wall, an exhibit depicting dozens of queer individuals from history representing disciplines from the sciences to religious figures, was one of most well-received programs in the series.

In November, Illinois Wesleyan received the [NASPA Region IV-East Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Award](#), which is presented to a college or university office, department or division demonstrating achievement in creating an [inclusive](#) campus environment.



Many students, community members, faculty and staff attended the LGBT Legacy Wall exhibit.