



**LGBT+
COLLEGE
CONFERENCE**

2016 Awards Dinner

April 9, 2016 | 7:00 p.m.

James Union Building | Middle Tennessee State University

Sidney A. McPhee

President
Middle Tennessee State University
Cope Administration Building 204
1301 East Main Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
o: 615-898-2622 • f: 615-898-2507



April 9, 2016

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the LGBT+ College Conference 2016 Awards Dinner. MTSU is proud to be a partner for this exciting evening of achievement. Like the awardees, our university has long been committed to diversity, fairness, and inclusion. The awardees being honored tonight have demonstrated their commitment to inclusion in the community, their workplaces, and schools. They have taken bold steps and been courageous often in the face of adversity to assure participation for all. The recipients' individual contributions are significant and have shaped our modern culture and the discourse about access, fairness, and breaking down barriers for the larger good.

Congratulations to the awardees, we have much to celebrate!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sidney A. McPhee".

Sidney A. McPhee
President

2016 Awards Dinner



April 9, 2016

Dear Friends,

On behalf of MT Lambda, I am proud to welcome you to the LGBT+ College Conference 2016 Awards Dinner. This is the third year we've had the privilege of working with the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences and a growing list of sponsors and supporters. We feel proud to bring positive attention to the work of those who make a difference for all identities.

Those being honored this evening are committed to influencing policy and practice while working to influence the kind of actions that ensure access, opportunity, and justice for all. I can't thank and applaud them enough for their commitment to the LGBT+ community and beyond.

Again, to all of you, and on behalf the entire True Blue family, thank you for being here on this special night!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Villasana". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elizabeth Villasana

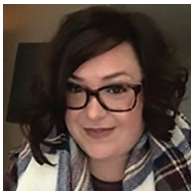
President
MT Lambda

LGBT+ College Conference 2016 Awards Dinner Host Greg Cason '07



Greg Cason is a Senior Buyer at Nissan North America. He is also the President of their Business Synergy Team "GSAN," which stands for Gay Straight Alliance at Nissan, and Treasurer of Nissan's Multicultural Business Synergy Team. Greg does outreach within Nashville and the LGBT+ community including Second Harvest, Habitat for Humanity, Nashville Pride, Nashville Black Pride, Atlanta Pride, Nashville CARES, Just Us, Gay Softball World Series, and more. Greg received his Masters of Business Administration degree at Middle Tennessee State University and enjoys spending time with his two daughters, two grandsons and his fiancé, Landry Boyle. When asked why he volunteers so much of his time, he states, "I give because I know what it feels like to be without."

LGBT+ College Conference 2016 Awards Dinner Music Wendy Bledsoe-Payne '05 '12



Wendy Bledsoe-Payne is a Nashville native and 1992 graduate of McGavock High School. Wendy is also a graduate of MTSU with degrees in Vocal Performance and Music Education. At MTSU, she was a member of the Chamber Chorus, Schola Cantorum, and the Nashville Opera Chorus for the performances of Die Fledermaus, La Traviata, and The Magic Flute, all under the direction of Dr. Raphael Bundage. Wendy has been the Assistant Choir Director and General Music teacher at Siegel High School in Murfreesboro, Tennessee for the past four years and is an active member of NAFMe, MTVA, TMEA, and ACDA.

LGBT+ College Conference 2016 Awards Dinner Music William Patrick Coleman '97



William Patrick Coleman has over fifteen years of professional experience as an artist, performer, educator, and public servant. Currently, William serves as the Director of Education for VSA Florida, the state's organization on arts and disability, at the University of South Florida in Tampa. William provides oversight and administration of VSA Florida's artist-in-residence programs that put teaching artists in the classroom to provide access, instruction, and experience in the arts. He also supports, collaborates, and partners with VSA's incredible teaching artists, schools, classroom teachers, and administrators by providing training and professional development resources. He currently resides in the Tampa Bay area with his husband and pooches.

LGBT+ College Conference 2016 Awards Dinner Keynote Speaker Dr. Renee McLaughlin



Dr. Renee McLaughlin is a senior medical executive with Cigna Healthcare and is responsible for building collaborative partnerships with health care delivery systems to improve health outcomes. She has extensive experience in the development, implementation, and operation of successful population health management partnerships and speaks regularly in both regional and national forums on value-based health care delivery. Dr. McLaughlin has a strong interest in LGBT health and workforce issues, and specifically those affecting gender-diverse people. Prior to joining Cigna in 2005, Dr. McLaughlin was a practicing general and vascular surgeon in a single-specialty practice. She earned a BS at Adrian College, MS at Wayne State University, and completed her graduate and post-graduate medical and surgical training at the University of Pittsburgh. She served in the United States Army during the first Gulf war. She currently lives in Chattanooga, Tennessee where she spends her free time enjoying Southern culture as well as the waters of the Tennessee River.

Program

Hosted by Greg Cason

Welcome and Introductions

Music Prelude

The Occasion

Greetings

Ms. Beverly Watts

Executive Director, Tennessee Human Rights Campaign

Ms. Elizabeth Villasana

President, MT Lambda

Mr. Jonathan Breeding '87

Advocate and Supporter

Invocation

Ms. Wendy Bledsoe-Payne and Mr. William Coleman

"True Colors," words and music by Billy Steinberg and Tom Kelly

Dinner

Welcome Back

Introduction of Speaker

Ms. Cathy Lively

Senior Analyst, Diversity and Inclusion, Nissan

Keynote Address

Dr. Renee McLaughlin

Senior Medical Director, Delivery System Clinical Integration at Cigna HealthCare

"At the end of the day it doesn't matter which group is most oppressed or whether they are identically oppressed, what matters is that no group be oppressed."

Keith Boykin, President of The National Black Justice Coalition

2016 Conference Awards Presentation Ceremony

Terry Whiteside Ally in Diversity Award

Civic Advocacy Award

Community Excellence Award

Diane Easter Corporate Engagement Award

Academic Advancement Award

MT Lambda Award Presentation

Wayne C. Rosing LGBT+ Advocacy Award

Joshua Rigsby'14

MT Lambda Past President

2016 Honoree John Weaver '89

(Awarded Posthumously)

John Weaver attended MTSU from 1985 to 1989 and majored in International Relations & Foreign Languages. In 1988, John, alongside Daniel R. Webster and Richie Smith, founded the Middle Tennessee State University Lambda Association—the first LGBT+ student organization in Tennessee. During a time when the campus climate was difficult for LGBT+ students, John and the other Founders pushed back against anti LGBT+ propaganda being published in the university paper and gave LGBT+ students a safe platform upon which to advocate for their equal rights as True Blue members of the student body. In late 2015 John described MT Lambda as the one thing in his life that he would forever remain most proud of, as he marveled at the positive influence and impact of the organization on MTSU in the present.

Remarks

Dr. Harold "Terry" Whiteside

Dean, College of Behavioral and Health Sciences, MTSU

Acknowledgements and Conference Closing

Nominees

Terry Whiteside Ally in Diversity Award

This award serves to recognize allies of the LGBT+ community for their work in advancing, supporting, and advocating in the community where they live, work, and play. The award was named for Dr. Terry Whiteside, Dean of the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences at Middle Tennessee State University, in 2014. His support was crucial to the launch of the Inaugural LGBT+ College Conference.

Claudia Huskey
Special Advisor to the
Mayor, Nashville

Dr. Marion Wilson
Middle Tennessee
State University

Pastor Stan Mitchell
GracePointe Church

Civic Advocacy Award

This award serves to recognize individuals for their outstanding civic works in support of the LGBT+ Community through civic related advocacy efforts. Examples include an individual whose personal or professional efforts focus on legislation, building grassroots coalitions, or providing leadership to overall strategic advocacy.

Dr. Jessica Kratzer
Middle Tennessee
State University

Dr. Mary Beth Asbury
Middle Tennessee
State University

Timothy Hampton
Motivational Speaker

Community Excellence Award

This award serves to recognize individuals for their work in advancing LGBT+ rights and the efforts of the LGBT+ community. Efforts include advocating for community programs, and initiatives that speak to the unique challenges of the LGBT+ community.

Diane Hatley
Nissan

Kathy Halbrooks
PFLAG Nashville

Ron Snitker
Waller

Nominees

Diane Easter Corporate Engagement Award

This award serves to recognize individuals for their professional efforts in advancing and advocating for LGBT+ inclusive workplace and community initiatives. The individual recognized will have successfully led high-impact collaborative programs with higher education and/or other organizations to advance social progress while contributing to the strategic goals of their company. The award was named for Diane Easter in 2014. Her support was crucial to the launch of the Inaugural LGBT+ College Conference.

Kim Sharp
Nissan

Michael Burcham
Narus Health

Steve Smotherman
Cracker Barrel

Academic Advancement Award

This award serves to recognize individuals who have made a tremendous impact on diversity and inclusion through study, research, or thought at an academic institution. This individual's efforts will have contributed to increased knowledge and understanding that supports and advances inclusive policies and practices.

Dr. Patrick McCarthy
Middle Tennessee
State University

Barbara Patton
Middle Tennessee
State University

Morgan Hunlen
Middle Tennessee
State University

2016 Awards Dinner

Past Awardees

Civic Advocacy Award

2015

Dr. Marisa Richmond
Tennessee Transgender
Political Coalition

2014

Mr. Chris Sanders
Tennessee Equality Project

Community Excellence Award

2015

Mr. Thomas Chappell
Association for Family and
Community Integrity

2014

Mr. Michael McDaniel
Community Foundation
of Middle Tennessee

Ally in Diversity Award

2015

Dr. Kenny Yarbrough
Volunteer State Community
College

2014

Dr. Harold (Terry) Whiteside
Middle Tennessee State
University

Corporate Engagement Award

2015

Ms. Cathy Lively
Nissan Motor Corporation

2014

Ms. Diane Easter
Deloitte LLP

Academic Achievement Award (established 2015)

2015

Mr. Brock Swims
Christian Brothers University

Wayne C. Rosing LGBT+ Advocacy Award

2015

Mr. Christian Grantham
Half Hill Farm

2014

Dr. Jim Williams
Middle Tennessee State
University

2013

Dr. Wayne C. Rosing
Middle Tennessee
State University

Event Patrons

Platinum

Ron Balcarras
Nashville, TN

Gold

**Vernice "FlyGirl"
Amour**
Atlanta, GA

Brandon Dykes
Nashville, TN

Diane Easter
Nashville, TN

Josh Rigsby
Nashville, TN

Preston Rowland
Murfreesboro, TN

Richard Meeks
Murfreesboro, TN

Ron Snitker
Nashville, TN

Terry Bird
Atlanta, GA

Thomas Chapel
Houston, TX

William Langston
Murfreesboro, TN

Jim Schmidt
Nashville, TN

John Weaver
Murfreesboro, TN

Silver

Barbara Turnage
Murfreesboro, TN

Bea Perdue
Murfreesboro, TN

Colby Jubenville
Murfreesboro, TN

Marian Wilson
Murfreesboro, TN

**Newtona (Tina)
Johnson**
Murfreesboro, TN

Bronze

Hannah Todd
Clarksville, TN

Shaela Dennis
Clarksville, TN

**Maria Marguerite
Salas**
Nashville, TN

2016 Awards Dinner

2016 Conference Corporate Advisory Board

Greg Cason

Co-Chair Conference
Corporate Advisory Board
Nissan

Ron Snitker

Co-Chair Conference
Corporate Advisory Board
Waller

Joey Amato

UNITE Magazine

Christin Baker

Tello Films

Ron Balcarras

Deloitte

Terry Bird

Chief Counsel to the
Director of Immigration
for Alabama, Georgia,
South Carolina, and North
Carolina, Retired

Neyder Brito

UBS USA, LLC

Justin Bucchio

Middle Tennessee State
University Department
of Social Work

Sue Cook

Open Arms Care

Michael Dodd

Cracker Barrel

Brandon Dykes

Street Works

Diane Easter

Deloitte

Diane Hatley

Nissan

Tonika Jordan

Middle Tennessee State
University Career Center

Will Langston

Middle Tennessee State
University Department
of Psychology

Novonda Lilly

Vanderbilt

Cathy Lively

Nissan

Matt Lively

Cracker Barrel

Justin Lofton

My House

David Long

Street Works

Jan Maddox

Deloitte

Bea Perdue

Middle Tennessee State
University College of
Behavioral and Health
Sciences

Bobbie Porter

Tennessee Board
of Regents

Joshua Rigsby

OutCentral

Steve Smotherman

Cracker Barrel

Elizabeth Villasana

MT Lambda

John Weaver

Delta Airlines, Retired;
co-founder of MT Lambda

Nicholas Weaver

Street Works

Awards Dinner Committee

Greg Cason

William Coleman

Brandon Dykes

Nikki Gibson

Bea Perdue

Joshua Rigsby

Barbara Scales

Lesley Hanlin – MTSU Student

Debra Winans – MTSU Student

Awards Dinner Table Sponsors

William Coleman
& Dennis Stull

College of Behavioral
and Health Sciences

Cracker Barrel

Deloitte

Michael McDaniel
& Josh Rigsby

Intrepid Sports Development

Ladies for a Change

Richard Figari Fund

Tennessee Human Rights
Commission

The John Weaver Family

Conference Sponsors

NISSAN

Deloitte.



**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance

waller.



 **HUMAN RESOURCES**



Thank You for Your Support

The members of MT Lambda thank all those who have supported us publicly and financially in the presentation of the 2016 LGBT+ College Conference Awards Dinner. A very special thanks to those honored this evening for their outstanding contributions toward making our communities welcoming to *All Identities*.

Conference graphics and artwork by Taylor Watson