

Dear Faculty or Administration Member:

Begun in 1996, Day of Silence is a national student-led action in which students on high school and college campuses across America engage in a day long silent protest in recognition of the discrimination and harassment faced by GLBT students and their allies. This year, members of the Association for Lafayette Feminists and QuEST, Lafayette's Gay – Straight Alliance, have been working to organize a Day of Silence as part of United Against Hate Week (March 29th – April 2nd). Throughout the week, several events have been scheduled to raise awareness of and fight hate, discrimination, and prejudice. As the week is to protest all forms of hate we have chosen to broaden the meaning of Day of Silence to encompass discrimination based on factors other than sexuality and gender expression. This year Day of Silence protests the harassment faced by individuals based on religion, race, ethnicity, sex/ gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

The Day of Silence can be used as a tool to affect positive change - both personally and community-wide - that lasts far beyond the nine hours of the event. We feel that the Day of Silence is a good way to teach the campus diversity and acceptance. Hopefully the protest will help raise awareness on issues surrounding hate and discrimination and prompt people to talk and think about them.

Why silence? For too long, the silencing of various groups has been the norm. Such silence and silencing affects us all in a profound way. Just as profound, however, can be the use of silence as a form of protest. The Day of Silence moves the power of these personal experiences to a community-focused effort. The Day of Silence is a way of reclaiming silence as a tool, a silence during which participants protest discrimination and abuse

For this day to be a success, however, we will need the support of the faculty and administration. Participating students will be recognizable wearing all black and "silenced" buttons. The silence will last from 8 am until 4 pm, at which time there will be a speak-out on the Farinon Student Center steps. We hope that this will not impose too much on any class activity. Faculty and administration that would like to show their support for the day can wear a white ribbon, which will be delivered to all department offices during the week of March 22 – 26. Thank you for your cooperation and help in making Lafayette's first ever Day of Silence a success.

Sincerely,
Omoniyi Adekanmbi
Day of Silence Coordinator

Greg Blevins
ALF Co-President
United Against Hate Week Co-Coordinator

Brad Knotte
QuEST General Co-chair