***LGBT Officer Report – January 2015***

Initially I wanted to run campaigns through LGBT History Month (February) concerning the “alternate” sexualities and gender identities in the spectrum that don’t necessarily get the same levels of awareness as the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender parts of the spectrum and was planning on meeting with the drama students within the LGBT+ society to discuss making a film with a positive spin on the others parts of LGBT+ that are almost being ignored.

Then a headline hit the news within the past couple of weeks: “Transgender teenager, 17, leaves heartbreaking suicide note blaming her Christian parents before walking in front of tractor trailer on highway” (Daily Mail, 30.12.14). This caught the attention of not only members of the LGBT+ community but the entire world and I decided in our LGBT+ society’s last meeting, where we discussed this horrific tragedy, that this issue can’t be ignored. It’s not only happening in USA but all over the world, including the UK, and it appears that not a lot of people are aware of this.

So I got the society together and we came up with a number of ideas of how we can not only help with general awareness for the transgender community but also speak out against Conversion Therapy. The drama students in the LGBT+ society are willing to create a performance that will be hard hitting but effective in educating the university community about issues that transgender people face (performance currently in development), based on Leelah Alcorn’s tragic suicide (see above paragraph).

The performances would be of the “pop-up” variety around campus (with permission) and a film version of it would be made to play online and shared with other universities, possibly even around our SU.

Alongside this performance, members of the society are eager to contribute to poster-making and creating artwork in support of this campaign (mainly run by the LGBT Rep., Becky Lou Small).

Aside from the transgender awareness work we will be doing, I will be working on a joint project with the LGBT Rep. and the LGBT+ society committee, which will be educating cis gendered students on definitions within the LGBT+ community (such as “what is asexuality, pansexuality, etc”) and issues faced by those in the community. We aim to possibly have assistance from the LGBT+ staff circle in teaching about these topics along with guest speakers (as yet to be decided on who).

The overall aim here is to educate and the outcome is for there to be a better understanding and acceptance of all LGBT+ people, not just in the university but in the wider community.