

GCN JOBS

Business Manager

Available immediately. Responsible for financial management using computerized accounting system, for accounts payable and receivable, staff payroll and generating regular financial reports. Perform general office management tasks. Develop and maintain bookstore sales and bookstore accounts. Negotiate and maintain long-term exchange advertisement contracts. Act as one of two staff liaisons to the Board of Directors. This position will work closely with the development coordinator on long-range financial planning and developing annual budgets.

Qualifications: Strong administrative and financial skills and experience. Experience with non-profit management or bookkeeping preferred. Strong interpersonal and group meeting skills.

National Reporter/ Circulation Co-coordinator

Available in December. Research, investigate and write news stories with a national scope. May include some analytical feature writing as well. Share responsibilities with other staff writer for coordinating weekly mailing of paper and processing subscriptions.

Qualifications: Strong writing skills and ability to write several stories under weekly deadline pressure. Knowledge of national, local, lesbian and gay community and issues helpful. Strong organizational and record-keeping skills as well as knowledge of data entry and/or computers also helpful.

Deadline for application: Dec. 8, 1991

GCN Positions All GCN positions require commitments to lesbian gay liberation, feminism, anti-racism, an awareness of class issues, and collective decision-making.

Salary Benefits: All positions pay \$230 weekly and include health life insurance through Harvard Community Health Plan, dental allowance, sick leave, and four weeks paid vacation. GCN offers staff members responsibility for their own jobs, with flexibility and ample room for innovation.

Lesbians assaulted by cab drivers

Dear GCN:

We are writing to alert the lesbian community to a disturbing trend of sexual violence directed at us. Although this is not a new problem, there have been recent incidents which are prompting us to write.

Specifically, we have heard from several lesbians who have been raped/assaulted by cab drivers after leaving lesbian/feminist establishments or events. In all of these incidents, the cabs were privately owned and had been waiting outside or nearby. We would advise women who must take a cab to phone a major cab company and make sure, when the cab arrives, that they are responding to your call. Although there is no way to insure safety by calling a cab company, cab drivers for companies are more accountable.

To our knowledge this does not happen frequently. Even so, we believe that it is critical for lesbians to have this information. We want to affirm lesbian visibility and community, and we share your outrage at this attack on our lives.

If you need more information or support, or want to become involved in our work, please call the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center at 492-RAPE.

In sisterhood,
Sharon M. Vardatira, Executive Director
Gina Scaramella, Volunteer
Cambridge, Mass.

Fighting for the rights of transsexuals

Dear GCN:

In the midst of trial preparations of a transsexual (TS) prisoner rape case, I have been following the debate in GCN about Nancy, a male-to-female TS who was evicted from the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival solely upon the belief she was less a woman than "wimmin-born-wimmin." After reading Nancy's letter in GCN 10/27-11/2, I had to take a minute out from my legal writing to respond.

Anyone who describes a male-to-female TS as a man masquerading around as a woman has missed the entire concept of TS-ism. As stated by one expert, "the male-to-female TS is not trying to become a member of the opposite sex...they already are at the brain level...it just happens to be that because of a fluke of nature in the development process the

genitals, the reproductive system is created first and completed before the brain differentiates." TS's are prisoners of nature confined in their own bodies. Thanks to surgery and estrogen we are able to find an answer to our uninvited dilemma and gain a sense of being a human (whole) being.

If the festival believes that the TS who has always mentally been a woman and undergoes sex reassignment surgery (SRS) does not qualify to enjoy their "safe, womyn only space," then I guess they will also conclude she is not qualified for any other amenities ordinarily delegated to females. Certainly, being born a woman isn't decisive of womanhood. Nor, does being born a male make a man. I assume when they'll exclude male-to-female TS's and butch lesbians? I wonder what they will do with the drag queens, transvestites and effeminate homosexuals? Would they qualify? When discrimination is implemented against one group of minorities it only serves as a precedent against others.

However, I was mostly moved by Nancy's statement that "their assault on my womanhood has nudged me out of the closet and now I feel compelled to take a more public and active role in confronting genderphobia." For the past six years I have been fighting and I mean sometimes downright "street fighting" for the rights of TSs. Though, my work mostly involves TS prisoners I can emphatically state "the gender community fails to work together for their common good." I have found a great disparity in the community and little support of my work, etc.

TSs have been literally thrown-out of jobs, housing, schools, etc. even before Christine Jorgensen went through SRS. Sadly, where we are in 1991 still facing the same discrimination because too many of us are not willing to educate society at large about the serious complexities surrounding TS-ism.

Everyday there is some poor TS who can no longer take being "trapped in the wrong body" coupled with the bigot attitudes, harassment and discrimination inflicted upon them by society, and believe the only way to find any peace is to proceed on to the "the hereafter" where hopefully they or anyone else will know the difference between a woman-born-a-woman or created (by nature mentally and by man physically) to be a woman, and if they do, it won't make any difference. Apparently, this humane treatment is beyond the festival's and to many others' grasp.

If it has taken a mere "covert policy" of a womyn's music festival to make any TS realize the gravity of our plight then I must ask myself, where are we? Where have you been? In this respect, at least it was a lesson well learned.

Dee Farmer 232388-037
P.O. Box 4000
Springfield, MO 65808

P.S. Any prisoner wishing to respond to my request in GCN 10/6-12 concerning possible witnesses of misclassification of transsexuals, etc. you may write to:

Sr. Mary Elizabeth, SSE
J2CP Information Services
P.O. Box 184
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693-0184

Speaking the embarrassing truth

Dear GCN:

In their letter exchange regarding the National Writers Union (NWU), Wickie Stamps and Steve Kyle both make valid points. I've been a Union member since 1988, a Boston Local Steering Committee member for the past year, and a national Delegate since last spring. I helped found the Gay/Lesbian Caucus, and have been active on First Amendment and other political issues. I've lobbied for the Union on the state and federal level. I'm not one of those whom Steve dismisses for not "getting off their asses."

Like most organizations that are predominantly white, heterosexual, and "liberal," the NWU prides itself on being tolerant of minorities while being quite intolerant of minority anger. That is why so many who attended our April conference liked Edmund White (a pleasant "inclusive" gay man) and disliked Toni Cade Bambara (an angry "exclusive" Black woman).

When I was at our June Delegates Assembly, I was one of three gay/lesbian delegates nationwide. Because of my age, background, personality, etc., I (like Edmund White) come across as an "inclusive" gay man. A fellow delegate (also from the Boston Local) introduced himself to the

Assemble as "a militant homosexual," wore QN T-shirts, and brought to the Assembly floor his concern that the UAW (with whom the NWU is about to affiliate) doesn't include *sexual orientation* in its non-discrimination clause. Needless to say, he and I were treated quite differently by the rest of the Delegates. Several (including a high-ranking national officer) took me aside and made disparaging remarks about the other Delegate's "anger." I regret that I wasn't honest enough to tell them that I was just as angry.

On the other hand, I love the NWU deeply. And Steve is right—they have given the Gay/Lesbian Caucus both money and sincere moral support. The Local is excited and enthusiastic that OutWrite will be in Boston this March. I wouldn't continue to serve on the Steering Committee, or as a Delegate, if I didn't believe that the vast majority of our members are caring, unbigoted and educable people, whatever their sexual orientation.

We in the NWU are human and we all have our faults and blind spots. I'm reminded of a story a Quaker friend told me years ago. Probably no group has labored so long, so tirelessly, and so consistently for racial equality as have the Friends. Soon after the Civil War, one Meeting encouraged Black people to come join them in worship. They did so by sitting aside a special bench in the back of the meeting house just for them.

We can help the NWU—or any other group—grow in tolerance only if we speak up when faced with intolerance. With the exception of Steve, I know of no one within the Union who was particularly upset by Wickie's letter—which was printed in both our national and local newsletters. We can take criticism and benefit from it. We must never resort to *ad hominem* attacks against anyone who happens to speak an embarrassing truth.

Bob Chatelle
Cambridge, Mass.

International Women's Day 1991

Dear GCN:

1992 is fast approaching and with it all the patriotic fervor surrounding the 500th anniversary of the European invasion of the Americas. George Bush and friends will undoubtedly compare the "discovery of the New World" with the New World Order.

As women we understand that relationship only too well.

For the culture and world that Columbus brought to the Americas was one based on military might, racism, sexism, colonialism and heterosexism. A world based on plunder, rape, theft and death.

Well, there's not much difference between that "old world order" and the new one.

That's why we want to respond to the call from indigenous peoples throughout the Americas for counter quincennial mobilizations.

We are calling on women to commemorate International Women's Day (IWD), March 8, 1992 with the theme: 500 Years of Resistance...Through Women's Eyes. In doing so, we will be joining women throughout the U.S. and the world as they celebrate International Women's Day, as well as speaking of the particularities of women's lives in this hemisphere.

On International Women's Day we want to raise our voices about women's experiences during these past 500 years of colonialism and patriarchy. What was happening to indigenous women in 1492? To Black women in 1927? To women healers and midwives in 1692? To Mexican women in 1792 and to Japanese, Chinese and Filipina women in 1892? How are our realities similar and diverse given the many communities that we come from? What are all women's conditions and demands now in 1992?

In the U.S. today, control of our bodies continues to be violated—from the loss of abortion rights to the virtual inaccessibility of health care, to genetic engineering. A staggering percentage of Native American, Puerto Rican and Black women continue to be sterilized. The fastest growing population getting AIDS is Black women. It's a land where violence against women and lesbians is endemic, where women are still paid less for our work and are still under and unemployed. More women and children will be homeless on the street with no options and nowhere to go. Women are locked away in overflowing mental institutions and prisons and it's by no surprise they are primarily women of color who are being "controlled" in this way. Women political prisoners are incarcerated for their activist work against this system.

We want to make sure that women's voice-

Gay Community News

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of ten, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in editorials represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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