Annual Report 2012 – 2013

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Institute Website: www.iSMSS.ualberta.ca
Camp fyrefly Website: www.fyrefly.ualberta.ca
UofA Pride Week Website: www.prideweek.ualberta.ca
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The Mission and Vision of the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services: Advocating for SGM Youth by Using Research to Inform Programming and Services

The Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services (iSMSS), which is housed in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta, was established in 2008 after nearly a decade of continuous work using research to advocate for sexual and gender minorities, especially vulnerable youth. iSMSS represents a unique and holistic Canadian university-community model, placing inclusive studies and services focused on sexual and gender minorities in a dynamic, interdependent relationship. Currently, the Institute functions as an interdisciplinary “hub” for scholarly and community work focused on matters of sexual and gender minority (SGM) identities, especially as they relate to the individual development, socialization, safety, and comprehensive health and wellbeing of SGM youth. This requires foci on recognition, respect, access, and accommodation of SGM individuals as persons and citizens.

Bringing research, institutional service, and educational and community programming together under one umbrella enables iSMSS to intersect its studies and services functions in ways that create opportunities for university students to engage in innovative intellectual work and sustained community outreach. The Institute’s modus operandi is to enhance possibilities for groundbreaking research, policy development, educational and cultural programming, service provision, and adequate resource allocation that meet the multiple needs of sexual and gender minorities so all have space and place in education, healthcare, and other institutional and living contexts.

iSMSS research highlights the fact that, with mentors, resources, and supports, many SGM youth can survive and thrive despite the daily stressors, risks, and barriers they encounter in their schools, families, healthcare, other institutional contexts, and communities. These youth are growing into resilience. We see them as at promise. By helping them to develop a resilience toolbox, SGM youth can become self-respecting and self-confident individuals who actively participate in creating change for themselves and others. Although much still needs to be learned about helping SGM youth in this process, current iSMSS research and community outreach work clearly demonstrate that those who set realistic goals and engage in problem solving with significant adults who are supportive and collaborative become more self-reliant, happier, and healthier, even in cases of complete family and societal rejection.

iSMSS Staff 2012-13

Dr. André P. Grace – Professor & iSMSS Director – Research
Dr. Kristopher Wells – Assistant Professor (appointed July 1, 2012 to the Department of Educational Policy Studies) & iSMSS Director – Programs and Services
Alexis Hillyard – Education Coordinator
Tamara Gartner – Counselling Psychologist and Coordinator, Youth Intervention and Outreach Worker, Phase II
Cory Dawson – Camp fyreferly Coordinator
iSMSS Annual Report 2012-13

Michael Phair – Adjunct Professor and Education Facilitator
Melinda McNie – Education Facilitator
Beverly Clarke – Administrative Secretary

iSMSS Endowment Campaign

With support from President Indira Samarasekera, the University of Alberta announced a $5 million dollar campaign to enhance iSMSS’s core operations and sustainability. The Campaign is intended to support:

- further expansion of Camp fYrefly – our summer leadership camp for SGM youth – as a national program;
- creation of an endowment to enable fiscal stability and provide partial support for core operations and innovative programming; and
- expansion of the iSMSS research program by providing funding for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to investigate SGM issues and the dynamic interactions that can be established through innovative research, policy development, community outreach, and service provision.

iSMSS Honourary Committee

- Salah Bachir, President, Cineplex Media
- Anthony Bidulka, author
- Scott Brison, Liberal MP, Kings-Hants, Nova Scotia
- Brian Burke, Professional Hockey Scout, Anaheim Ducks
- Olivia Chow, NDP MP, Trinity-Spadina, Toronto, Ontario
- Dr. Hedy Fry, Liberal MP, Vancouver Centre
- Ralph Goodale, Liberal MP, Wascana, Saskatchewan
- Sandra Huculak, ATB Financial Director of Corporate Social Responsibility & Community Investment
- Linda Hughes, Chancellor Emeritus, University of Alberta
- k.d. lang, musician
- Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel and Lynn Mandel
- J. Herb McFaul, President of McFaul Consulting
- Anne McLellan, Former Deputy Prime Minister of Canada
- Harlan Pruden, Director & Co-Founder of NorthEast Two-Spirit Society
- Doug Stollery, Q.C., & Scott Graham, Director, Community Grants, Edmonton Community Foundation
- Mark Tewksbury, Olympic Gold Medalist

iSMSS Executive Committee

- Frank Calder
- Dr. André P. Grace
Building Knowledge and Awareness the iSMSS Campaign: The Importance of SGM Research and Advocacy

- The University of Alberta’s Alumni Association launched its first Alumni Pride Chapter on March 20, 2013.
- The first institutionally supported University of Alberta Pride Week was held March 13-22, 2013.
- On March 15, 2013, President Indira Samarasekera announced the $5 million dollar iSMSS Campaign, and the $500,000 lead gift from the Stollery Charitable Foundation, to the media and over 100 guests at the Timms Centre for the Arts. Speakers included Doug Stollery, Mayor Stephen Mandel, Dr. Kristopher Wells, and Camp fYrefly alumnus Evan Westfall.
- On May 22, 2013, Dean Fern Snart announced the opening of Camp fYrefly – Calgary and provided an update on the Campaign to the media and guests at the University of Alberta Calgary Centre. Speakers included Alberta Minister of Justice Jonathan Denis, ATB Director Sandra Huculak, Chair of the Chinook LGBT Fund Chris Post, Dr. Kristopher Wells, and Camp fYrefly Alumnus Shelby Richardson.
- iSMSS work and successes have been reported in several print, web and TV news stories across the globe. Colleagues at iSMSS are sought out to comment on many SGM issues and concerns. One of this year’s highlights has been the two-part Global News story on the assistance that iSMSS provided to the Kaufmann family and their transgender son.

Please visit http://www.ismss.ualberta.ca/ourcampaign.htm for more iSMSS Campaign details.

The Studies Dimension 2012-13

At iSMSS, our research program is built to incorporate studies of inclusive lifelong learning; sexual and gender minorities and our issues concerned with recognition, respect, access, and accommodation; resilience as a non-linear, asset-creating process; policymaking and its implementation in caring practices in institutional and community contexts; and the preparatory and continuing education of caring professionals, including teachers, school administrators, school counsellors, and school psychologists. As we work to advance research in these areas, the iSMSS research program is an ideal fit with the theme area transforming research in education, which is acknowledged as the Faculty of Education’s recognized research strength in the University of Alberta’s Strategic Research Plan. In keeping with the educational imperative to be there for every student, and the healthcare imperative to do no harm, the iSMSS research program aims to transform research by opening up possibilities for
transdisciplinary research on sexual and gender minorities, especially vulnerable children and youth, with the goals of improving social, cultural, and comprehensive health education for SGM youth as well as SGM-inclusive preparatory education and continuing development for educators and healthcare professionals.

At iSMSS, we bring research to bear on deficiencies and absences in policymaking and institutional and caring professional practices in order to advance SGM inclusivity and equity in keeping with Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that provides protection on grounds of individual differences. In terms of practical applications, research outcomes are intended to help SGM youth to grow into resilience so they can mediate life in schools, families, healthcare, and other contexts. It is also intended to guide the professional preparation and development of key stakeholders such as teachers and guidance counsellors, equipping them to be better advocates and resources for these vulnerable youth.

Currently, Dr. Grace and Dr. Wells are conducting research and publishing and presenting their work in academic, professional association, and community venues in local, national, and international contexts. iSMSS research is driven by four key goals aimed at making life better NOW for sexual and gender minority (SGM or lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) youth. These goals are:

- to develop evidence-based approaches to comprehensive policy development and implementation focused on meeting the needs of SGM youth in education and healthcare;
- to advance inclusive education, including comprehensive health education, for SGM youth, drawing on new studies that conceptualize growing into resilience as a non-linear, asset-building process of assisting youth to problem solve and thrive;
- to assist families and the significant adults in the lives of SGM youth to be resources and supports; and
- to improve the educational preparation and continuing development of educators and healthcare professionals so they can better serve SGM youth.

**Major Research Grants**

2011-2014  
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Standard Research Grant (operating grant: $113, 060) – Principal Investigator: Dr. Grace  
Project Title: *Growing into Resilience: Working in the Intersection of Research, Policy, and Practice to Study the Non-linear, Asset-creating Processes of Sexual-Minority and Gender-Variant (SMGV) Youth Living in Power Intersections with Their Other Identities*

2012-2017  
CIHR operating grant: $1, 977, 930 or $399, 586 per year for 5 years – Dr. Grace and Dr. Wells are Co-Investigators with Dr. Elizabeth Saewyc, Principal Investigator, UBC School of Nursing  
Project Title: *Reducing Stigma, Promoting Resilience: Population Health Interventions for LGBTQ Youth*

2013-2018  
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Insight Grant: $489,293.00 – Dr. Wells & Mr. Michael Phar (Adjunct Professor, iSMSS) are Research Collaborators
with Dr. Deanna Williamson, Principal Investigator, Department of Human Ecology, University of Alberta.

Project Title: *Family Functioning in Everyday Life: The Experiences of Families with Young Children and Diverse Compositions and Ethno-Cultural Origins*

**Internal Research Grant**

2013  
Roger S. Smith Undergraduate Student Research Award (operating grant: $5000.00) – Dr. Wells, Mentor, funded by the Office of the Vice-President – Research, University of Alberta  
Project Title: *From Pain to Pride: Researching and Reclaiming the History of Edmonton’s Queer Communities*

**Publications**

**Academic Publications**

- Grace, A. P. (2013). *Lifelong learning as critical action: International perspectives on people, politics, policy, and practice*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press. [This book will be available in early Fall 2013 and focuses on learning for sexual and gender minorities and other vulnerable populations across the lifespan, exploring contexts in Canada and an array of developed and developing nations.]

- Grace, A. P., with Wells, K. (forthcoming). *Youth at promise: Sexual and gender minority youth in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. [This book, enabled by research funding that Dr. Grace received from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, is completed and is currently undergoing national peer review.]

- Grace, A. P. (2013). Researching sexual minority and gender variant youth and their growth into resilience. In W. Midgley, P. A. Danaher, & M. Baguley (Eds.), *The role of participants in education research: Ethics, epistemologies, and methods* (pp. 15-28). New York: Routledge. [This chapter explores iSMSS research with youth in our intervention and outreach programming, including Camp fYrefly.]

- Grace, A. P. (2013). Camp fYrefly: Linking research to advocacy in community work with sexual and gender minority youth. In W. Pearce & J. Hillabold (Eds.), *OUT SPOKEN: Perspectives on Queer Identities* (pp. 127-142). Regina, SK: University of Regina Press. [This chapter explores iSMSS outreach work with campers as intervention and prevention, with an emphasis on addressing increasing suicide ideation, attempts, and completions among sexual and gender minority youth in North America.]


**Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults held jointly with the Biennial Conference of the Scottish Centre for Research in Lifelong Learning, University of Stirling.** Glasgow, Scotland: Glasgow Caledonian University. (USB format: 3,618 words). [This paper presented iSMSS research to an international audience of educators in June 2013.]

**Professional Publications and Resources Emanating from iSMSS Research**

- Grace, A. P., & Wells, K. (forthcoming). *Respecting and accommodating sexual and gender minorities in Canadian culture, society, and education: A pan-Canadian handbook of policies, practices, and resources.* Ottawa: Canadian Teachers’ Federation. [This book is completed and we are working to have it published in English and French by the Canadian Teachers’ Federation, with support from the Nova Scotia Teachers’ Union and other provincial/territorial teachers’ associations.]
- Wells, K., Roberts, G., & Allan, C. (2012). *Supporting transsexual and transgender students in K-12 schools: A guide for educators.* Ottawa: ON: Canadian Teachers’ Federation. [This guidebook has sold more than 4,000 copies, making it one of the top 3 most requested publications in the history of the Canadian Teachers’ Federation.]

**Positions Held in Academic, Consultative, and Community Contexts**

- Dr. Grace is a member of the Executive of the Canadian Association for the Study of Women and Education (CASWE) within the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) (2011 – present). In this role he chairs the Queer Studies in Education and Culture Special Interest Group that he initiated and had unanimous support to establish within CASWE. QSEC had its inaugural meeting at CSSE 2012. This work has helped iSMSS to build a network of scholars engaged in sexual and gender minority studies.
- Dr. Grace holds an invited appointment to the Canadian Teachers’ Federation Panel of Academic Experts (Fall 2010 to present), serving as national consultant on SGM issues in schooling.
- Dr. Grace served as an external reviewer for the 2011 and 2012 Annual Reports on the State of Public Health in Canada for the Chief Public Health Officer’s Reports Unit.
- Dr. Wells served on the following committees external to the University of Alberta:
  - Book Review Editor, *Journal of LGBT Youth* (Taylor & Francis)
  - Co-Chair, Edmonton Police Chief’s Community Advisory Council (Elected)
  - Chair, Edmonton Police Service Sexual Minorities Liaison Committee (Elected)
  - Member, Alberta Hate Crimes Committee
Member, Edmonton Public Schools Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Advisory Committee
Invited Reviewer, Pearson Education Canada

Queer Studies in Education and Culture Special Interest Group, Canadian Society for the Study of Education

As a member of the Executive of the Canadian Association for the Study of Women and Education (CASWE) within the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) (2011 – present), Dr. Grace chairs the Queer Studies in Education and Culture Special Interest Group (QSEC SIG) that he initiated and had unanimous support to establish within CASWE. QSEC had its inaugural meeting at CSSE 2012. Prior to this, to expand opportunities for networking and mentoring for those engaged in sexual and gender minority studies in Canada and abroad, under the auspices of the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services, University of Alberta, he organized and hosted three Queer Studies in Education and Culture (QSEC) interdisciplinary pre-conferences (2009-2011) at the annual CSSE conferences. With these successful pre-conferences as a foundation, he moved to establish the QSEC SIG within CASWE/CSSE in 2011. This work has helped him to build a network of scholars engaged in sexual and gender minority studies. The success of the QSEC SIG was demonstrated by a 50 percent increase in the number of papers presented at CSSE 2013 compared to the inaugural year.

InsideOUT Speakers’ Series

The Institute also plays a vital role in campus knowledge mobilization through ventures such as its InsideOUT Speakers’ Series. iSMSS hosts monthly seminars during the academic year that focus on SGM research in education and culture. These seminars are designed as an interdisciplinary engagement for academics, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students. Undergraduates and members of the larger community are also invited to attend. The 2012-13 Inside/OUT speakers’ series program included:

- September 20 – Sexuality and Spirituality
  - A Panel Discussion with participants Rev. Dr. Charles Bidwell, Chair of the Academic Senate, St. Stephen’s College; Rev. Audrey Brooks, Unitarian Chaplain, University of Alberta; Elder Ed Lavalee, Two-Spirit Circle Society; and Rev. Liz Carter-Morgan, Sherwood Park United Church.

- October 18 – Austerity and Excess: Crippling the Crisis
  - Dr. Robert McRuer, Department of English, George Washington University, presented in partnership with the (Dis)ability?: Queer and Feminist Perspectives Symposium.

- November 2 – Children’s Passions and Kid Orientalism: How a Global Future for Child Sexuality is Now Surfacing
  - Dr. Kathryn Bond Stockton, Department of English, University of Utah gave this keynote lecture, which was sponsored by the Canada Research Chair in Cultural Studies; the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services; HIV Edmonton; Trudeau
Foundation, Department of Women’s Studies; and the Department of English & Film Studies.

- December 6 – *Female Sexual Dysfunction, Feminist Sexology, and the Psychiatry of the Normal*
  - Dr. Chloe Taylor, Department of Women’s Studies, University of Alberta presented.

- January 17 – *Sporting Homonationalisms: The Case of the 21st Century Gay Games and Outgames*
  - Dr. Judy Davidson, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta presented.

- February 14 – *LGBTQ Sexual Health: Happy Queer Valentine’s Day!*
  - Dr. Daniel McKennitt, Division of Preventative Medicine, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry; Dr. Brian Parker, Options for Sexual Health; and Lauren Albrecht, MEd, Sex Educator and Researcher presented in partnership with the University of Alberta’s Sex Fest.

- March 21 – Film Screening: *What I LOVE about Being Queer*
  - Vivek Shraya, Toronto-based Artist and Educator presented.

- April 4 – *Who’s Your Daddy? Are you my Mommy?: Same-sex Marriage and the Naming of Parents*
  - Dr. Lois Harder, Department of Political Science, and Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies, Faculty of Arts presented.

**Michael Phair Leadership Award**

The Michael Phair Leadership Award is the first SGM-specific award in the history of the University of Alberta. Selection is based on demonstrated leadership qualities and involvement in extracurricular and community activities. Preference is given to undergraduate students who have demonstrated commitment to the advancement of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified, two-spirited, and queer communities. The 2012 recipients were:

- Alana Turner, Faculty of Arts
- Nicholas Diaz, Faculty of Science

**The Services Dimension 2012-13**

**Service Grants**

iSMSS service grants received during the 2012-13 academic year totaled $349,626.00 and include:

- The Family Resilience Project received $154,200.00 in funding from the United Way, the City of Edmonton, and the Government of Alberta, Region 6, Children & Youth Services.
The Calgary Community Foundation provided $40,000 to support Camp fyrefly – Calgary.

The Edmonton Pride Festival Society provided $2,000 to support the inaugural 2013 University of Alberta Pride Week.

The Education Conference Fund provided $2,400 and the Edmonton Arts Council provided $2,250 to support the Coming Out Monologues Performance and Colloquium.

A $50,000 grant was received from the Alberta Human Rights Education Fund, Government of Alberta to support the development and implementation of the fyrefly in Schools program in Edmonton and Calgary.

$75,000 in funding was received from the Community Incentive Program, Government of Alberta to support Camp fyrefly 2013.

A grant of $6,126 was received from the Employment Equity Advisory Committee, University of Alberta to support a project entitled Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Equity Audit: An Inclusive Policy and Practice Review of Canadian Post-Secondary Institutions.

The Edmonton Community Foundation’s Rainbow Fund provided $250.00 to support an iSMSS holiday event for families.

A $2,400 grant was received from the Employment Equity Advisory Committee, University of Alberta, to support ASL and CART interpreters for the 2012-13 Inside/OUT Speakers’ Series and University of Alberta Pride Week.

The Government of Alberta’s Office for the Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying provided $10,000 in funding for a project entitled Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying Prevention Resources and Supports for Gay-Straight Student Alliances. iSMSS was primary investigator.

The Government of Alberta’s Office for the Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying provided $5,000 in funding for a project titled LGBTQ Curricular Resources.

NoHomophobes.com

iSMSS launched NoHomophobes.com on September 26, 2012. Calder Bateman Communication, Edmonton, along with development partner, Burnkit, Vancouver created NoHomophobes for iSMSS. The site posts live tweets with homophobic words, sometimes used casually, but ultimately reinforcing prejudices against sexual minorities. The site also counts the tweets. For example, since the counter was activated, “faggot” has appeared in over 14 million tweets and “dyke” in over 1.5 million tweets.

From its launch day in September, NoHomophobes.com struck a nerve and received worldwide attention because it showed the real world of homophobia rather than simply providing commentary. To date, there have been over 3.5 million page views and over 1 million unique visitors, with the largest numbers from the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. However, there have been tens of thousands from other countries as well.

During the past year, NoHomophobes.com received international recognition for its innovation, creativity, and design, including two prestigious awards of merit from the One Show in New York. The New York-based Art Directors Club Global Awards, often described as the “bible” of the creative community, also gave the site an award of merit. As well, Communications Arts selected the site as one of 37 honorees in its interactive annual. In Alberta, NoHomophobes.com won Best in Show from
the Advertising Club of Edmonton. The iSMSS website provides a complete list of awards and recognitions.

**Awards & Recognition for NoHomophobes.com**

iSMSS received:

- *Award of Merit* from the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) – Capital Region for the iSMSS campaign launch and pride proclamation.
- *Social Justice Award of Merit* from the Edmonton Social Planning Council, awarded to courageous individuals or groups who have not turned away from controversy in seeking social justice for either a defined community group or for the community as a whole.
- *Fearless Client Award* for the NoHomophobes.com project, presented by the Advertising Club of Edmonton (ACE) Awards.

**AMIQAAQ Two-Spirit Conference**

iSMSS was a supporter of the first Two Spirit conference held in Alberta. To our knowledge, this was also the first conference of its kind to be hosted by a major research university in Canada. The 2012 conference theme was: *Born This Way: Two Spirit Voices*.

The Office of the Provost – Vice President (Academic) provided support for the conference where participants:

- built knowledge and understanding of Two-Spirit individuals, cultures, and communities;
- interrogated hetero- and gender normativities, which often render many sexual and gender minorities invisible and silent;
- shared stories and experiences of community advocacy, struggle, healing, reconciliation, and knowledge building; and
- created new networks of support to transform our communities into spaces of hope and possibility for all to be welcomed and valued for their unique individual cultures and identities.

The conference was held November 2 - 3, 2012 at Campus St. Jean, University of Alberta.

**Safe Spaces Initiative**

The Safe Spaces Initiative (SSI) is a University of Alberta project that iSMSS developed and implemented. This Initiative, which began in summer 2011, is built on the premise that our University campuses should be safe places – physically, emotionally, and intellectually – for SGM students, faculty, and staff. This means that all students, faculty, and staff are recognized, respected, and accommodated across identities and differences in all aspects of University life. SGM individuals on campus should feel free to express themselves without fear of judgment or criticism, and have their concerns addressed and needs supported by all University employees, policies, procedures, and facilities.
Safe Spaces Training & Workshops

During the 2012-13 academic year, diverse professional development workshops were provided to University of Alberta groups. All workshops were customized to meet the individual needs and context of each campus group. SSI workshops highlighted meaningful strategies for creating an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere for students and staff of all sexual orientations and gender identities within the university community. Over the past year, SSI workshops addressed a number of key objectives related to inclusive practice, including:

- Exploring and engaging with LGBTQ terminology;
- Understanding the lived and learned realities of SGM students and staff;
- Identifying strategies for creating inclusive and safe environments for SGM students and staff;
- Engaging in a meaningful Q&A period; and
- Identifying useful campus and community resources and supports.

During the 2012/2013 academic year, SSI Workshops were delivered to the following groups:

- University Wellness Staff
- Campus Ambassadors
- Office of Sustainability
- UAlberta Sexual Assault Centre
- Student Union Services
- OUTreach Student Group
- Health and Wellness Team Volunteers (UWS)
- Education Students’ Association
- Office of the Registrar Staff (3 workshops in total)
- Students Union Executive and Senior Services (Staff Diversity and Anti-Oppression Workshop)

SSI was also involved in the following events/workshops:

- International Week 2013
- New Staff Orientation
- Week of Welcome
- UAlberta orientation
- Safe Spaces Orientation Workshops (x2)

A campus resource directory and Safe Contact membership list are available on the iSMSS website.

Safe Spaces Campus Climate Survey

During the past year, SSI Climate Survey data was analyzed and a draft report was written. This report was sent for peer review to key stakeholders across UofA campuses. A final report will be completed and released in Fall 2013. Professional development workshops will also be developed to help disseminate report findings across UofA campuses. The SSI Climate Survey is the first survey of its kind in the history of the University of Alberta. The survey involved a random sample of 10,000
undergraduate students. Of these 10,000 students, 2,372 began the survey and 2,046 completed the survey.

**UofA Pride Week**

iSMSS worked closely with OUTreach, the SGM undergraduate student group, and other University and community partners to plan and host the first institutionally supported University of Alberta Pride Week, March 13-22, 2013. UofA Pride Week was created as a focal point to support the creation of safe and caring campuses for SGM students, staff, and faculty. UofA Pride Week was supported by an array of University of Alberta offices, faculties, and groups including OUTreach; the Offices of the Registrar, the Dean of Students, and the Dean of Education; the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights; and the Students’ Union. iSMSS has a long-term goal of making Pride Week an important, vibrant, and enduring part of the institutional fabric of the University of Alberta. The mission statement of UAAlberta Pride Week 2013 is:

> University of Alberta Pride Week celebrates the vibrant diversity of our campuses and recognizes our important and collective efforts in creating a welcoming, inclusive, safe, and respectful environment for sexual and gender minority students, faculty, and staff. Sexual and gender minorities represent an evolving constellation of identities including, but not limited to, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, asexual, two-spirit, questioning, and queer.

UofA Pride Week officially started with two performances of *The Coming Out Monologues*, and continued with an assortment of panel discussions promoting shared conversations, a colourful campus parade which drew about 200 participants, athletic events such as rainbow yoga and dodge ball, and an array of guest speakers from across Canada. Various UofA community groups and Edmonton groups including Team Edmonton and REACH sponsored events. Vivek Shraya, a UAAlberta alumnus, showcased his film *What I Love about Being Queer* and presented a book reading from his novel *God Loves Hair*. Dr. Janice Ristock, Vice Provost at the University of Manitoba, presented two lectures on same-gender partner violence and how communities can effectively respond to this often overlooked issue.

The final day of UofA Pride Week was celebrated with the annual Breaking the Silence event that showcased a number of speakers, including Mickey Wilson of the Pride Centre of Edmonton and Janet Keeping of the Green Party. Speakers reflected on their experiences of discrimination and resilience. The 10-day UofA Pride Week ended with the annual OUTreach drag show.

**Pride Week Event Summary**

UofA Pride Week included of a number of events hosted by iSMSS, OUTreach, and variety of campus and community partners:

March 13th – Coming Out Monologues Performance and Colloquium
March 14th – Pride Week Teaser featuring Michael Phair and Darrin Hagen
March 14th – Coming Out Monologues Performance and Colloquium (2nd show)
March 15th – Official UofA Pride Week & iSMSS National Endowment Launch
March 15th – UofA Pride Week Launch Party
March 18th – Rainbow Yoga
March 18th – UofA Pride Parade
March 18th – LGBTQ Family Panel
March 18th – Dr. Janice Ristock: Keynote Lecture at Augustana campus entitled *Relationship Violence in LGBTQ Lives: Thinking through a framework of intersectionality.*
March 18th – Boot Camp hosted by Team Edmonton
March 18th – Dr. Janice Ristock: Keynote Lecture at North Campus entitled *What's to be Done: A dialogue on how communities can better respond to relationship violence in LGBTQ lives.*
March 19th – Community Conversations on LGBTQ Safety hosted by REACH Edmonton
March 19th – Traveling Tickle Trunk Presentation
March 19th – Movie Night: *But I’m a Cheerleader*
March 20th – Pride Week Safe Spaces Orientation
March 20th – Community Resource Fair
March 20th – *God Loves Hair* book reading by author and invited guest Vivek Shraya
March 20th – *Reproductive Autonomy: Control of Sexuality* Panel Discussion
March 20th – Film Screening: *What I Love About Being Queer* by filmmaker and invited guest Vivek Shraya
March 20th – Alumni Pride Chapter Launch
March 20th – Movie Night: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*
March 21st – Pride Dodge ball hosted by Team Edmonton
March 21st – Queer Art Night
March 22nd – Yoga as Anti-Oppressive Practice
March 22nd – Breaking the Silence
March 22nd – OUTreach Drag Show

**UofA Pride Week Partners & Contributions**

- Office of the Registrar: design and distribution of Pride Week promotional materials.
- Pride Festival Society of Edmonton: start-up funding for the UofA Pride Festival
- Edmonton Arts Council: a grant to support *artist fees for the Coming Out Monologues: Performance and Colloquium.*
- Gender Based Violence Prevention Project of the Students’ Union [*Collaborator*]: funding for visiting scholar Dr. Janice Ristock
- Augustana Campus: funding for visiting scholar Dr. Janice Ristock
- Office of Safe Disclosure & Human Rights: printed Pride Week promotional materials
- Alberta Public Interest Research Group (APIRG): child care for Pride Week events
- The Institute for Sexual Minority Studies & Services and The Safe Spaces Initiative
- OUTreach
- The Office of the Dean of Students
- Faculty of Education Conference Fund
- University of Alberta Marketing and Communications
- Education Students’ Association
- UofA Libraries
- The Students’ Union
University of Alberta Protective Services
University of Alberta Residence Services
Safewalk
Faculty of Native Studies
University of Alberta Alumni Association & the Alumni Pride Chapter
University of Alberta Sexual Assault Centre
Reach Edmonton
Campus Ambassadors
Living Archives on Eugenics in Western Canada
Vivek Shraya
Dewey’s
Roxanne Runyon
Tara Brodin
The Tickle Trunk
Gay Calgary & Edmonton Magazine

University of Alberta Pride Flag Supporters

The campus community, including all faculties, some student groups and individuals, the Provost, the Registrar, and President Samarasekera, came together to fund the installment of Pride Banners displayed on campus flagpoles. These amazing contributions demonstrated a strong statement of commitment and institutional support for sexual and gender minorities within our campus communities. Pride Flag sponsors included:

Office of the President
Martin Ferguson-Pell
Augustana
Carl and Ellen Amrhein
Dean of Students
Education Students Association
Ernie Ingles
Faculté St. Jean
Faculty of Agriculture, Life, and Environmental Sciences
Faculty of Arts
Faculty of Business
Faculty of Education
Faculty of Engineering
Faculty of Extension
Faculty of Law
Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry
Faculty of Native Studies
Faculty of Nursing
Faculty of Pharmacy
Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine
Educational Outreach Programming

During the 2011-2012 academic year, iSMSS maintained its strong commitment to educational outreach in the Faculty of Education and across other faculties and professional bodies in the University of Alberta. It also continued educational outreach in schools and community groups.

Total # of Educational Outreach sessions delivered: 51
Total # of Participants: 1350

Sessions that iSMSS provides are individualized to address a) specific course objectives, b) unique requests from specific instructors/teachers, c) the knowledge base of the students, or d) the unique professional locations and needs of pre-professional students. iSMSS educational outreach programming includes these key objectives:

- Understand LGBTQ terminology;
- Understand our rights and responsibilities as teachers/educators with regard to LGBTQ inclusion in relation to such topics as policymaking and the law, addressing homo/bi/transphobic language and bullying, dealing with difficult parents, family diversity, and transgender youth in sports;
- Highlight strategies for creating inclusive educational spaces for SGM students;
- Identify risks and resilience factors surrounding issues of homo/bi/transphobic bullying;
- Be more mindful of assumptions and stereotypes that arise in sociocultural interactions in schools, healthcare facilities, and other institutional contexts;
- Explore societal structures such as heterosexism, sexism, and homo/bi/transphobia;
- Understand the lived and learned realities of SGM youth, with special attention given to SGM youth living in intersections such as those with disabilities;
- Consider issues of access to healthcare and the overall health implications for SGM individuals;
- Identify resources on campus, in professional contexts, and in the wider community; and
- Help teachers and students identify ways they can be allies in addressing SGM issues in their schools.
Faculty of Education Classes Visited

- EDU 250: Introduction to the Teaching Profession
- EDPS 310: Classroom Management
- EDPS 410: Ethics and Law in Teaching
- EDPS 360: Society and Education
- EDPS 521: Adult Learning and Development
- EDPS 301: Inclusive Education
- EDPY 402: Child Development for Educators
- EDPY 404: Adolescent Development
- EDPY 456: Consultation and Collaboration in Special Education
- EDSE 447/451: Physical Education
- EDEL 355: Early Childhood Program Environments
- EDEL 409: Teaching Literature in Elementary Schools
- EDEL 457/458: Early Childhood – Theory and Practice

Other University of Alberta Departments and Classes Visited

- Middle Years Program, Red Deer College
- Human Ecology
- Sociology
- Women and Gender Studies
- English and Film Studies
- Education Week

Other Academic, Government, and Community Institutions Visited

- Grant MacEwan University: Social Work and Health Education
- Concordia
- Augustana
- Norquest Nursing program
- STI Clinic
- Youth Empowerment and Support Services (YESS)

Camp fYrefly-Edmonton 2012

Camp fYrefly (www.CampfYrefly.ca) is the Institute’s award-winning summer leadership program, which is a university-community educational outreach project that focuses on the educational, health, safety, and socialization needs of SGM youth. At Camp fYrefly, young people engage in an array of arts-informed workshops, which strive to help youth develop personal resilience and leadership skills so they can become agents for positive social change in their schools, families, and communities. About 1000 youth have attended Camp fYrefly since its inception. The transformative power of the camp lies in its ambition to make life better NOW for SGM youth.
The 9th Camp fyrefly Edmonton occurred in July 2012. The 4th Camp fyrefly Saskatchewan was held in Regina in August 2012 (see below). In sum, about 100 youth attended these two camps. In addition to opportunities to attend an eclectic array of workshops on individual development, socialization, comprehensive health, leadership, and growing into resilience, campers also enjoyed the spirited arts-informed queer pedagogy that is at the heart of our artist-in-residence program.

**Camp fyrefly Edmonton Artist-in-Residence**

Each year, as part of the Artist-in-Residence Program, Camp fyrefly welcomes an emerging or established contemporary Canadian artist who has shown a commitment to innovation, exploration, community outreach, and building public understanding of sex, sexual, and gender differences. Kate Reid, a critically acclaimed, professional musician and activist from Bowen Island, British Columbia was the artist in residence for Camp fyrefly 2012 in Edmonton. Kate is a self-described “guitar-playing, harmonica-slinging singer-songwriter and bona-fide storyteller …, with a style she describes as ‘slam-storytelling meets folk- music’.”

At Camp fyrefly-Edmonton, Kate provided the following workshops:

- **Coming Out... As a Writer (Part 1): Creating an Experience in Yourself and Your Reader/Listener**
  Workshop description: All you need to bring to this workshop is yourself and your willingness to create. Writing something meaningful involves digging into our experiences and emotions to unearth the stories there. It also involves letting go and letting the process guide you. You will learn how to tap into your expressive self and discover strategies on how to write a song, prose or spoken word piece that tells a story and packs an emotional punch in your reader/listener.

- **Coming Out... As a Writer (Part 2): Power Bundles and Powerful Writing**
  Workshop description: Connecting to ourselves and to our histories is essential to producing authentic and powerful writing. A strong connection to nature can help us move inward into places of healing and expression. In this workshop, you will explore yourself and your experiences by using metaphors of the natural world to guide you in your creative writing. You will also learn helpful tips and strategies to add to you creative writing “tool-box.”

- **Mapping Our Bodies: Revisiting Our Pasts and Envisioning Our Futures**
  Workshop description: In every corner and crevice of our being, there is a story to be told. Our truth resides in our bodies: sometimes it is coursing richly through our veins and sometimes, it is buried deep within us, begging to be brought up to the light. In this workshop, you will work
with your life experiences to create a life-sized portrait of yourself as you revisit your past, envision your future, and begin the journey towards the person you want to become. You will be working with paints, paper, markers, glue and other fun art supplies.

**Youth Participant Demographics**

Participating in Camp fYrefly is a powerful and unique experience, which focuses on developing leadership qualities through activities that challenge youth to explore their identity, build resilience, and enhance self- and social-esteem. Camp fYrefly would like each youth participant to be able to return home with a more “resilient mindset” and a support network of positive friendships, trusted adult mentors, and an empowered sense of self.

In 2012, 87 youth applied to attend Camp fYrefly – Edmonton. Of the applications received, nearly 30 youth indicated they wanted to take on a leadership role at camp by applying to be youth leaders. While the majority of applications came from the Edmonton area, there was significant interest in the Camp from youth across Canada. In addition to a number of applications from Calgary youth, we also received a number of out-of-province applications. 2012 also saw a decrease in average participant age, which was 17.6 years.

**Programming at Camp fYrefly-Edmonton**

All camp programming is guided by input from youth and facilitated by trained educators and youth workers in collaboration with a team of artists, dramatists, educators, and community and youth leaders. The camp, guided by an arts-based educational philosophy, is jam-packed with dance, drama, music, writing, visual art, empowerment and reflection exercises, anti-oppression work, personal growth opportunities, healthy socialization, and in-depth learning activities about specific youth topics and social issues.

At Camp fYrefly 2012, the wide range of community members and organizations that presented workshops included:

- Channeling Your Inner SPIRIT: Renita Bertlett and Nikki Dueck, Calgary Family Services
- Writing Outside the Lines II: Gail Sidonie Sobat, Author and Coordinator of YouthWrite
- What’s Up With You? Coping With Emotions and Building Resilience: Stephanie Shantz, Canadian Mental Health Association
- Responding to Biblical Bullying: Gary Simpson, Affirm Ministry, McDougall United Church
- Queer Professionals in the Workplace Panel: Various Local Queer Professionals
- Healthy Sexual Decision Making: Teresa Lambert and Blake Spence, Calgary Sexual Health Centre
- Finding Your Voice, Sharing Your Story: David Stawn, Edmonton Public School Teacher
- Rights in the Sun: Claire Peacock, John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights
- fYrefly in Schools: Melinda McNie, Alexis Hillyard and Lauren Groves, iSMSS
- Discovering Your Spiritual Self: Rev. Audrey Brooks, University of Alberta Interfaith Chaplains Association
- Advocacy 101: The Basics: Arlene Eaton-Erickson, Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
Stand Up and Speak Out: Dr. Reverend Charles Bidwell
Intro to Dance Composition - Finding Meaning in Movement: Ainsley Hillyard, Good Women Dance Collective
How to Handle Your Money: ATB Financial
Intersectionality in Identity: Melissa Casey
The Forgotten T (“Trans* 101”): Dan Tallack and David Nyffeler
Heteronormativity in Advertising: Wade Kelly
Post Modern Family or Families: Strength in Our Stories: Nancy McLeod and Kyle Harland
Multiple Identities and Ways of Being: Lindsay Herriot, iSMSS
Health, Sexuality and Healthy Relationships: Nick Moore, Brian Parker
Weather and Climate: Claude Labine
Navigating Trans* Feminine Experiences and Identities: Mercedes Allen
The Youth ‘Artist’ Project - Theatre for Social Change: Michelle Rios
What is a Hate Crime?: Alberta Hate Crimes Committee & Edmonton Police Service
Actually It’s Sir: Navigating Trans* Masculine Experiences and Identities: David Nyffeler and Daniel Tallack
Self Defense: SiFu Carol and Assistants Bobby and Michael

In addition to the workshops, as part of our Camp fYrefly “field trip” tradition, campers were able to visit Edmonton’s lively Whyte Avenue to view the Oscar-award winning film “Beginners” at Edmonton’s historic Princess Theatre.

Support for Camp fYrefly

Camp fYrefly exists with support from many individuals, community organizations, churches, businesses, and corporations from across North America. Annual camp operating costs are in excess of $50,000. We raise these funds from a variety of sources, which include fundraisers, community partnerships, and grants.

Camp fYrefly receives support – financial and/or in-kind – from the University of Alberta, University of Regina, Canadian Teachers’ Federation, Alberta Teachers’ Association, Government of Alberta, Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, City of Edmonton, Edmonton Police Service, Edmonton Public Teachers’ Local, Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, Alberta’s Promise, TELUS, ATB Financial, PFLAG Canada, Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose, and the Stollery Charitable Foundation. In addition to these organizations, hundreds of individual donors from across Canada support Camp fYrefly. As well, iSMSS staff and volunteers host several events annually to promote Camp fYrefly and raise funds.

Edmonton Pride Festival

As part of Edmonton’s 2012 Pride Festival, iSMSS staff, volunteers, and youth marched in the annual Pride Parade. The Camp fYrefly float followed the Edmonton Public School Board float, with the school board selected as the parade grand marshals for 2012. With the generous support of private donors, we were able to showcase our giant inflatable fYrefly mascot again this year. We also
collaborated with Edmonton Public Schools and the Edmonton Public Library to share a joint resource and information tent in Churchill Square.

7th Annual Mayor’s Pride Brunch in Support of Camp fYrefly

Held at the end of the Edmonton Pride Festival in June 2012, the brunch was our largest to date, with over 300 people in attendance including Dr. Fern Snart, Dean of Education, and Dr. Randy Wimmer, the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Teacher Education. Mayor Stephen Mandel hosted the brunch and various dignitaries were in attendance including Minister Thomas Lukaszuk, MLA Laurie Blakeman, and many City of Edmonton Councillors. The Brunch featured a powerful story from the Kauffman family who shared how the support of iSMSS and Camp fYrefly provided critical supports for their transitioning child. Mason Jenkins, a Camp fYrefly youth leader, also impressed brunch attendees with a wonderful musical performance.

8th Annual Camp fYrefly Wine Tasting & Silent Auction Gala

The 2012 Gala was our largest and most successful gala to date. Guests experienced the power of a community coming together to support SGM youth. We extend our deepest appreciation to our generous event partners: DeVine Wines & Spirits (for the stellar wines), Wildflower Grill (for the phenomenal food), Urban Affairs (for the amazing room décor), Corey Christopher (for the beautiful floral arrangements), and the Matrix Hotel (for an outstanding and elegant venue). Our silent auction was also our largest to date, with over 50 auction packages and 3 live auction items, including dinner for two with Mayor Stephen Mandel. Overall, 83 individual, corporate, and private donors made contributions to support the 2012 Camp fYrefly gala. A full list of these supporters can be found on our Camp fYrefly website.

Camp fYrefly Saskatchewan 2012 in Regina

Camp fYrefly Saskatchewan 2012 was held at the Lumsden Beach United Church campsite near Regina from August 3rd to 6th. Dr. André P. Grace represented iSMSS, providing supports that included co-facilitation of the Camp fYrefly Parent/Significant Adult/Sibling Support Group session at Lumsden United Church on the last day of camp. Mike White, Program Committee Chair, related that the program committee included a strong focus on providing content that met the needs of Two-Spirit Indigenous campers and the mental-health needs of all campers. Indigenous content was included in two specific workshops: one on Two-Spirit identities and another on traditional Indigenous crafts and medicines. Additional Indigenous content was incorporated under the direction and guidance of Métis Elder Marjorie Beaucage who offered medicine walks, smudges, and traditional songs of welcome and departure. Mental-health issues were addressed through a variety of workshops and presentations. There was a whole-group session on dealing with homophobia, transphobia, and hate crimes that concluded with information on healthy living and maintaining good mental health. There was a specific workshop on how to provide peer support to others as well as a workshop providing information on how to cope with anxiety. In sum, the camp program incorporated a variety of workshops reflecting the arts-based focus of the camp and emphasizing individual development, socialization, leadership skill-building, and growing into resilience.
Artist-in-residence, Jeffery Straker, made a significant contribution to the arts component of camp in leading large- and small-group workshops and working individually with campers.

Dr. James McNinch, Dean of Education, University of Regina, is Camp fYrefly Saskatchewan Director who oversees camp finances. Russell Mitchell-Walker and Carla Blakley are Regina co-chairs of Camp fYrefly Saskatchewan. They acknowledged the significant contributions of remarkable staff and volunteers including Kobie Spriggs (camp coordinator); Greg Trapp and Veronica Fradette (local arrangements co-chairs); Barbara Jones, Joni Darke, Sandy Ward, and Marilyn Totten (family/significant adults event organizers); Kyla deRyk Trapp (publicity, promotion, and education); Roger Carrier (volunteer organizer); and Kelly Holmes-Binns (program assistant). Kelly, with the efforts of the camp program team – specifically Anthony Santoro and Landon Walliser – ensured delivery of a very strong program. With the support of many volunteers, Camp fYrefly Saskatchewan 2012 was a resounding success.

fYrefly in Schools

fYrefly in Schools is an iSMSS-developed educational initiative designed to help reduce discrimination against SGM youth, increase awareness of the impacts of homo/bi/transphobia, build capacity for allied behavior, and create safe and inclusive school environments for all students. Geared towards junior high and high school students, fYrefly in Schools workshops are facilitated by an experienced educator and a youth peer-education team. Sessions are 40 – 80 minutes in length and delivered to schools on a request basis.

Through a series of student-centered activities, fYrefly in Schools workshops are designed to increase students’ understanding of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) terminology, engage with common assumptions and stereotypes, and address some of the unique safety, health, and educational challenges that sexual and gender minorities face in schools. Specifically, these sessions provide participants with a safe learning environment to reflect upon the impacts of homophobic and transphobic language and bullying. Students are encouraged to be proactive, and to construct positive and productive ways to become allies and reduce discrimination and harassment of SGM youth as well as those perceived to be LGBTQ by their peers.

A key component of all fYrefly in Schools presentations is providing students with the opportunity to hear firsthand from a panel of peers who are SGM persons, self-identified allies who support sexual and gender minorities, and/or youth that have a family member who identifies as non-heterosexual. Along with providing a safe place for students to ask age-appropriate questions, the program’s activities enable students to learn from their peers about 1) the coming out experience and processes of self and familial acceptance; 2) consequences of homo/bi/transphobic bullying and guidelines to promote safety and wellbeing; and 3) positive aspects about “being who you are” in the world and the importance of recognizing diversity and difference as fundamental aspects of our society.
Program Statistics: Outputs from September 2012 – December 2012

- Students engaged: 287 (249 surveys collected)
- Subject areas: CALM, Health, English, Student Leadership
- Total number of workshops delivered: 18 (15 High School, 3 Junior High)
- Number of Volunteers: 15 unique panel members, contributing 82 hours

Program Evaluation

Our program evaluation consists of a pre- and post-presentation survey. Survey results included:

- Students have increased knowledge about school and community supports for LGBTQ individuals and allies (e.g., Camp fyrefly, iSMSS, school GSA).
  - Only 27.6% of the students surveyed pre-presentation were able to list 3 community resources for LGBTQ youth. After the presentation, that percentage rose to 34.7%.
  - Only 25.3% (63) of students knew about their school’s GSA before the session (note: not all visited schools had a GSA).
  - 7.6% discovered there was a GSA in their school/community that they didn’t previously know about (19 students).

- Students increased their knowledge of LGBTQ realities (e.g., homophobic and transphobic bullying, terminology, coming out, hiding oneself, and positive life stories).
  - 93.1% agree or strongly agree that the presentation increased their knowledge and awareness about homophobic language and bullying.
  - 93.3% of students agree or strongly agree that they were previously aware of assumptions that are made about LGBTQ people.
  - 93.5% agree or strongly agree that they were more aware of some of the assumptions and stereotypes made about LGBTQ people after the presentation.
  - 96.3% agree or strongly agree that the presentation increased their knowledge and awareness about LGBTQ people and their experiences.

- Students feel empowered to become allies and support LGBTQ people (e.g., addressing homophobic/transphobic language, standing up and showing support verbally or through action).
  - 82.9% felt empowered to be an ally and show their support for LGBTQ people post-session.
  - 92.7% were more aware of the language they used and the impact it may have on others.

Five major themes emerged while analyzing the survey data from the question: “What is one important thing you learned during this presentation?” These themes corresponded well with the

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1 Percentages are based on the number of participants per question.
program outcomes listed above. Students identified that they were engaging with homo/bi/transphobic language and comprehending its impact as well as demonstrating an understanding of LGBTQ specific terminology. Students also recognized that they gained knowledge of LGBTQ issues and realities. Additionally, the program saw a large number of students identify strategies on how to become an ally for LGBTQ people and how they could utilize those strategies in their daily lives.

The following represents an illustrative cross-section of student quotations as they relate to the five key program themes:

- **Awareness of Homo/Transphobic Language**
  - “I realized just how hurtful ‘that’s so gay’ is. I didn’t know before.”
  - “Assumptions and stereotypes and negative phrases are hurtful towards LGBTQ people. I understand the effects of those words on the LGBTQ people better.”
  - “The language that my peers use is hurtful.”
  - “That things I say can impact other’s feelings and to be less judgmental.”

- **Terminology**
  - “The difference between sex, sexuality, and gender identity.”
  - “The true meaning of queer and transgender.”

- **Normalization of LGBTQ Identities**
  - “LGBTQ people share the same values as straight people.”
  - “It’s perfectly normal to have different attractions.”
  - “It’s okay to be gay.”

- **Knowledge of LGBTQ Issues/Realities**
  - “LGBTQ people are bullied all the time.”
  - “How hard it is for someone to come out to their parents and friends.”

- **Strategies to be an Ally**
  - “It’s important to stand up, whether it’s for a friend, stranger, or yourself.”
  - “How to apply this information to my work with community helpers.”
  - “That because you’re straight you can still support.”
  - “That we need to stand up against bullying more.”
  - “To not treat people differently just because their perspectives on life and sexuality are different.”

**Program Expansion**

Phase II of the fYrefly in Schools program proved to be highly successful. iSMSS plans to continue to deliver programming for the 2012-13 school year in Edmonton Public Schools and other supporting school districts. fYrefly in Schools will also begin a pilot phase in Calgary in Fall 2013.

**Program Funders**

The Stollery Community Foundation and the Alberta Human Rights and Multiculturalism Education Fund provided funding to support fYrefly in Schools.
The Youth Intervention and Outreach Worker Program

The Youth Intervention and Outreach Worker (YIOW) program (Phase I) was delivered from December 2008 through to December 2011. The following statistics summarize outcomes of the third and final year of operation of Phase 1:

- Offered 64 registered group events for youth, with 724 participants in total;
- Provided 38 face-to-face contacts, including repeats, with a total of 26 participants;
- Provided information referrals to 411 participants;
- Provided referral service to 70 participants; and
- Presented at 2 community events reaching 535 participants.

The Family Resilience Project

The YIOW program moved into Phase II in Winter 2012. Phase II is called The Family Resilience Project. It focuses on providing evidence-informed professional supports for SGM or LGBTQ children, youth (under 25 years old), families (variously constructed), and community agencies in the Edmonton region. In Phase II the following supports and services were offered:

- **Individual and Family Counselling:** Short-term, solution-focused counselling is provided for SGM children, youth, and their constructions of family. Referrals are accepted from school social workers, counsellors, family therapists, physicians, teachers, caseworkers, and parents as well as self-referrals from youth.
- **PFLAG Support Group:** This support group runs the last Wednesday of each month at the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services. The group is designed to support parents, guardians, caregivers, friends, and loved ones in the lives of SGM youth.
- **Trans and Gender Questioning Youth Support Group:** This group runs the last Tuesday of the month at the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies & Services. The group is designed to support trans and gender questioning youth under 25 years old.
- **Professional Development:** iSMSS provides evidence-informed presentations and case consultations primarily for Region 6 agencies with Alberta Children and Youth Services to help staff build professional capacity to support the comprehensive health (including physical, sexual, and mental health), individual development, safety, and socialization needs of sexual and gender minority youth in their caseload.


- **Outputs**
  - Active clients at present = 21
  - Closed Files = 9
  - Average length of service = 2.25 months
  - Average # of sessions = 7.11
  - Number of Volunteers = 3 (15 hours in total)
  - Average # of participants for group = 5.5
  - Total # of hours in session since December 2011 = 255.25
• Referrals/Intakes in total – Referrals/intakes/consultation phone calls have come from 30+
different professionals from the following individuals and organizations:

  o Gender Identity Clinic
  o Edmonton Public Schools
  o Yellowhead Youth Centre
  o AHS Youth Addiction Youth Services
  o St. Albert Therapist
  o AHS – Adolescent Mental Health Therapist
  o PFLAG inquiries
  o Caseworkers – Region 6
  o The Family Centre – Agency Staff
  o CASA Organization
  o The Family Centre – Therapist
  o Boys and Girls Club
  o Big Brothers and Sisters Edmonton
  o Mental Health Therapist – AHS
  o School Guidance Counsellors
  o Night Wind Treatment Centre – Clinical Coordinator
  o Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
  o Numerous self referrals – consultations – resource linking
  o University of Alberta

Trans & Gender Questioning Peer-to-Peer Led Group Attendance

• April 24, 2012 = 5
• May 29, 2012 = 5
• June 26, 2012 = 1
• July 24, 2012 = 7

PFLAG Group Attendance

• April 25, 2012 = 7
• May 30, 2012 = 5
• June 27, 2012 = 7
• July 25, 2012 = 7

Community and Region 6 Presentations

• Community
  o The Family Centre
    ▪ Family Intervention Program – December 8, 2011
    ▪ Success Coaches Program - January 18, 2012
  o Yellowhead Youth Centre – February 21, 2012
• CASA Child, Adolescent, and Family Mental Health – Sherwood Park – July 9, 2012

• Region 6
  • Southwest/Leduc Neighborhood Centre – May 1, 2012
  • East Neighborhood Centre – May 23, 2012
  • Aboriginal Initiatives Office – June 27, 2012
  • West Central Office – July 4, 2012

• Project Trends
  • Trans-identified/gender minority clients comprise a higher caseload than what was originally expected.
  • Main presenting concerns for youth are anxiety, bullying, depression, and lack of family acceptance.
  • The power of group support is evident as it helps to decrease isolation and participants can relate to one another.
  • There has been an increase in demand for professional development workshops on sexual and gender identity issues from professionals and service providers in the Edmonton and surrounding area.

**Family Resilience Project Success Story**

*I just wanted to send a quick thank you for all of your support this weekend ... and for all your support in general. You have been such an amazing gift to our daughter K and both my husband and me. I know you helped advocate for her to attend Camp fyrefly and I don’t think THANK YOU even begins to say how much we appreciate you doing that for her!*

*Camp fyrefly has truly made a difference in not only K’s life but ours as well. Please say thank you to everyone who was part of making camp such an amazing event. Since we saw you on Monday (after camp and still sad) K has been so incredibly happy and is celebrating who she is. She is not scared to be herself and is no longer mad at both of us for sending her to camp. I honestly didn’t believe that she would come back a different kid but she most certainly has. She even told another friend of ours that she went to camp for sexual minorities and that she identifies as Lesbian. She even shared the story of how one of the guys is fab at walking in high heels. I loved seeing her speaking in such a “this is not a big deal way.” I almost fell off my chair but kept it together. She then said, “I found a place where I fit in where I don’t feel different.” Anyways I could keep going on and on but I won’t. I am so happy for K and after coming from a place of wanting to end her life, she now is celebrating who she is. We have our daughter back... and I am so thankful for that.*

*I know things won’t be perfect but I finally feel like all will be well.*

– From a Very Proud Mom!

**First Annual Provincial Gay-Straight Alliance Conference**

iSMSS hosted the First Annual Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) Conference in November 2012. The event involved 60 participants from across Alberta including Jasper, Red Deer, Calgary, Airdrie, Edmonton, and many rural regions. The purpose of this annual conference is to enhance the capacity of student leaders and teacher advisors involved in GSA work to create more equitable, inclusive, respectful, and
safer schools. The conference was opened with speeches from Deputy Premier Thomas Lukaszuk; Hon. Heather Klimchuck, Minister of Culture; Ms. Sarah Hoffman, Chair, Edmonton Public School Board; and Dr. Fern Snart, Dean, Faculty of Education. Rae Spoon, a trans performing artist and writer, was the Artist-in-Residence and Keynote Speaker at the conference.

This inaugural conference indicated a remarkable step forward and paves a new frontier for social change in Alberta. The energy in the conference was electric, and the students and teachers left with a renewed sense of hope and purpose for their school’s GSAs.

The Stollery Charitable Foundation, Edmonton Public Schools, and iSMSS supported the First Annual Gay-Straight Alliance Conference. Participants shared the following reflections on the conference:

- “It helped to widen my understanding of GSAs outside of the Edmonton area and what challenges rural schools face when starting up their clubs and growing their community.”
- “Listening to the great support identified by government, school board and university officials was wonderful. To hear and see this level of support is very uplifting.”
- “Learning to be more accepting and how to handle issues such as homophobia and bullying in my school and community.”
- “I now have more tools in supporting GSA’s like the Power Flower. I also made some contacts who can help me create a network of support for a GSA at Outreach (Leduc) such as individual teachers elsewhere and also organizations that can help students find advocates.”

Other Campus and Community Activities

Family Events

iSMSS, in partnership with the Pride Centre of Edmonton, hosted two successful SGM family events. In September, we hosted a Family BBQ at Emily Murphy Park, and in December we hosted a Family Cookie decorating Party at the Pride Centre. Each event involved over 60 participants. The Edmonton Community Foundation Rainbow Grant program provided funding for these events.

Gender Based Violence Prevention Project

iSMSS is an active member of the Gender Based Violence Prevention Project (GBVPP) sponsored by the University of Alberta Students’ Union. The GBVPP is dedicated to promoting a campus free of gender-based violence. iSMSS has been a member of the Steering Committee as well as the Education Committee, which is in charge of educational outreach and programming.

Community Service Learning

iSMSS has maintained a strong commitment to volunteerism over the past academic year. During 2012-2013, iSMSS hosted 14 student volunteers from the UofA’s Community Service Learning Program. These students contributed to a number of ongoing and new iSMSS projects including the First Annual Gay-Straight Alliance Conference, UofA Pride Week, updating the Sexual Orientation and
Gender Identity Recommended Fiction and Nonfiction Resource Guide, contributing to our Trans and Gender Questioning Youth Group, and chronicling the history of Edmonton’s Pride Parade.