

# Trans\*Studies Conference 2012 Workshop

## T-Camp: An InterCampus Retreat for Trans/Genderqueer and Gender Questioning Students

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In January 2012, the first college TGQQ retreat in the nation brought together 64 T-Campers from 17 colleges and universities for three days of community-building, dialogue, and personal growth.

### **51 Students from 16 campuses**

Cal Poly Pomona	Scripps College
Chapman University	UC Berkeley
Harvey Mudd College	UC Davis
Mills College	UC Irvine
Pitzer College	UC Los Angeles
Pomona College	UC Riverside
Sacramento City College	UC San Diego
St. Mary's College of California	UC Santa Barbara

### **13 Facilitators from:**

Blood Orange Infoshop	UC Irvine
Chapman University	UC Los Angeles
Claremont Colleges	UC Riverside
CSU San Bernardino	UC San Diego
MCC in the Valley	UC Santa Barbara
UC Berkeley	

### **Budget Overview**

1. \$13,359 budget [camp, food, bus x 2 and SUV, supplies, T-shirts]
2. \$140/person to cover camp lodging & food [only 5 students paid out of pocket]
3. \$5,099 provided by 5 campus LGBT resource centers to cover other expenses: Cal Poly Pomona, Claremont Colleges, UC Irvine, UCLA, UC Riverside,
4. Largest expense other than camp: \$2,765 for 2 charter buses
5. Chapman University provided to each participating campus the Brown Boi Project book "Freeing Ourselves: A Guide to Health and Self Love for Brown Bois"
6. University of Redlands provided a room and parking for a Pre-Departure Meeting on Friday, 1pm-3pm.

## **Planning Process**

The seeds for T-Camp were planted by **UC Irvine**, when the campus LGBT Resource Center hosted a one-day retreat in Spring 2011 for UCI trans/genderqueer and gender-questioning students. A group of campus LGBT resource staff began working on the logistics of bringing together a similar intercampus retreat. A January week-end reservation held by UC Riverside at Camp de Benneville Pines, an LGBT-friendly camp in the San Bernardino mountains run by the Unitarian/Universalist Church, was confirmed.

Two conference calls, one in-person group planning meeting, and several smaller phone and in-person consultations were held in Fall 2011. The Logistics Committee included campus staff. The Content Committee included TGQQ students, staff, and community members. The retreat agenda drew from the UCI TGQQ retreat, UCR's annual LGBTQ student retreat, and Chapman University's annual social justice retreat. We also considered student responses to the online retreat application.

Facilitators were drawn from campus LGBT resource centers, TGQ-identified staff and faculty, and TGQ-identified community members. Three trans-identified facilitators withdrew in December over concerns signing the required UC liability waiver.

## **Recruitment Process**

1. Online application linked to web sites and facebook page
2. Application questions included qualitative questions:
  - a. What do you hope to learn, gain, or explore at T-Camp?
  - b. What are some things you hope will happen at T-Camp?
  - c. What are some things you hope will NOT happen at T-Camp?
  - d. ... Please write a paragraph describing how you identify yourself...
3. 73 applications
4. Inquiries from 4 non-students (2 college-age and 2 older)
5. 19 students decided not to complete registration process (no payment/paperwork)
6. 4 students dropped out in December after completing registration process
7. 51 student T-Campers went up the mountain

<http://www.lgbtrc.uci.edu/programs/TGQQretreat.php>

<http://out.ucr.edu/events/Pages/retreat.aspx>

<http://www.facebook.com/Tcampers>

"T-camp was absolutely life-changing. It's been a long time since I've been around that many other trans\* people and it was much much much needed. I got to talk to other trans\* folks about genderqueerness, social justice, disability identity, spirituality, activism, relationships, and so much more. I feel re-invigorated and inspired and excited to try to bring some of this magic back to school this semester. I feel like the beautiful healing energy of that space is what's going to get me through this semester. Thank you to all of the incredible people who made T-camp possible, and nourishing and wonderful." - shared with permission from a facebook post

## **Activities**

### **Friday**

- 1:00 Pre-departure Meeting @ University of Redlands  
Photo releases, name tags, lanyards, t-shirts, and pizza
- 3:00 Get on the bus, ya'll
- 4:30 Arrive at Camp, drop off luggage, return to Lodge for folders & notebooks
- 5:00 **Opening Ceremonies @ Lodge** [1 circle]  
Camp Rules, Shared Ground Rules, Twitter Wall
- 6:30 Dinner
- 7:30 Common Ground Circle [1 circle] Step in/out activity
- 8:30 **Micro-aggressions & Triggers Triads (hard/soft/hot/cold spots)** [1 circle + triads], Trigger Wall
- 9:30 Home Groups – meet members, debrief for evening, choose group name & motion.  
Sample prompt: What is your name & what does it mean to you (chosen and how? Given?)
- Night Games, music, gossip, bedtime

### **Saturday**

- 8:00 Breakfast
- 9:00 *Energizer – Move Your Butt!*
- 9:30 **Labels People Place on Me + Debrief** [All in Home Groups]
- 10:45 Journaling + Break
- 11:00 **Closed Breakouts**
1. People of Color
  2. White/Anti-Racism
  3. [added] Multiracial / Other Racially Defined / Anti-Racism
- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:30 Free time & Naps & Snowpeeps – 1.5 hours
- 3:15 **Circles – Round 1**
1. Transmasculine/Masculine of Center
  2. Transfeminine
  3. Genderqueer/Outside the Box
  4. [Added] Gender Questioning
- 4:30 Break/travel
- 4:45 **Circles – Round 2**
1. TG & Spirituality
  2. Exploring Spirituality
  3. Feminism & the TG Community
  4. Relationships
- 6:00 Home Groups
- 6:30 Dinner
- Added dinner discussion: Kink & Sex Positive
- 7:30 [**added**] **Circles – Round 3**
1. Self-care & Wellness
  2. Trans\* & Disability
  3. People of Color, Part II
  4. L.A. Trans Film Festival screenings
- 9:00 Prepare for Talent(less) Show

9:30 **Social – Talent(less) Show**  
Night **Dance @ Lodge**

## **Sunday**

8:00 Pack your belongings  
8:30 Breakfast  
9:15 *Energizer – Move Your Butt!*  
9:30 **[added] Circles**  
1. Being an Ally & Creating Trans-Friendly Spaces  
2. Medical & Natural Transitioning  
10:30 **State of Our Campuses**  
UC, CSU + Community College, Private  
11:30 **Letter to Myself**  
noon Group Photo  
12:30 Lunch  
1:30 Home Groups  
2:00 **Written Evaluations**  
2:30 **Tap Circle**  
3:15 Break, pack, clean up after ourselves  
3:30 Back on the bus, ya'll!  
4:30 Arrive at UofR campus

### **Home Groups**

6 groups of about 10 people, including co-facilitators. Meet throughout the retreat to provide a more intimate space for reflection, dialogue, and bonding.

**Mail Bags** – Friday, we each are given a mail bag to personalize with craft supplies (by lunch Saturday). We can leave positive notes in others' bags throughout the retreat. On Sunday, we take our mail bag and can read on the bus or later.

**Letter to Myself** – On Sunday, we are given 20 minutes to write a letter to ourselves, which is sealed in a self-addressed envelop provided by Chapman University. The letter is mailed to us in a few weeks, so we can reflect on our time at T-Camp and how we feel now or where we've moved following the retreat.

**Tap Circle** – This is the last group activity. We stand in a circle facing outward, and take turns in the center tapping on the shoulder or hand those folks who “made us laugh, tough us something, surprised us, challenged us, feel are a friend or ally,” etc.

**Move Your Butt!** – We sit in circles in chairs, with someone in the middle. The center person states “Move your butt if...” something true about themselves. Anyone who shares that trait must get up and find an empty chair at least one chair away to sit it. Whoever cannot find a chair is then in the center and does the next round.

## **Learning Outcomes:**

1. Opportunities throughout retreat for every individual to work on personal growth. Each student will:
  - a. Be able to self-identify (even if their expressed identity is label-less) to and be able to communicate that stated identity to become legible to the other participants.
  - b. Be able to articulate by the end of the weekend what they are able and willing to contribute to their campus, to this group/consortium, to the larger TGQQ movement.
  - c. Be able to articulate 3 things they learned while at the retreat
  - d. Be able to articulate 5 things about themselves that are strengths or qualities of value that they like and respect.
  - e. Be able to articulate at least 1 tool to continue personal exploration / introspection.
  - f. Be able to articulate at least 1 tool for stress reduction or self-care.
2. Opportunities to hear from TGQQ leaders from outside of participant campuses and learn from each of their areas of expertise (TBD). This expertise could be:
  - a. Medical wellness
  - b. Transition relevant
  - c. Legal issues pertaining to TGQQ populations
  - d. Policy issues
  - e. Activism
  - f. Psycho/social and relevant to TGQQ populations
3. Opportunities throughout retreat to engage with other representatives from each school to share best practices from represented campuses to:
  - a. Learn tools, policy, programs, educational models to take back to their own campus
  - b. Provide support to represented campuses where needed
  - c. Share ideas and knowledge base
  - d. Identify gaps in policy, education, support systems, etc.
  - e. Start a strategic plan for this intercollegiate group
  - f. Start a strategic plan to connect with a larger California TGQQ movement
4. Opportunities throughout retreat for every individual to learn specific skills, community tools, and personal tools:
  - a. Be able to articulate 1 method of activism
  - b. Be able to articulate 1 method to support peers
  - c. Be able to articulate 1 method for defining boundaries for safety (this could be physical, emotional, interpersonal, sexual)
5. Every person will participate in the strategic planning process. By the end of the weekend each participant will:
  - a. Be able to articulate their specific commitment to the next step in their own campus activism.
  - b. Be able to articulate their specific commitment to the next step in activism for this group/consortium.
  - c. Be able to articulate their specific ability, commitment to supporting other member(s) of the group.