March, 2013

We’re giving you, the readers, the chance to NAME YOUR NEWSLETTER!

Think you’ve got what it takes?

Just email your ideas to asdalgbt@gmail.com

We’ll select the top suggestions and put it up to you, to vote on our name!

Are You In?
ASDA LGBT NETWORK  asdalgbt@gmail.com
**LGBT Launch Event**

On 3rd October 2012 we launched the network to the business, and the turnout was amazing! We had over 100 colleagues, and George House & Walmart attended on video conference too.

**Guest Speakers**

Two of our members, Simon Fern & John Knight, helped shed some light on the importance of Diversity in the workplace and LGBT support by sharing their own personal experiences. We also heard from guest speakers Laura Doughty (Deputy CEO of Stonewall) and Ben Cohen (Founder of the Stand Up Foundation).

**Diversity at ASDA**

In November last year, all five Diversity Steering Groups (below) met for the first time, to discuss our company’s goal of becoming a more diverse business; with working, sponsored groups representing each of the 5 strands of diversity covered in the Equality Act 2010.

Having developed the Network ourselves, we found that we had a head start on to others groups and we’re really proud that our LGBT Network is in such a position to be able to share our learning and experience with the other groups, and help them to develop.

**Diversity Steering Group**

- **Gender**
  - Karen Hubbard
  - Ian Stansfield
  - Hermant Patel
  - Wendy O’Bank

- **Disability**
  - Barry Williams
  - Fiona Briault

- **Ethnicity**
  - Stephen Smith
  - Feroz Patel

- **Age**
  - Jo Whitfield
  - Ellie Doohan

- **LGBT**
  - Hayley Tatum

**In December 2012, Sharon flew over from Bentonville to visit our Stores, and Depots, and Head Office to get a real feel for the work we are doing on Diversity. She spent some time with ASDA’s Diversity Steering group, and we got to spend some time talking about our work and plans for the LGBT Network.**

**We hope to learn more from Walmart pride and share our learning between the groups.**
National Student Pride are an organisation originally set up in 2005, as a response to the Oxford Brookes Christian Union debate on ‘Homosexuality and the Bible’. After two successful prides in Oxford the “Oxford Brookes LGBT Society” joined with NUS LGBT (National Union of Students) in 2007 and relocated to Manchester. In 2009 the event moved to Brighton and noticeably in 2010 the event was attended by the current Prime Minister, David Cameron. Now the event is widely endorsed event and the current leaders of the three largest UK political parties. Having this political clout has helped the organisation lobby government regarding the LGBT issues that really matter. Some of these issues that NUS LGBT have helped shape include Donation Not Discrimination (2011) emphasising the right for gay/bisexual men to donate blood.

“We are delighted that Asda are sponsoring National Student Pride 2013. It is great to have on board such a strong recognisable brand, that students can associate with. The next generation of employers will be able to see through the sponsorship that Asda are an equal and diverse employer, in what we hope will become a long lasting relationship in the years ahead…”

(Tom Guy, Chair of National Student Pride)
ASDA is passionate about supporting the future generation of LGBT individuals and their straight allies. As well as supporting a good cause, Student Pride offers ASDA the great chance to demonstrate what we can offer students, the future leaders, after graduation. National Student Pride gives us the chance to promote ASDA’s extensive variety of career opportunities that LGBT which results students can apply to with confidence, specifically our wide range of graduate scheme positions. ASDA wants to be viewed to the next generation as a business that supports LGBT causes and encourages diversity at all levels. We understand diversity promotes new and different ways of thinking which results in fresh, innovative solutions.

“No one wants to do something where they can’t bring their most valued possessions to the floor, and there is nothing more precious than your identity”
- John Amaechi, gay NBA star

The Debates

Homophobia in Sport

Question Time

Why National Student Pride?
With the departure of Jon Dodd we are welcoming new recruits to the Steering Group.

**Phil Richardson** currently works in the Contact Centre as a Team Manager for the Centralised Switchboard over at The Mint and stepped forward to get involved.

**Sian Wood** has been with ASDA since 2008 recently moving over to join the Pricing Team focusing on George Pricing.

**Matthew Jenkinson** recently joined Asda House from retail to be part of the Marketing Graduate Scheme. He too currently works in Pricing focusing on the Asda Price Guarantee.

**Benji Mallett-Williams** recently joined from Tesco, working in Business Improvement and productivity. He was previously a GSM of a Tesco Express.

World AIDS Day is celebrated all over the world every year on 1st December to raise awareness of HIV, support for those living with the disease, and to commemorate those who have died as a result.

More than 90,000 people are currently living with HIV in the UK and globally an estimated 33.3 million people have HIV. More than 25 million people between 1981 and 2007 have died from the virus, making it one of the most destructive pandemics in history.

Last year we raised £255 by selling Red Ribbons in Asda House/The Mint. This year we stepped up our game and have raised a fantastic sum of £594.93.

Thank you to everyone who bought a Ribbon and wore it that week and thank you to those who volunteered to sell them for us.

To find out more about World AIDS Day, visit www.worldaidsday.org

“Together with a donation from the Asda Foundation we handed £750 to the Terrance Higgins Trust.”
Originally founded in 1989 as a lobbyist organisation to oppose Section 28 of the Local Government Act, today the charity has grown into a well respected charity whose main focus is lobbying the issues that matter to the LGBT community.

Asda has been working closely with the external provider Stonewall in order to get a better understanding of the needs of our LGBT colleagues and how to make the workplace an more inclusive environment.

In 2012 we submitted our Stonewall Top 100 application but realised we had a long way to go. Our 2013 Stonewall aim’s are to be within the prestigious Top 100 LGBT employers in 2014 as well as developing our relationship with Stonewall. As such we have actions from our 2013 ranking and will attend the Stonewall Workplace conference where we will discuss how to establish an LGBT network.

Phil Richardson
How long have you worked at Asda? 7 years
What is your job? Contact Centre, Team Manager
What is your favourite thing about working here?
The unique culture and how much I feel valued.
What’s been your experience of being an LGBT colleague?
The team have achieved so much before I joined and have met challenges head on with vigour and determination. Listening to them talk passionately about the network to whoever wants to lend an ear, is inspirational.
What inspired you to join the LGBT Network?
I heard about the group through word of mouth and thought that I can help make a difference. Because the group is only young, it’s a perfect time to join.

Focus on...

What was your experience of coming out like?
Coming out in the work force was the hardest thing I ever did, probably because my school life was so difficult. The first time I came out was when I was 18 (now 36) I remember how scared I felt, my heart was racing, my mind doing overtime but, when I did it, I felt a huge weight lift. Looking back, I think how far I’ve come and how proud I am for all the milestones I’ve overcome. It does become easier when you’ve done it once, trust me! I’m sure, if I had a steering group like this, I would have had the support and help needed.

Have you ever faced any difficulties in your day-to-day life as a result of being gay?
My ex landlady was homophobic and although I couldn’t prove this, the signs where there. To cut a long story very short I moved into a one bed roomed flat and a few weeks later my partner moved in. Her reaction was “I don’t like “couples” living here”. After that, our lives were hell. She was very clever at hiding her homophobia so I couldn’t prove it.
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Team</th>
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For any more information or support please contact any of the above contacts. Please note Debra Lee (Diversity Manager) is also contactable on 07779700595.