

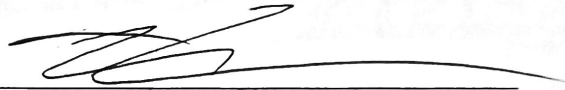
12. The IRS treats OBU as a tax exempt charitable organization.
13. OBU's student handbook outlines rules of behavior for students. This handbook contains a specific section for "human sexuality".
14. The section states, in part, "This policy addresses transsexualism, transgenderism, homosexuality, and related gender identity issues. The University affirms that God's original and ongoing intent and action is the creation of humanity manifested as two distinct sexes, male and female. The University also recognizes that due to sin and human brokenness, human experiential perception of sex and gender is not always that which God the Creator originally designed."
15. The handbook goes on to state: "the University does not support nor affirm the resolution of tension between one's biological sex and one's experiential perception of same sex attraction or of gender by the adoption of psychological identity discordant with one's birth sex. Similarly, the University does not support nor affirm attempts to change one's given biological birth sex via medical intervention in favor of the identity of the opposite sex or of an indeterminate identity."
16. At the time of my enrollment, I was generally aware that OBU opposed non-heterosexual, cisgender identities and behaviors. However, at the time, these positions were consistent with my belief system and my attempts to overcome my same-sex attraction. I thought the policies actually affirmed the steps I was taking.
17. In high school and through my first two years of college, I tried to overcome my struggle with same-sex attraction through prayer, reading books and self-discipline. I constantly thought about my struggle. My mental health started deteriorating and I made no progress toward overcoming my attractions despite my several years of intense efforts.
18. A defining moment for me and my sexual identity development occurred when a young middle school student who I was working with through church told me he struggled with same-sex attraction. I told him the church could help and recommended that he do all the things that I was doing to overcome my sin struggle. But I knew that I was giving this youth dangerous, false advice and it troubled me.
19. Also prior to coming out, my Resident Director on campus told me that he couldn't trust a gay student who wanted to be an RA because he thought he might take advantage of the boys on his floor. This scared me because he didn't know about my sexuality.
20. After this discussion, my anxiety came back hard. I knew that I needed help and reached out to the counselling center.
21. I first came out as bisexual to my therapist during my Sophomore year in the spring of 2015. I felt a huge weight lifted. It was the best that I had ever felt. Recognizing that being bisexual was not just an attraction but was part of my identity felt liberating for me.
22. I came out to friends in the summer of 2015. This was very good for my mental health.

23. Marriage equality occurred in June of 2015 and I wrote an article trying to reconcile my Southern Baptist faith with the Supreme Court's decision about civil same-sex marriage.
24. The Director of Residential Life at OBU called me in response to this article. He told me that my article was not in line with OBU's position. I was more careful about my public comments about sexuality after that for awhile but got in trouble for another social media post on sexuality issues and removed my post.
25. My coming out experience at OBU received two very different reactions. On the one hand, the majority of the faculty and students who I came out to privately were openly supportive or didn't seem to think it was a major issue.
26. However, on the other hand, the OBU administration condemned me and disciplined me.
27. The issue rose to a head when the Director of Residence Life asked me why I cared so much about the LGBTQ+ issues I was writing about. I told him that I cared so much because I am bisexual.
28. As a result of my coming out, I was fired from my on-campus job as a Resident Assistant. The Dean of Students told me that OBU's policies prohibited me from serving as an RA because I am bisexual.
29. The Dean of Students asked me if I was going to come out publicly on campus. He then told me that the student handbook prohibited me from doing so.
30. The Dean of Students also told me that other LGBTQ+ students who had come out publicly at OBU had been harassed, called "fag" and experienced unsafe situations. He told me that what he was trying to say is that if I came out publicly and remained a student at OBU, he couldn't guarantee my safety and did not want to have students there who he could not keep safe.
31. I decided to come out publicly on campus anyway. I did so for my own integrity and mental health and for the sake of other LGBTQ+ youth. On National Coming Out Day in October of 2015, I came out publicly on social media.
32. Shortly thereafter, because of my coming out to the OBU administration and publicly on social media, I was dismissed from OBU without any notice. I found out because the registrar told me that I had been administratively withdrawn from OBU and asked where I would like my transcripts to be sent. I checked my online student account and I could no longer register for classes.
33. OBU forced me to choose between my own beliefs and convictions about myself, my identity and what was best for my mental health and OBU's beliefs and convictions about me and my identity, which were harmful to me.
34. I felt betrayed because the OBU community in general was supportive and open-minded towards me.

35. OBU's policies harmed me in other ways. While a student at OBU, I was physically assaulted by a same-sex romantic partner on campus.
36. We had been dating for a few months at the time. It was a first same-sex relationship for both of us.
37. We got in a verbal fight and he then hit me in the face.
38. We broke up after the assault.
39. We had a class together. Because I could not report the assault, I could not have him separated from me and had to see him two days a week for an hour and a half during class. I also had to see him in my housing situation because we lived in the same dorm.
40. Neither of us were out at the time. I was too scared to report the assault because it would have outed him and would likely have subjected me to further monitoring by the administration or disciplinary action. My partner could have lost his job because he was employed by OBU. His family was also strongly opposed to him being gay and it would have hurt his relationship with his family.
41. If my partner had been a different gender than me, I would have reported this assault.
42. The experience of being rejected by OBU after I came out, caused me a lot of stress, sadness and anxiety. This was the lowest point for me since I had come out.
43. When I was fired and expelled, I transferred to a regional university and lived with my parents. However, when I tried to transfer churches, they rejected me because of my sexual identity and refusal to adopt an anti-LGBTQ doctrinal position.
44. However, I later co-founded Bison 4 Equality, an LGBTQ+ group of OBU students and alumni that we had started to put together while I was still a student. The purpose of the group was to ensure that queer and trans students would be safe and protected.
45. In that capacity, I have learned firsthand that other LGBTQ+ students at OBU have and continue to suffer under OBU's discriminatory policies. Queer and trans students have lost scholarships, been removed from sports teams and been harassed, even when they were not engaging in same-sex relationships or sexual behaviors.
46. OBU requested and received a religious exemption from Title IX by the U.S. Department of Education that purportedly allowed them to fire me from my campus job and dismiss me from my studies without any consequence or accountability.
47. OBU relies on this religious exemption to continue to maintain its discriminatory policies and cause severe harm to queer and trans students at OBU.
48. Bison 4 Equality participated in the #GiveBackIX campaign, attempting to protect queer and trans students by asking OBU to give back its Title IX exemption.

49. The campus community of OBU no longer feels safe because that community is segregated between those who are protected under the law (straight, cisgender students), and those who are not (queer and trans students).
50. I am a federal taxpayer and my taxes should not be spent furthering the discrimination against me by OBU.
51. I am currently in a relationship with a man. I would not be allowed to enroll at OBU because of my relationship status.
52. Current LGBTQ+ students at OBU are at immediate risk of anxiety, depression, disciplinary action and expulsion because of their LGBTQ+ identities and relationships.
53. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 10th day of February, 2021.

By:



Tristan Campbell

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474- AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF NATALIE CARTER
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Natalie Carter, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of College Park, Georgia.
3. I am using a pseudonym as I fear repercussions from Toccoa Falls College if they were to discover who I am and my participation in this suit.
4. I began attending Toccoa Falls College in Toccoa Falls, Georgia in August 2016. I expect to graduate in July 2021.
5. Toccoa Falls College’s student handbook states that “The College expects all members of the community to refrain from any form of sexual immorality including, but not limited to, any form of extramarital sexual activity, adultery, promiscuity, touching of intimate parts above or below clothing, homosexual behavior, transgenderism, viewing/participating in pornography, or sharing sexual images of one’s self or others. Cohabitation is also not allowed.”
6. Students are then encouraged to go to counseling for “proactive education or assistance with relationship issues.”
7. I am a queer woman.
8. I did not want to go to this college from the moment I stepped on campus for a tour there during my senior year of high school. I felt a strong vibe that this was not the school for

me. I had not come fully to terms with my sexuality and was suppressing it. I believe this intuition was a warning for me for the future.

9. I do not feel safe on campus and know for a fact that I would not be supported if I came out. I do not know if my school knows about my sexuality or not, but I am under the impression they have an idea and are keeping an eye on me.
10. I personally feel silenced, and my stomach is in knots knowing that I can't be expressive for all that I am.
11. At school, we talk about loving people wholeheartedly and loving all that we are. But I feel like I am not being loved for who I am, but for half of me. If people were to figure out the other half, I would be disowned.
12. I do not feel safe coming out on campus and I do not feel safe coming out on social media because I am afraid of other students at the school outing me or the school finding out about my sexual orientation on its own. The result would be that I would get thrown out.
13. I also think of my future employment. The school has a reputation for being racist and xenophobic, in addition to be homophobic and transphobic. I am afraid that I will be labeled as being like the students who are "phobics," before I can even express my views to a potential employer.
14. I believe that the discrimination that is being done at these Christian universities needs to finally be brought to light because of the inner damage it is doing to their LGBTQ+ students.
15. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I will also have to repay loans from the U.S. Department of Education that I am taking out for attending Toccoa Falls College.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed this 28 day of March, 2021.

By:

Natalie Carter
Natalie Carter (Mar 28, 2021 19:38 EDT)

Natalie Carter

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of)	
themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474-
Plaintiffs,	)	AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF RACHEL
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and	)	HELD
Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as)	
Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights,)	
U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Rachel Held, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Macungie, Pennsylvania, located in Lehigh County.
3. Beginning in August of 2017, I became a student at Messiah University in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. I expect to graduate in May of 2021 with a degree in Peace and Conflict Studies.
4. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I will also be required to repay student loans from the U.S. Department of Education that I took out to enroll at Messiah University.
5. I attended Messiah University because it was highly recommended by the Christians in my life as being a good school, especially for education majors, which I was considering at the time. Being in a Christian college seemed like the right thing to do because I grew up Christian and wanted to be in a Christian environment for school.
6. I also attended Messiah because I was offered a scholarship and my parents liked the school.
7. Messiah University's student handbook outlines rules of behavior for students. This handbook contains a specific "Sexual Behavior" section.
8. The section begins, "we affirm Christian marriage to be the union of one man and one woman and that human sexuality should be understood within this framework."
9. The handbook goes on to state: "students who experience same-sex attraction or LGBT+ are expected to refrain from 'same-sex sexual expression' as embodied in culturally

contextual practices (e.g., identifying as a couple or exhibiting expressions of physical intimacy).”

10. I am a bisexual woman.
11. I use she/they pronouns.
12. I’m engaged to a man who is not a student at Messiah.
13. I feel comfortable talking about my fiancé on campus because he is a cisgender male. I would not feel comfortable talking about my fiancé on campus, and could be subject to disciplinary action, if my fiancé was female or a transgender male.
14. I worked as an RA at Messiah. During RA orientation, we were asked whether we think LGBT+ students should be allowed to hold leadership positions.
15. During my Freshman year, an RA told me that when one of Messiah’s RAs was approached by a gay student and that RA told the student that being gay was wrong and encouraged him to seek out guidance to overcome his sin. That RA was rehired as an RA the following year.
16. I fear that if the wrong people at Messiah University found out that I am bisexual, that I could be in danger of immediate discipline or dismissal.
17. I feel safe coming out to my friends and some professors and staff. However, I would not publicize it to people that I do not know.
18. The school has polarized views that can both be progressive on one side of the spectrum, yet hateful to members of the LGBT+ community on the other end. Both views are tolerated by Messiah.
19. Messiah’s policies on sexual orientation and gender identity make me feel uncomfortable and very angry. It is scary knowing that such an intimate part of your life can be policed by university administrators.
20. Other students are also encouraged by Messiah to inform on each other when they violate campus policies around student conduct, including alcohol use and sexual rules. This is called “the silent witness program.” I have been reported on by another student before and it makes me nervous knowing that my sexuality could be reported as well.
21. There are also double standards when it comes to how straight relationships are treated as opposed to same sex ones.
22. I feel a lot of anxiety when I am at school when it comes to determining what I can say and to whom. I fear telling my roommates my sexual orientation or requesting that they use she/they pronouns because I worry about them being uncomfortable with me or that they will view me differently.

23. I worry that upon my graduation, my school's anti-LGBT+ policies will be an impediment to finding a job because employers will view me as incapable of serving or respecting LGBT+ people.
24. There are other LGBTQ+ students at Messiah University right now.
25. The Sexuality and Gender Education (SAGE) program at Messiah allows for some discussion and community for LGBT+ students. However, Messiah University does not allow an independent LGBT+ club on campus. Unofficial clubs exist at Messiah but they are not allowed to advertise or be public about their meetings. Many queer students don't know about these groups because of the secrecy imposed by Messiah.
26. Messiah University says that "Students who identify as LGBT+ are welcomed at Messiah University." However, I feel like Messiah's welcome falls short because they adopt the "love the sinner, hate the sin" mentality. It is almost more painful than an explicitly unwelcoming environment because it makes me think I will be fully safe and accepted as a bisexual student on campus, when in fact, I am not.
27. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 12th day of February, 2021.

By:



Rachel Held

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474- AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF LAUREN HOEKSTRA
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Lauren Hoekstra, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I reside in Sioux Center, Iowa but my permanent address is in Michigan.
3. I attended Calvin Christian School, a private, Christian high school in Michigan.
4. I am 20 years old.
5. My major is secondary English education with a minor in sociology.
6. Beginning in August, 2018, I became a student at Dordt University (hereinafter “Dordt”) in Sioux Center, Iowa. I am currently a student and expect to graduate in either December 2021 or May 2022.
7. While attending Dordt, I received federal financial aid, including student loans, from the U.S. Department of Education. I have worked a federal work study job at the print and mail center at Dordt my entire time as a student at Dordt.
8. I will have federal student loans that I have to repay as a result of attending Dordt.

9. I attended Dordt because it felt like home. My second-cousins and my friend from home's family went to Dordt. I visited campus during my junior year in high school. The people at Dordt were kind. I liked the religious aspect of the school as it reflected my upbringing in the CRC Church. They had a major that I was interested in at the time. I enjoyed meeting the faculty. In all, it felt like a place that I wanted to be part of.

10. I received quite a few scholarships from Dordt, which also influenced my decision to attend Dordt.

11. Since I can remember, I have always been attracted to females. I started being more aware of what that meant when I was in 8th grade. I was in high school when same-sex marriage was legalized in 2015. I remember my mom seeing the news on TV and saying "that is so sad." Her reaction confused me because everyone on the TV looked so happy.

12. I am a queer woman.

13. God created me this way and I am not a mistake.

14. When I decided to attend Dordt, I did not know that Dordt would be hostile to my sexual orientation. I did not find out about Dordt's policies until partway through my first semester.

15. Dordt's student handbook outlines rules of behavior for students.

16. The handbook regulates romantic relationships and sexual conduct. The handbook states "scripture is clear that God created humans as two distinct sexes, male and female; however, due to sin and brokenness, our experience of sex and gender is not always what God the Creator originally designed for His glory and our joy and flourishing as his servants."

17. The handbook later goes on to say “the only appropriate and permissible context in which sexual intimacy may be expressed as overt sexual interaction is in a marriage partnership of a man and a woman.”

18. These statement from the student handbook feel hurtful, patronizing and like they ignore the reality of the sexuality and gender identity of 18-22 year old students. Dordt’s policies on sexuality feel both unfair and oppressive.

19. The 2020-2021 Student Handbook defines the following sexual misconduct forbidden by the handbook as unbiblical:

- A. “Promoting or advocating sexually immoral activity”,
- B. “Extramarital sexual relations”,
- C. “Homosexual relations”,
- D. “Transgendered Behavior.”

20. The 2020-2021 Student Handbook goes on to state the following about same-sex romantic relationships:

C. Homosexual Relations. It is unacceptable to have sexual relations with someone of the same sex. It is unacceptable to marry or be engaged to marry a person of the same sex. Dordt University also prohibits promoting or advocating such activity.

D. Transgendered Behavior. Adopting an identity discordant with one’s biological sex is prohibited. Dordt university also prohibits promoting or advocating such activity.

21. The part about “being engaged to marry a person of the same sex” is new. This change is a result of a female student being engaged to another woman last year. Dordt was unhappy with her engagement and wanted to dismiss her but didn’t have an explicit basis in the student handbook to do so.

22. These policies reflect how queer and trans students are threatened with disciplinary action and expulsion for being who they are and loving who they love. We are held to a different, stricter level than straight students. If you are in a relationship, you have to watch out. Public displays of affection, like holding hands, are not allowed for queer students.

23. Two of my friends were in same-sex dating relationships on campus. They were ratted out by other students and required to meet with administrators. The administrators told them that they shouldn't be in a dating relationship but that if they were going to stay together, they needed to keep it quiet.

24. Homophobia is rampant here at Dordt.

25. I have lost friends because of coming out. Other queer students are too scared to come out because they fear losing friends and respect.

26. The student handbook also says that Dordt may determine that if an individual participates in forbidden conduct "an individual shall be dismissed from the university." This policy causes queer and trans student to fear that they may be expelled if they are authentic about their identities and relationships.

27. There are no queer role models at Dordt. I wish I had queer role models here because it would make me feel more welcome, safe and accepted.

28. I discussed coming out publicly with members of the administration including the Dean of Student Life, Robert Taylor, and the Dean of Chapel Aaron Baart. I was told that I would not get in trouble for coming out on campus as long as I was not blatantly promoting homosexuality or putting a homosexual relationship "in the face" of the people on campus.

29. I decided at that point to publicly come out in June 2020. The professors who know about my sexuality are supportive, but I only feel safe sharing with the professors who I believe will be understanding and kind about it.

30. I feel a great amount of anxiety relating to my coming out. I am afraid of having professors treat me differently or losing friends. I suffer some depression at school stemming from feeling different from everyone else on campus. I feel repressed in my own identity and feelings.

31. Some professors at Dordt teach in class that those who practice homosexuality will burn in hell. This belief is widespread at Dordt and is reflected in how other students react to me, including one student telling me by direct message that she feared for my soul. Her statement was followed by a long email telling me why being queer is immoral.

32. It would be very helpful for queer and trans students at Dordt if Dordt's nondiscrimination policy included sexual orientation and gender identity. It would also be helpful for queer and trans students at Dordt if they knew that they had Title IX protections.

33. Right now, if queer and trans students suffer discrimination on campus, they are powerless to protect themselves. We would feel safer knowing that if something happened to us, we would be protected and there would be accountability for how we were treated.

34. I am a federal taxpayer and do not feel that my taxes should fund Dordt's discriminatory policies.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 27th day of January, 2021.

By: 

Lauren Hoekstra

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474- AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and	)	CHANDLER HORNING
Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as)	
Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights,)	
U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Chandler Horning, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Meridian, ID, located in Ada County.
3. I started attending Brigham Young University Idaho in Rexburg, ID in September 2015. I graduated in April 2020.
4. I chose to stay at Brigham Young after I came out because I was too far into school to be able to logically and easily transfer my credits.
5. BYU’s recent history when it comes to its stance on queer students is volatile. In February 2020, the school removed the wording banning same-sex romantic attraction. However, a few weeks later, a commissioner from the LDS church sent out a letter stating in no uncertain terms that “the moral standards of the Church did not change” and that “same-sex romantic behavior cannot lead to eternal marriage and is therefore not compatible with the principles included in the honor code.”
6. Presently BYU’s honor code states that students, faculty, and staff must “live a chaste and virtuous life, including abstaining from any sexual relations outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.”
7. BYU-Idaho also has a page on their counselling center website specifically discussing same sex attraction that says: “Sadly, anxiety, depression, social difficulties, feelings of isolation, and even suicidal thoughts may arise for individuals experiencing same-gender attraction.” The resources on this page lead only to LDS approved materials.
8. I am a gay man.

9. I did not feel safe coming out on campus. After I did come out, I attended school online. When I had to go back to on-campus learning, I put myself back in the closet for two semesters.
10. If I had acted in any way on my sexuality, even if it was to hold hands with a man, I could be expelled.
11. BYU-Idaho's policies make me feel like a flawed alien not worthy to live or exist.
12. I was damaged by BYU's policies. I spent my time there afraid that I would get expelled and therefore evicted from my BYU housing for breaking their honor code.
13. Students who are expelled or suspended are evicted within three days from BYU-I's mandatory, approved unmarried student housing.
14. Losing my housing would have left me homeless in rural Idaho.
15. I've suffered anxiety and depression from the stress and from hearing how gross I am even when they weren't saying it to my face.
16. There was an underground "conversion therapy-lite" group held by a faculty member in a dentist office in Rexburg. It is for those who "want to follow God's plan" and marry someone of the opposite sex in the temple despite being LGBT.
17. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I am also repaying student loans from the U.S. Department of Education that I took out to enroll in Brigham Young University.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 29 day of March, 2021.

By: s/Chandler Horning
Chandler Horning

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474- AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF LOUIS JAMES
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Louis James, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am using a pseudonym as I fear retaliation from Indiana Wesleyan University for participating in this lawsuit.
3. I am a student at Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion, Indiana.
4. I chose IWU because it had a lot of things I was looking for in a school and it offered a lot of scholarship money.
5. I felt nervous about attending IWU as a gay person but it was my only real option to pursue what I love.
6. Indiana Wesleyan University has an extensive and lengthy statement on human sexuality located on its website. Some of the highlights of this statement include:
 - We affirm that God’s plan for marriage and sexual fulfillment can only be found within the context of marriage between one man and one woman.
 - With regard to sexuality and marriage this means that we agree to refrain from inappropriate sexual relationships outside of marriage between a man and a woman.
 - To follow the teachings of the Scriptures regarding marriage and divorce. We affirm that sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful.
 - Sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful. Yet we believe the grace of God sufficient

to overcome both the practice of such activity and the perversion leading to its practice

- Therefore God's plan for human sexuality is that it is to be expressed only in a monogamous lifelong relationship between one man and one woman within the framework of marriage. This is the only relationship which is divinely designed for the birth and rearing of children and is a covenant union made in the sight of God, taking priority over every other human relationship
- We also agree to refrain from gender presentation that is incongruent with one's birth documentation.

7. I am a gay man. I accepted my sexual identity while in 8th grade. I had to partially go back into the closet at IWU.
8. The school says that they accept LGBTQ+ students, but their handbook says otherwise.
9. I have to worry about whether I'll be kicked out for being gay.
10. In August of 2020, I saw that a bunch of students were sharing a post about an RA who was fired for being gay. That made me think I had made a mistake in coming to IWU.
11. I thought everyone was staring at me, thinking I was gay too.
12. I became very anxious. I was also hurt because friends of mine said that the fired, gay student had no right to be here and was the one in the wrong. I wasn't sure who I could trust.
13. I went into a major spiral. I wasn't sleeping. I was barely eating.
14. I had anxiety whenever I went walking around.
15. In response to the firing, students painted the campus rock rainbow, which was great. However, other students would walk by it and say things like "that's not right."
16. Other students also painted over the rainbow. They painted hateful messages. One of the messages said "turn and repent." IWU did not take the hateful messages down.
17. In response to the firing, my college put out statements about how they welcome LGBTQ+ students.
18. However, at the same time, they sent another message saying that marriage is between a man and a woman.
19. The messages were so contradictory.
20. There are so many LGBTQ students at IWU who are in hiding and scared to come out.
21. A lot of professors talk about LGBTQ+ identities as sinful.

22. I hear homophobic slurs like “fa****” around campus.
23. Thankfully, I have found a circle of people who accept me and love me for who I am. They make me feel safe.
24. My school’s policies are saddening to read. These policies are especially saddening because IWU is a university, where I am paying to go to school.
25. LGBTQ+ students should be able to live more freely at the school of their choice. We are not just our sexuality, we are human beings, our sexual orientation is just a small aspect of what makes us a person. We have feelings and need safety and freedom just like everyone else. I want to fight for that freedom so future students do not have to live in fear.
26. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I will also have to repay loans from the U.S. Department of Education that I took out to attend IWU.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 28th day of March, 2021.

By: s/Louis James

Louis James

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of)
themselves and all others similarly situated,)

Plaintiffs,)

v.)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and)
Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as)
Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights,))
U.S. Department of Education,)

Defendants.)

Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474-
AA

**DECLARATION OF
JONATHAN JONES**

I, Jonathan Jones, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I grew up in the Little Rock, Arkansas area and attended a non-denominational church that felt like home. My church was a big part of my life but that started to fall apart when I turned 18 and came out as part of the queer community.
3. I now identify as a bisexual, nonbinary, genderfluid person.
4. The church I grew up in was okay with my sexuality when I was not dating someone of the same-sex. However, when I realized that I wanted to date someone, like my heterosexual peers were doing, I told my church and my church ultimately rejected me.
5. I am currently a resident of Azusa, California, located in Los Angeles County.
6. I began attending Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, California in August 2017. I plan to graduate in July 2021.

7. While attending Azusa Pacific University, I received federal financial aid, including student loans, grants, work study, and scholarships. I will have to repay my student loans when I graduate.
8. I chose this school because of the Theology and the Global Studies programs. I also had the chance to participate in a scholarship which was based around social justice and student leadership. I felt that I could be part of the community of this school when I toured it.
9. At the end of the summer of 2018, I returned to APU for my Sophomore year. I had a scholarship where I was required to be in a leadership position at APU.
10. During my orientation as a student leader, APU reviewed the campus policies with us, including LGBTQ+ policies. We were informed that there was no longer a ban on same-sex dating. That information felt great to me, as it felt like my sexual identity and faith identity could be integrated.
11. However, in the fall of 2018, a professor sent a hateful and homophobic letter to the school and accused APU of leading students down the wrong path on human sexuality. This letter was leaked and distributed widely.
12. This letter hurt because I knew the people that this professor was writing about and because it also affected me as a queer person.
13. After that letter, there was a Board of Trustees meeting about same-sex dating on campus. The Board reversed the decision to allow same-sex dating.
14. The Board also made clear that the LGBTQ+ student group, which was called Haven at the time, was not a club, it was a ministry. The group was put under the Dean of Wellness.

15. This was a very scary time. I had started to feel safe coming out. Other students had started to feel safe coming out. And now this felt like a trick, like a trap.
16. I worried that I might lose my leadership position or my scholarship.
17. I started hearing from LGBTQ+ former students at APU who had lost their leadership positions or scholarships because of their-same-sex relationships.
18. I felt unwanted and unsafe on campus on an institutional level.
19. We held a prayer vigil in response to the Board's action. We did not hold a protest because we could have been disciplined if we held a protest.
20. It was unclear to us what would happen to us if we were caught in a same-sex relationship.
21. This uncertainty, confusion and rejection made it hard for me to go to class.
22. Several months later, in the spring of 2019, APU changed its student policies. APU no longer addressed same-sex dating in its code of conduct. APU's code of conduct stated that extramarital sex remained prohibited and that APU believed marriage was only between a man and a woman. These changes were confusing. There was no statement that same-sex dating was allowed or that LGBTQ+ identities and relationships were affirmed.
23. It feels like APU continues to downplay or hide its queer and trans student population so as not to offend its donor base.
24. APU also forced us to change the name of our LGBTQ+ student group. They did not like the name Haven. We had to change it to Tapestry. As a ministry, our financial situation is inferior to that of student clubs, and we do not get to fully control our programming.

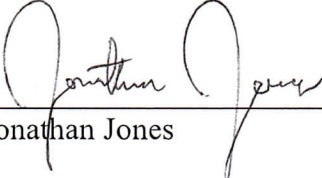
25. Tapestry is better than not having a place for us to gather, but it has limitations and features that reduce its value.
26. As Tapestry remains a ministry of APU, rather than an independent student club, APU maintains control over us. It also means that APU knows who comes to our meetings because an APU administrator attends our meetings.
27. If Tapestry were allowed to be a student club, rather than a controlled ministry, it would be a safer and more equal space for queer and trans students and students who are questioning their sexuality or gender identity.
28. Our group should be treated like the other clubs on campus. Putting us under the control of APU as a “ministry,” singles us out for unequal treatment and stigmatizes us.
29. There are other practices at APU that put LGBTQ+ students in danger. For example, APU has removed a queer student from their housing assignments when a roommate reported them for “coming onto them,” when, in reality, the student had merely come out to them.
30. APU’s major donors tend to be anti-LGBTQ+ and APU prioritizes these donors on human sexuality and gender identity issues, rather than prioritizing the safety and health needs of their LGBTQ+ students.
31. Azusa Pacific University’s current Human Sexuality statement states, in part, “as an evangelical community of disciples and scholars who embrace the historic Christian understanding of Scripture, Azusa Pacific University holds that sexuality is a gift from God and basic to human identity as well as a matter of behavioral expression. We hold that the full behavioral expression of sexuality is to take place within the context of a marriage covenant between a man and a woman and that individuals remain celibate

outside of the bond of marriage. Therefore, we seek to cultivate a community in which sexuality is embraced as God-given and good and where biblical standards of sexual behavior are upheld.”

32. This exclusionary affirmation of straight relationships ignores the queer and trans students at APU, including those who are in relationships. It’s a conflicting message and a shaming message that singles out queer people and tells them that celibacy is their only option in life.
33. These policies force people to stay in the closet or go back into the closet. The closet is not a healthy place for queer people to be because they have to monitor and suppress important parts of their identities.
34. The faculty and staff at the school have been able to offer only limited statements of support because they are forced to sign a belief statement as employers of the university.
35. My school’s position towards gender and sexual orientation makes me feel ostracized and unwanted. The school has briefly recognized gay couples, just to reverse their stance, and then reverse it again, lifting bans on gay romance later. But, generally, the queer community at Azusa Pacific University is now ignored and sidelined.
36. We are not celebrated. Our safety and health is not prioritized. We have no protection from what APU and its Board and donors can decide to do to us.
37. A lot of LGBTQ+ students remain closeted on campus because they don’t feel safe coming out.
38. A non-discrimination policy that included LGBTQ+ students at APU would make me feel safer at APU. We need a strong rule in place that prohibits APU from punishing students for being queer or trans or for dating someone of the same gender.

39. I am participating in this lawsuit because future queer Christian students deserve a space to explore their spirituality alongside their sexuality and gender identity in a faith-based environment without the fear of harassment or discrimination.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 6th day of March, 2021.

By: 
Jonathan Jones

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474- AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF ASHTIN MARKOWSKI
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Ashtin Markowski, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Springville, UT, located in Utah County.
3. I started attending Brigham Young University in Provo, UT in September 2014. I graduated in December 2020.
4. I chose Brigham Young because of family tradition and religious affiliation.
5. BYU’s recent history when it comes to its stance on queer students is volatile.
6. In February 2020, the school removed the wording banning same-sex romantic attraction. However, a few weeks later, a commissioner from the LDS church sent out a letter stating in no uncertain terms that “the moral standards of the Church did not change” and that “same-sex romantic relationships cannot lead to eternal marriage and are therefore not compatible with the principles included in the honor code.”
7. Presently BYU’s honor code states that students, faculty, and staff must “live a chaste and virtuous life, including abstaining from any sexual relations outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.”
8. I am a lesbian woman.
9. I did not generally feel safe coming out on the BYU campus.
10. I do have some friends on campus who are supportive.

DECLARATION OF ASHTIN MARKOWSKI

11. I had an on-campus job at the Missionary Training Center where I trained missionaries and taught people about our church online. I did this for two and a half years.
12. I was fired from this job after I cut my hair to better match my gender expression. This firing was done according to the school's purported rules, saying that my hair was "extreme and distracting" and that it was "too masculine, not feminine enough".
13. I did not feel that I was going against the school's dress and grooming standards and that their interpretation of these rules was very subjective. This seemed especially subjective as they had just hired a man with bleached hair, although having bleached hair was against their rules for men.
14. I still have nightmares about running into my former supervisor or manager.
15. I still cannot drive by BYU's campus or the MTC (across the street) without feeling on edge.
16. Even though I graduated months ago, I still feel like I am going to "get in trouble" because of how I constantly had to worry that I would be thrown out of school for dating someone of the same gender.
17. To be able to attend BYU, students have to renew their ecclesiastical endorsement every year. This means that the students must be deemed "worthy" by the church and are willing to live the church's commandments and the school's honor code.
18. I was constantly worried I would lose this endorsement, as the church had conditioned me to discuss my attraction towards other girls with my bishop.
19. I began to feel unwelcome at the church for being gay, adding to my terror that I would lose my endorsement.
20. BYU's current policies make me feel unsafe and unwelcome to be who I am on campus.
21. I was thrilled when BYU changed their Honor Code to remove the prohibition on "homosexual behavior". I rejoiced with my fellow LGBTQ+ students and even knew some people who came out publicly during this time because they felt safe.
22. When the church declared that "homosexual behavior does not lead to eternal marriage" it did not make sense to me. One reason was that it is one of only many things that do not lead to "eternal marriage" and those are not dealt with by the Honor Code.
23. I also felt that the school did not actually care about its LGBTQ+ students and their safety. The school wanted an excuse to not allow non-sexual same-gender behavior such as dating, handholding, kissing, or cuddling. I felt pain for those who felt safe coming out or posting pictures of them kissing someone of the same gender on campus.
24. As a result of my time at BYU and because of their policies, I was diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder and major depressive disorder. I also scored high on an

ADHD evaluation. I am currently working with a LGBTQ+ affirming therapist for religious trauma and C-PTSD.

25. I was so conditioned that I did not realize I was gay until my second relationship with a woman.
26. For the time in between my first and second relationship, I talked to a BYU appointed Bishop who said he wanted to help me overcome my feelings of “temptation” and “same-sex attraction.”
27. I was asked if it was a sex addiction. I was told I needed to be more feminine. He wanted to help “get me back on the right path” because “many people looked up to me and the pain of leading them astray would be worse than I ever experienced.”
28. I wonder if people will see BYU on my resume and judge me without meeting me or seeing me, especially since I no longer identify with the Mormon church and am happily with a woman.
29. I am participating in this lawsuit because I don’t want anyone else to feel how I’ve felt – betrayed, unsafe, constantly anxious, and feeling like something bad is going to happen.
30. I do not think it is fair how BYU handled their Honor Code and the subsequent letter.
31. I also do not think that it is right that BYU fired me from my on-campus job for my haircut.
32. I think all universities and colleges should be held to a standard which requires them to treat all individuals with respect and love.
33. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I am also repaying student loans from the U.S. Department of Education that I took out to enroll in Brigham Young University.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 29 day of March, 2021.

By: s/Ashtin Markowski

Ashtin Markowski

8. The Seventh-day Adventist position statement refers to Bible verses that state: “If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.” Leviticus 20:13.
9. La Sierra also provides a “Q&A” for its Sexual Morality policy. The Q&A states:

Q&A

What is La Sierra’s stance on the official recognition of LGBTQ clubs or organizations?

- *At this time, La Sierra does not officially recognize student organizations representing alternative lifestyles.*

Can students face disciplinary action just for identifying as LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer)?

- *No. However, all students (LGBTQ and heterosexual) could face disciplinary action for misconduct.*

May a student disagree with the universities [sic] statement on sexual relationships?

- *Yes, you can disagree but within the context of respect and recognition of the values of the university.*
- *La Sierra University’s policies are informed by and adhere to biblical principles. The university acknowledges the complexity of issues surrounding sexuality, and is committed to the open and rigorous study of Scripture and discussion of all perspectives, both inside and outside the classroom. Regardless of one’s view on the subject, La Sierra University affirms the dignity and worth of every person and seeks to create a campus culture where each person is treated with Christian love, dignity and respect.*

Is there support for LGBTQ students?

- *Yes, there is support and we believe students who experience same sex attraction are best supported when they are able to share their questions, struggles, or their self-understanding with others in a trusted environment. Experiencing identity issues in isolation can be overwhelming; community support can be positive and nurturing. Thus the university offers support for LGBTQ and questioning students.*

Can students be disciplined for sexual activity outside marriage?

- *Sexual misconduct, depending on the facts and circumstances of each case, may result in disciplinary action. In all disciplinary matters, we seek to be redemptive in the lives of the individuals involved. Consequently, the university will offer pastoral care and assistance to support and strengthen the student’s resolve to live consistently within traditional Christian teaching on sexuality.*

10. I am a queer, non-binary person.
11. As a student, my problems have been with the administration and their actions, rather than with other students.

12. Whether it be having vague and problematic policies or their performative activism, queer students aren't protected at La Sierra.
13. When LGBTQ+ students have filed complaints of discrimination, myself among them, staff and faculty use their discretion to justify the lack of change on campus.
14. The administration does not fully support our LGBTQ+ group on campus and the work we are doing, as we are not allowed to be an officially recognized club.
15. While La Sierra no longer punishes a student merely for identifying as LGBTQ+, the school continues to adhere to a policy that considers homosexual activities and relationships to be "detestable," as is stated in the Seventh-day Adventist position on Homosexuality that is formally adopted by La Sierra in its Sexual Morality policy.
16. It feels threatening to know that La Sierra considers same-sex dating to be "sexual misconduct" that could result in my expulsion.
17. Even where a queer student is in a romantic, but non-sexual relationship, they could be subject to exploitation and potential discipline.
18. During my time as a criminal justice student, I witnessed ample amounts of homophobia and transphobia on campus.
19. I was once sat down by the director of the Corona, California campus to show me the righteousness of heterosexuality.
20. I have personally witnessed professors using hate speech about queer identities during lectures, with students present.
21. Most of the discrimination I have endured involves hate speech, performative activism, and censoring the on-campus LGBTQ+ group.
22. It has been very difficult to be a queer, disabled person of color at La Sierra. My leadership and opposition to La Sierra's "separate but equal" policies have been shut down on more than one occasion.
23. Universities such as La Sierra need to take the consequences of their actions against queer students seriously.
24. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I will also have to repay student loans from the U.S. Department of Education that I took out to enroll in La Sierra.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 29 day of March, 2021.

By: S/Cameron Martinez

Cameron Martinez

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474- AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF JOANNA MAXON
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Joanna Maxon, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Hurst, Texas, located in Tarrant County.
3. I am a wife and mother.
4. I am a Christian and part of the United Methodist Church.
5. Beginning in March 2015, I attended Fuller Theological Seminary online with its main campus located in Pasadena, California. I also attended some classes in person at its Texas campus in Houston.
6. I attended until October 2018.
7. My plan was to obtain a Master of Arts in Theology degree from Fuller to learn more about my faith but to also advance my career.
8. Students who enroll in the MAT degree program pursue the degree to enhance their leadership skills for use in a variety of professions, including ministry, business, nonprofit work, and the arts.
9. I was very proud of getting into Fuller and this degree program.
10. Earlier in my life, I struggled to finish life goals. That changed later in my life. In pursuing my degree at Fuller, it was really important to me that I finish the program. I was fully committed to that goal. I was passionate about my classes and they gave me tremendous joy.

11. However, I did not graduate from Fuller because I was suddenly expelled for my sexuality and my same-sex marriage.
12. Despite being denied a degree, I am still repaying the federal student loans from the U.S. Department of Education that I took out to enroll at Fuller.
13. Fuller has a policy against unlawful discrimination. In this policy, the school says that it does not discriminate on the basis of “race, color...sex, marital status...gender, gender identity, gender expression.”
14. The same statement also says, “Fuller Theological Seminary does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. The seminary does lawfully discriminate on the basis of sexual conduct that violates the Community Standard Statement on Sexual Standards. The seminary believes that sexual union must be reserved for marriage, which is a covenant union between one man and one woman. The seminary believes premarital, extramarital, and homosexual forms of sexual conduct to be inconsistent with the teachings of scripture. Therefore, the seminary expects members of its community to abstain from what it holds to be unbiblical sexual practices.”
15. Fuller Theological Seminary does not expressly forbid students from marrying students of the same sex.
16. Fuller also does not state that the consequence for same-sex marriage would be immediate dismissal.
17. Fuller also has a Community Standard: Sexual Standards policy which states, in part, “Fuller Theological Seminary believes that sexual union must be reserved for marriage, which is the covenant between one man and one woman, and that sexual abstinence is required for the unmarried. The seminary believes that premarital, extramarital, and homosexual forms of explicit sexual conduct to be inconsistent with the teaching of Scripture. Consequently, the seminary expects all members of its community...to abstain from what it holds to be unbiblical sexual practices.”
18. I am a pansexual woman.
19. I initially attended Fuller because they had online classes along with a campus in Texas. I also liked Fuller because it had over 150 Christian denominations represented in the student body and is known for progressive stances on immigration, race, and other issues.
20. I felt safe being out about my sexuality with other students and professors at Fuller. I spoke and wrote about my family, including my wife and daughter. None of my professors or other students expressed concern to me about my same-sex marriage.
21. However, I was expelled in 2018 after someone in the Financial Aid Department learned about my same-sex marriage from my tax return. They took it upon themselves to report me to the administration for what they perceived to be a violation of Fuller’s policies.

22. However, no investigation was made to determine whether I had committed a homosexual conduct violation, nor were Fuller's own disciplinary procedures followed.
23. During this process, the person who handled my case held the dual roles of investigating Fuller's complaint against me and being responsible for investigating the potential discrimination *by* Fuller against me. This placed the Title IX officer in a conflict of interest position.
24. I was expelled after the dean of the school determined that my marriage put me in violations of Fuller's Community Standards.
25. I was five classes short of earning my degree from Fuller after three years of hard work.
26. I was immediately withdrawn from the classes I was attending at the time.
27. I was devastated. I felt betrayed by Fuller's actions. I thought the community had welcomed me. I expected at the very least to be treated with more respect and kindness than they showed me.
28. Fuller's expulsion impacted my family life. I had a hard time trusting people, even my own family. I withdrew, both emotionally and physically, from my wife and daughter as a result of the harm I experienced. This was hard for my wife and teenage daughter.
29. I spent nearly a year of holding the pain and anger inside and not talking with friends or a therapist about it because I was not emotionally able to face what Fuller had done to me.
30. My work performance was also impacted by the stress of my expulsion. I was not able to be fully present as an employee.
31. Eventually, I sought counselling for my expulsion. This counselling has brought up other areas of rejection and betrayal from my childhood. My therapy is ongoing.
32. The week I was expelled was also near the anniversary of Matthew Shepard's death and occurred when my church, the United Methodist Church, took an additional rejecting stance on LGBTQ+ people.
33. This compounded rejection was very hard for me emotionally and spiritually. I felt lost and confused.
34. I am participating in this case because I do not want anyone else to be injured in the way I have been. I want to make whatever difference I can for those behind me.
35. I am a federal taxpayer and do not feel that my taxes should be spent in furthering the discrimination against me by Fuller.
36. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 26th day of February, 2021.

By: 
Joanna Maxon

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474-AA
v.	)	DECLARATION OF MACKENZIE
	)	MCCANN
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Mackenzie McCann, declare:

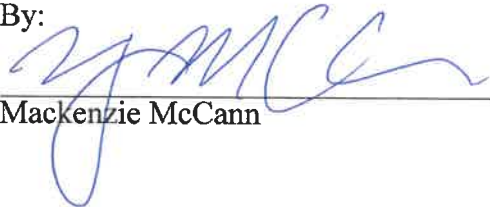
1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, located in Lehigh County.
3. Beginning in August 2018, I became a student at Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA. I left the school in December 2018 without graduating.
4. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I will also be required to repay student loans that I took out from the U.S. Department of Education to attend Liberty University.
5. I chose Liberty University for a variety of reasons. One was that I intended to shift my focus from Psychology (my major at Pace University, my prior and now current university), to Biblical Studies. At the time I was a devout Christian, and I hoped to be around like-minded individuals.
6. I was impressed by Liberty University's credentials and academic programs and was looking forward to spiritual offerings and resources on campus.
7. Liberty University operates under a "Statement on Sexuality and Relationships," which appears in the Student Honor Code, "The Liberty Way."
8. The Student Honor Codes dictates numerous standards of behavior regulating everything from the clothes students are allowed to wear to which movies are forbidden.
9. This policy states (in its entirety) "Sexual relations outside of a biblically ordained marriage between a natural-born man and a natural-born woman are not permissible at Liberty University. In personal relationships, students are encouraged to know and abide

by common-sense guidelines to avoid the appearance of impropriety. Activities inconsistent with these standards and guidelines are violations of the Student Honor Code.”

10. I am non-binary and queer.
11. From the minute I stepped on to Liberty's campus, I knew it'd never be safe to be authentically myself (as it relates to my gender and sexuality's queerness).
12. I consistently dealt with homophobic and misogynistic comments from students and faculty at Liberty University. Included in these comments were requests to pray for someone that was a lesbian. Also, a fellow, male, student, in reference to me, “the dyke’s kinda hot.”
13. Other situations I dealt with at Liberty University included being asked to justify my lifestyle in the Bible, friends saying they were praying I would be “freed from my homosexuality,” and angry comments that there were only two genders.
14. In short, my fear of isolation transformed into a monster that became self-silencing and self-hatred. My once-spirited opinions about queer rights and visibility morphed into a desperate attempt to fit in and avoid social/emotional persecution.
15. There was no safety or support for me as a queer, non-binary person at Liberty University. I'm sure there still isn't.
16. I started dating a woman long-distance during my first year at Liberty. I couldn't tell anyone because it was prohibited by Liberty and would have ostracized me socially.
17. The secrecy and self-doubt was a huge strain and source of anxiety. I felt like I could not trust my heart because my beliefs and Liberty's policies told me that my heart desired something sinful.
18. Students at Liberty behave in homophobic and anti-queer ways because they know that they can do so with relative impunity. Liberty's culture enables such conduct and makes students feel like Liberty is backing them.
19. I was forced to leave Liberty University after one semester because of the emotional strain that I was facing. I left the school for my own emotional safety.
20. A psychologist at Liberty University diagnosed me at the time with Bipolar Disorder. After leaving, I spent months in psychotherapy related to my experience there. During that therapy I discovered that this was a misdiagnosis at best and that the issues I was having had nothing to do with bipolar disorder.
21. Rather, my mental health struggles stemmed from the repercussions of Liberty's campus climate, in which my queer identity was demonized as something evil.

22. During my time at Liberty, I was not aware of any queer support group.
23. I did not feel safe telling faculty, staff or even medical or mental health professionals at Liberty about my queer identity.
24. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 12th day of February 2021.

By:



Mackenzie McCann

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of)	
themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,)	
v.)	
)	
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and)	
Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as)	
Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights,)	
U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474-AA

**DECLARATION OF DARREN
MCDONALD**

I, Darren McDonald, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Portland, Oregon, located in Multnomah County.
3. I grew up in Arcadia, California.
4. I am a gay man. I'm also a partially sighted person.
5. I grew up knowing that I had to follow the rules because I needed the approval of my parents and church for my safety and protection.
6. I grew up attending a Presbyterian Church USA congregation.
7. I attended public schools through high school. I was in special education through elementary school and was bullied heavily during those years.
8. I found a lot of acceptance in church because I was not viewed as the blind, fat kid, like I was at school. I was viewed as a whole person and part of a family.
9. I began at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California in August 1998. I graduated in 2002.
10. I began Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California in September, 2002. I graduated in December 2006.
11. I received student loans or grants from the U.S. Department of Education to attend Fuller.
12. Westmont has multiple statements listed in its online student handbook when it comes to marriage and homosexuality.

13. The first statement comes in the Behavioral Expectations section at the beginning of the student handbook. The statement is “the college will not condone practices the Scripture forbids” followed by a list of activities including “sexual relations outside of marriage.” A later statement in this section states: “the college expects our members who chose to marry to abide by the commitment to lifelong heterosexual marriage.”
14. Westmont’s rule against Lewd, Indecent, or Obscene Conduct includes the statement “discretion should also be exercised regarding watching videos, hanging posters, and viewing periodicals, websites or social media sites that are degrading and/or promote an unhealthy view of sex, sexuality, and gender.”
15. Westmont also has a very lengthy section in its student handbook regarding Sexual Activity Outside of Marriage. The statement reads, in full (emphasis added):

*At Westmont, we are committed to helping our students develop Christ-like maturity in all areas of their lives, which includes helping students make wise and biblical decisions regarding sexual activity. The Community Life Statement reflects the college’s understanding of Scripture, which is the church’s historic, classical interpretation of marriage and sexual fidelity. In regard to sexual activity, **the college will not condone practices that Scripture forbids, including sexual relations outside of marriage between persons of opposite sex or persons of the same sex.** Additionally, conduct promoting such intimacy between unmarried persons (i.e., nudity, lying in bed together) is unacceptable behavior and private situations that foster such behavior should be avoided. Members of the Westmont community who choose to marry are expected to abide by the **commitment to lifelong heterosexual marriage**, and whether single or married, to strive to maintain healthy family relationships.*

*Westmont College believes the best place to navigate these issues of sexuality, including sexual identity, is in Christian community and that students are best supported if they are able to share their questions, struggles, or their self-understanding with trusted others, including those in Student Life and Residence Life. Concerns about sexuality may be difficult to disclose, but struggling in silence is a far greater challenge. In all such personal issues, Student Life and Residence Life staff members are committed to discretion, sensitivity, compassion, and redemptive actions. Additionally, confidential assistance is available through Westmont’s Counseling Services. **When a student approaches us and communicates that he or she is struggling with sexual purity or same-sex attraction or behavior, we aim to offer safety that promotes openness, to communicate personal acceptance, and to provide accountability and assistance to support students to live consistently with biblical teaching.***

All members of the Westmont Community are expected to treat one another with respect, dignity and Christ-like compassion. Insults, slurs and other forms of derogatory, disrespectful or flippant speech have no place in a Christian community. The college is committed to protecting individuals from harassment and retaliation based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

16. Fuller also has multiple statements listed in its online student handbook when it comes to marriage and homosexuality.
17. In its statement on marriage and divorce, Fuller states “Christ teaches that God the Creator intended marriage to be an unconditional covenant between a woman and a man.”
18. Fuller also has a Community Standard: Sexual Standards policy which states, in part, “Fuller Theological Seminary believes that sexual union must be reserved for marriage, which is the covenant between one man and one woman, and that sexual abstinence is required for the unmarried. The seminary believes that premarital, extramarital, and

homosexual forms of explicit sexual conduct to be inconsistent with the teaching of Scripture. Consequently, the seminary expects all members of its community...to abstain from what it holds to be unbiblical sexual practices.”

19. Fuller also has a non-discrimination policy, which includes the following: “Fuller Theological Seminary does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. The seminary does lawfully discriminate on the basis of sexual conduct that violates the Community Standard Statement on Sexual Standards. The seminary believes that sexual union must be reserved for marriage, which is a covenant union between one man and one woman. The seminary believes premarital, extramarital, and homosexual forms of sexual conduct to be inconsistent with the teachings of scripture. Therefore, the seminary expects members of its community to abstain from what it holds to be unbiblical sexual practices.”
20. I chose Westmont and Fuller because in public school I faced significant bullying related (in part) to my visual impairment. I was a blind, fat, awkward, and socially isolated blind kid in a public school. I was the child of church leaders at the evangelical church that I grew up at and I had a voice and leadership in the youth ministry.
21. I was also deeply in denial about my sexuality at the time. I suppressed my sexuality for a long time, in part, because of the cultural narrative that treats disabled people as non-sexual beings.
22. I did not feel safe coming out. I did not feel safe existing. The cultural climate at Westmont and Fuller was harsh with homosexuality positioned as an "issue" and an enemy of the Church.
23. At Westmont, I did not fully gender conform. "Spring Sing" is a major event at Westmont where each residence hall puts on skits to parodied songs. I was given the part of a gay character who was to wear a muumuu and chase another student asking for a kiss.
24. The students were not laughing with me, they were laughing at me. The skit was basically framed as the gay monster, predator chasing the innocent straight student. I felt like a contemptible monstrosity. I internalized this for a long time.
25. Fuller was very "don't ask, don't tell" when I went there. The line for how far you could push being out was extremely murky which in a way felt great and, in a way, felt scarier since there was no predictability about it.
26. I participated in a class on New Testament Ethics in which the entire class was structured around intentionally polarized groups debating the "controversial case" of a lesbian couple asking to be members of a church. It was treated as if the lesbian couple situation was a threat. I did not feel safe either emotionally or physically in these conversations.
27. I had to drink before class to feel able to survive them emotionally (and I'm not and have never been even much of a social drinker).

28. At the time I attended these schools, I felt suicidal. The approach of both of these schools towards my sexual identity at the time was to encourage conversion therapy.
29. I became increasingly suicidal when considering whether or not I should come out at Fuller.
30. I still suffer from depression, anxiety, shame, and internalized homophobia as a result of attending these schools.
31. I know that there are, and always will be, LGBTQ+ students at Westmont and Fuller and that they will continue to suffer and have no protections unless policies are changed.
32. I am participating in this lawsuit because I am convinced that Christian colleges like Westmont and Fuller endanger LGBTQQI students, alumni, and staff. As a gay survivor of these institutions who has enough job security and privilege to fight back, I believe it is my duty to use everything in my being to resist the harmful practices of these institutions.
33. I am a federal taxpayer and do not feel that my taxes should be spent in furthering the discrimination against people like me by Fuller and Westmont.
34. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 18th day of March, 2021.

By:



Darren McDonald

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474-
v.	)	AA
)	
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,	)	DECLARATION OF SCOTT MCSWAIN
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Scott McSwain, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Tacoma, Washington, located in Pierce County.
3. I started attending Union University in Jackson, TN in July 2006. I graduated in May 2010.
4. I chose Union University because my father is a Southern Baptist minister and knew the then president and several professors since he was an alumni.
5. I was originally supposed to attend Murray State University in Kentucky but, when my father found out my roommate to be gay, my family decided it was best to attend a school where surrounding myself with godly people would have a more positive effect on me.
6. Union has "Community Values Statements", which are included in the student handbook that goes to all students. These statements address a number of the school's moral and ethical standards, including when it comes to queer and gender non-conforming students.
7. There is a paragraph on "Sexually Impure Relationships" in the "Community Values Statements". This policy states: "Sexually impure relationships include but are not limited to participation in or appearance of engaging in premarital sex, extramarital sex, homosexual activities, or cohabitation. Union affirms that sexual relationships are designed by God to be expressed solely within a marriage between a man and a woman. The Bible condemns all sexual relationships outside of marriage (Matt. 5:27-29; Gal. 5:19). The promotion, advocacy, defense or ongoing practice of a homosexual lifestyle (including same-sex dating behaviors) is also contrary to our community values."

Homosexual behaviors, even in the context of a marriage, remain outside Union's community values. We seek to help students who face all types of sexual temptation, encouraging single students to live chaste, celibate lives, and encouraging married students to be faithful to their marriage and their spouse."

8. The policy goes on to address transgender students in a "Gender Identity" paragraph which states: "Union adheres to the biblical tenet that God created only two genders, that He fashioned each one of us and thus designated our gender/sex. Therefore, identifying oneself as a gender other than the gender assigned by God at birth is in opposition to the University's community values. Further, engaging in activities or making any efforts to distinguish or convert one's gender/sex to something other than the gender/sex to which you were biologically born and which was God-given (i.e. transvestites, transsexuals, transgenders, etc.) is prohibited."
9. The school dress code also commands that faculty, students, and staff must "dress in such a way that represents their legal gender".
10. I am a gay man.
11. During my time at Union, the school found out I was gay. I don't know how they found out I was gay. It could have been an ex-girlfriend, another gay student at the school, or someone in my fraternity.
12. I was taken into a dimly lit room where Union told me that I was going to hell and that the school was worried for my soul.
13. Union told me that I would be thrown out and all of my credits taken away if I did not attend sexual conversion therapy.
14. I was given vouchers for an Exodus International approved therapist.
15. I was also required to install software that would send the school my online history every week.
16. During my time in conversion therapy, I was sexually assaulted by my therapist. I reported this to the school.
17. Union University subjected me to severe psychological torture through their discipline.
18. The school's policies made me feel that I was subpar and subhuman in their eyes.
19. As a result of the school's actions, I was diagnosed with anxiety and panic disorder. I have been to urgent care multiple times for panic attacks, including as recently as August of 2020.
20. I am participating in this lawsuit because Union continues to discriminate against students and potential students based on who they love while accepting federal funds. I

want to have a part in rooting out the discrimination and psychological torture that is still going on in West Tennessee.

21. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I am also repaying student loans from the U.S. Department of Education that I took out to enroll in Union.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 28 day of March, 2021.

By:



Scott McSwain

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474- AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF FAITH MILLENDER
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

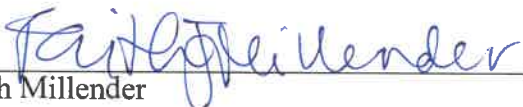
I, Faith Millender, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am currently a resident of St. David’s, Pennsylvania, located in Delaware County.
3. I grew up in West Africa and moved back to the United States when I was 15.
4. My parents were Southern Baptist missionaries.
5. I have two siblings. All three of us are queer.
6. Beginning in August 2018, I became a student at Eastern University in Pennsylvania. I expect to graduate in May 2022.
7. Eastern University originated as a Southern Baptist institution but is now a non-denominational Christian liberal arts college.
8. I took out student loans from the U.S. Department of Education to enroll at Eastern University and I will be required to repay those loans. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States.
9. I attended Eastern University because I was interested in attending a Christian school and I wanted to be in a nursing program. I loved Eastern University when I visited it and it fit all the criteria of the college I wanted to attend.
10. I was also attracted to the fact that Eastern was more liberal than some of the other colleges I was considering (Liberty University and William Carey University).
11. Eastern University has a limited mention of their sexual intimacy policy in their handbook. The policy states “as a Christian community, Eastern University expects a

sexual lifestyle that is consistent with our understanding of biblical teaching. For our community, inappropriate displays of affection are not acceptable and sexual intimacy is prohibited outside of marriage between one man and one woman.”

12. I was not aware of this policy at the time I enrolled at Eastern.
13. This policy undermines Eastern’s message to us that we are safe and welcome here.
14. It is very hard to feel loved while you are also being told that you are not able to love.
15. Additionally, our professors are bound by a clause that prohibits homosexual conduct and treats it as a terminable offense.
16. Two queer staff members quit their jobs at Eastern shortly after becoming engaged to each other. It is unknown whether they would be safe to be out about their relationship.
17. The uncertainty around Eastern’s policies on queer relationships and conduct (other than marriage) makes it risky for queer students, faculty and staff at Eastern to date or show affection.
18. I am a bisexual/queer woman.
19. I feel safe and supported by a significant amount of people on the campus.
20. My nursing program is more traditional than the other programs and I feel safe with my professors, but I do not feel supported in my identity or even seen as a queer individual.
21. Queer people are rarely discussed in my program. Faculty do not teach us how to provide LGBTQ+ specific healthcare. Students in our program are not taught how to specifically care for transgender and queer patients.
22. I have made my experience and identity known and have done a number of school projects on queer topics. These projects are met with varying responses, but usually shock and surprise.
23. There are members of the faculty and staff that I do not feel safe with because of their known homophobia.
24. I don’t know whether my nursing program would support me if I experienced discrimination from patients or other providers because of my sexuality.
25. There is an official LGBTIA+ club on Eastern University’s campus called Refuge. I am co-President of Refuge. It became a sanctioned club in 2017.
26. Refuge’s goal is twofold: (1) provide a safe space for queer students, and allies, to be seen and heard; (2) provide advocacy and education for the non-affirming constituencies on our campus.

27. Refuge has lived up to its name and purpose. It is good for our mental health, safety and sense of belonging on campus.
28. While Eastern provides a better environment for queer students than some other Christian colleges, I still feel frustrated and invalidated because of my school's policies on sexual orientation.
29. I feel like I am disregarded and that my sexuality makes me "less than" other students because of these policies. Other queer students and I are being told that we are supported and safe on campus, but Eastern University's policies result in discrimination, misgendering, and queer students on campus being labelled as morally wrong.
30. It is discouraging to be told over and over again that the emotions, perceptions, and realities we as queer students experience on campus are invalid and do not matter.
31. While I feel safe on campus, I, at the same time, choose to not come out to some professors or other people associated with the school because I have concerns whether I will feel safe and respected by them.
32. Queer members of the Eastern University community are not ever fully safe on campus, as evidenced by the interactions of some homophobic members of that community and a sexual intimacy policy which is vague and open to many interpretations.
33. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 12th day of February, 2021.

By: 
Faith Millender

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474- AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF JAYCEN MARCUS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendant)	

I, Jaycen Marcus, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Portland, Oregon, located in Multnomah County.
3. I started attending George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon in August 2012. I left in March 2016 without graduating.
4. I chose George Fox University because I wanted to go to a small college with a more liberal arts focus.
5. George Fox has a “Lifestyle Statement” which states, “In regard to sexual morality, we believe that only marriage between a man and a woman is God's intention for the joyful fulfillment of sexual intimacy. This should always be in the context of mutual compassion, love, and fidelity. Sexual behaviors outside of this context are inconsistent with God's teaching. We recognize these principles may conflict with the practice or opinion of some within the larger culture. We are convinced that this is God's design for providing the most loving guidance and practice for individuals and our community.”
6. GFU’s student handbook states that “George Fox University accepts the biblical standards that prohibit all sexual immorality” and that “we believe the power of God and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit combine to provide the means to live victoriously with respect to sexual purity.”
7. I am a transgender man of open sexuality.
8. When I went to George Fox, coming out was not easy. I did find some support from students, teachers, and staff.

9. George Fox made me feel excluded and not seen for who I was.
10. I dealt with a lot of anxiety and depression as well as not feeling safe as one should be able to in their school.
11. While a student at GFU, I requested to move from female housing and to live with other men after my transition.
12. Living in a female dorm meant that each day, the first thoughts I had were about my struggles living in a body that never felt right to me.
13. Living in female housing while undergoing testosterone therapy was a particular challenge
14. George Fox initially denied my request to live with other men because I am a transgender man.
15. I filed a Title IX complaint with the U.S. Department of Education regarding this housing discrimination.
16. George Fox University requested a religious exemption from the U.S. Department of Education so that they could maintain their discriminatory housing policy while continuing to receive federal funding.
17. The U.S. Department of Education granted GFU's request for a religious exemption and closed my complaint file with the Department as a result of that exemption.
18. GFU currently maintains a policy on transgender students, which states, in part: "Given the varying circumstances of students identifying as transgender, addressing their particular needs will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, prioritizing the well-being of the individual and community alike."
19. I am participating in this lawsuit because I feel that everyone deserves to have an experience that feels safe and supportive, including with their student housing.
20. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I am also repaying student loans from the U.S. Department of Education that I took out to enroll in George Fox.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 29 day of March, 2021.

By: s/Jaycen Marcus

Jaycen Marcus

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474- AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF JOURNEY MUELLER
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Journey Mueller, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Longmont, Colorado, located in Boulder County.
3. Between August 2017 and April 2018, I was a student at Colorado Christian University in Lakewood, Colorado (hereinafter "CCU").
4. While attending CCU, I received Federal Financial Aid, including student loans and scholarships.
5. I am continuing to pay off the student loans for my education at CCU.
6. I attended CCU because of family ties and because CCU offered me a scholarship.
7. CCU's student handbook contains a lifestyle covenant outlining rules of behavior for students. This covenant requires students to commit to "mutual accountability" by reporting

other students to CCU's administration if their behavior is perceived to violate the covenant. This encourages a snitch culture that puts queer and transgender students at risk of harm.

8. The lifestyle covenant regulates romantic relationships and sexual conduct. Same-gender romantic relationships and signs of affection between same-sex couples are forbidden and may result in discipline.

9. The 2020-2021 Student Handbook defines the sexual misconduct forbidden by the covenant broadly as "any consensual sexual behavior that occurs outside of the covenant of marriage. This includes sexual intercourse, cohabitation, public displays of affection, intimate contact, consensual sexual touching, **behavior that exhibits a same-sex romantic relationship**, pornography, and actions (for example spending the night with someone of the opposite sex) that may lead to situations of temptation, regret, and immoral conduct."

10. The 2020-2021 Student Handbook goes on to state the following about same-sex romantic relationships:

God created human beings to show forth God's image as male and female in relationship (Gen 1:26-28), and the biblical ideal is the expression of sexuality within a heterosexual, lifelong, monogamous union (Mk 10:4- 12). However, God's ideal for human sexuality, as with every aspect of humanity, has been interrupted by humanity's rebellion and God's judgment. As a result, some human beings experience confusion regarding their gender identity and/or sexual orientation. When students at CCU find themselves with questions regarding their gender identity, or sexual orientation, they are encouraged to come forward and take advantage of the University's Counseling Center services and pastoral resources to help guide and direct them through their struggle. At times it may be necessary to remove a student from specific involvement such as athletic team

participation, leadership positions, or other University activities either temporarily or permanently. The University will allow students to continue their enrollment at the University as long as they can remain celibate, and as they undergo counseling and mentoring. All students who are not married are required to remain celibate, whether they are same-sex attracted or opposite-sex attracted. It is the University's desire to walk with the student through their struggle with their sexual orientation. **If a student does engage in a same-sex relationship, violates the policy on same-sex behavior, or exhibits same-sex intimate relationship behavior anytime during the mentoring, he or she will be disciplined within the terms of the sexual conduct/activity policy.**

11. I am a lesbian woman.

12. During my time as a student, my roommates suspected I was attracted to women.

They locked me in my dorm room, blocked the door and wouldn't let me leave until I confessed.

13. My roommates then outed me to administration in accordance with CCU's policy of reporting other students for lifestyle covenant violations.

14. My roommate's outing of my sexual orientation triggered a series of disciplinary actions against me by CCU. My discipline included mandated conversion therapy, mandated mentorship, and academic probation.

15. My counselor told me that the goal of my counselling was for me to become heterosexual.

16. CCU removed me from my housing.

17. CCU placed me in an isolated dorm where I had to live alone because CCU did not want me to live with other women.

18. As a student at CCU, I was required to attend “ex-gay” chapels where same-gender relationships were demonized and abstinence was touted as an alternative to homosexuality.

19. CCU blocked access to LGBTQ+ resources on its campus Wi-Fi, making it difficult for me to find affirming help.

20. As a result of CCU’s actions, I am now living with clinically diagnosed PTSD and other mental health issues.

21. Because of the abusive environment at CCU, I suffered documented mental health crises involving self-harm and suicide attempts.

22. To stay alive, I had to leave CCU. I left shortly before the end of my first year.

23. Due to CCU’s conduct, my relationship with my family has been significantly and negatively impacted, including periods of housing instability.

24. CCU stole my coming out from me. Instead of me coming out to my family when I was ready and in my own way, they forced me to come out to my family and to do so under humiliating and painful circumstances.

25. I barely survived this experience.

26. I am not the only student that CCU has treated like this. Others have told me that they have experienced the same or similar treatment from CCU because they are queer or trans.

27. There are other queer students at CCU right now. I have been told by one of them that they are terrified to say or do anything that might expose their sexuality.

28. After I left CCU, I requested my student records so that I could consider pursuing legal recourse. CCU failed to give me my student records. I felt powerless at this point and my mental health further deteriorated.

29. Additionally, I did not try to further assert my right to be free from discrimination because CCU is a religiously affiliated university and I did not think I would have been protected.

30. In fact, CCU requested and received a religious exemption from Title IX by the Department of Education that allowed them to do what they did to me without any consequence or accountability.

31. I still live near the CCU campus and experience anxiety when I think about what they did to me.

32. I am and have been a federal taxpayer and I don't think my taxes should be funding the discrimination against me.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 22nd day of January, 2021.

By:


Journey Mueller

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**


Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474- AA
)	
Plaintiffs,	)	DECLARATION OF JP
v.)	
)	
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, JP, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Waco, Texas, located in McClennan County.
3. I grew up in the Los Angeles area in California. I went to a private Christian high school with a very similar environment to Baylor.
4. I began attending Baylor University in Waco, Texas in August 2017. I'm a pre-med student. I expect to graduate in May 2021 with a degree in Biology and Biochemistry.
5. I receive merit based financial aid to attend Baylor.
6. I am Vice President of Gamma Alpha Upsilon, which when written in the Greek alphabet appears as "GAY." Gamma is the only "official," unofficial LGBTQ+ support group for Baylor students.
7. I became involved in Gamma during my first semester of Freshman year. I originally joined as an ally and Gamma gave me the space to figure out my sexual identity.
8. Baylor has multiple statements listed in its website when it comes to marriage and homosexuality.
9. The school has an official policy on sexual conduct. This policy states "Baylor will be guided by the biblical understanding that human sexuality is a gift from God and that physical sexual intimacy is to be expressed in the context of marital fidelity. Thus, it is expected that Baylor students, faculty, and staff will engage in behaviors consistent with this understanding of human sexuality."

10. Baylor's official Statement on Human Sexuality states "Baylor University welcomes all students into a safe and supportive environment in which to discuss and learn about a variety of issues, including those of human sexuality. The University affirms the biblical understanding of sexuality as a gift from God. Christian churches across the ages and around the world have affirmed purity in singleness and fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman as the biblical norm. Temptations to deviate from this norm include both heterosexual sex outside of marriage and homosexual behavior. It is this expected that Baylor students will not participate in advocacy groups which promote understandings of sexuality that are contrary to biblical teaching."
11. This statement makes me feel like my identity is a sinful temptation. It feels like Baylor thinks that something is inherently wrong with my sexual identity.
12. Baylor's statements say that they support queer students but they directly contradict these statements by saying that queer identities are invalid and by denying us access to queer support groups.
13. Baylor's official statement on Human Sexuality then directs students "struggling" with these issues to go to some form of counselling at one of the on-campus counselling centers.
14. This feels like Baylor is suggesting conversion therapy by another name.
15. Baylor University also has a statement of "Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion" which states "we seek to embody Christ's teachings of love and inclusivity across boundaries of racial, ethnic, gender, social-economic, religious, and other expressions of human difference. Because, at Baylor, 'Love thy neighbor' is not just words...they are a way of life."
16. Baylor does not put these words into practice. Baylor is designed to support white, heteronormative Christian men and takes little to no action to practice the Baylor Way towards other students.
17. This "way of life" seems to be a value of the school, except when it is not, such as when Baylor expressly allows for discrimination, as stated in Baylor's Civil Rights policy, "As a religiously controlled institution of higher education, Baylor is exempt from compliance with select provisions of certain civil rights laws, and Baylor is also exempt from prohibitions of discrimination based on religion. As such, the University prescribes standards of personal conduct which are consistent with its religious mission and values".
18. This policy makes me feel unsafe and unprotected by the law.
19. Baylor is unlikely to discipline queer students merely for being queer. However, Baylor's policy forbidding "homosexual behavior" and its other statements condemning queer identities and relationships, makes me feel like I could never show affection to a queer partner and that I would be at risk of discipline and ridicule if I were to hold their hand or give them a kiss in public.

20. I am a queer man.
21. I chose Baylor because it has an excellent pre-med program. I originally did not want to go to Baylor because of its conservative reputation. However, Baylor ended up being the best school that I got into and that I could afford.
22. I was not aware of Baylor's disposition towards the LGBTQ+ community when enrolling as I did not discover my sexuality until between my Freshman and Sophomore years.
23. Baylor claims to love its LGBTQ+ students, yet they refuse to grant us access to any form of student support system. They treat our existence as if there is something inherently wrong with us.
24. While I have not been subjected to conversion therapy or other therapy or assaulted, the school's opinion towards its LGBTQ+ students cause me a great deal of anxiety.
25. I fear that I will not be able to be fully out without it affecting my career in medicine. I worry that I will not be able to get into medical school because I am not straight. My professors are not as affirming of queer identities as other departments on campus and I fear how Baylor treats its non-straight students will negatively affect my career.
26. Baylor has allowed a student group to promote hostile, homophobic messages and defended that group's right to spread those messages, while at the same time, forbidding LGBTQ+ students from having a support group or sanctioned club.
27. Gamma, or an earlier version of Gamma, has applied for a charter every semester and been denied its charter every time.
28. This year, Gamma has more support for its charter than it ever has had in its history.
29. For the first time ever, Gamma's charter has the official support of: (1) Baylor Student Senate; (2) Baylor Faculty Senate; (3) Baylor NAACP; (4) Baylor Asian Student Coalition; (5) Baylor Latinx Coalition; (6) Baylor Black Student Coalition; (7) Texas Rising; (8) College Democrats; (9) several pan-Hellenic sororities and fraternities (*informally supported); (9) nearly all multicultural sororities and fraternities.
30. I am participating in this lawsuit because Baylor has made their LGBTQ+ students feel like they are less than and undesirable. I am tired of seeing my friends hurt by the way their school treats them. I want to help change the way our universities treat their LGBTQ+ students.

- 
32. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that this declaration was executed this 27th day of February, 2021.

By:

J P

JP

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of)	
themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474-
Plaintiffs,	)	AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and	)	DANIELLE POWELL
Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as)	
Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights,)	
U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Danielle Powell, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of New Orleans, Louisiana, located in Orleans Parish.
3. Beginning in August 2007, I became a student at Grace University in Omaha, Nebraska. I ceased attending Grace University in March 2011 without graduating.
4. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I am also repaying student loans that I took out to enroll in Grace University.
5. Grace University ceased operations in 2018. Its student handbooks were not archived. I have a handbook saved from when I was a student there for the years 2010-2011.
6. Included with some of these rules in the student handbook are severe restrictions on media and computer usage, including limitations on channels, movies, and shows that students can watch and not be allowed to dance at campus events without the permission of the dean.
7. Included in the student handbook is an extensive section on dating. It states, among other things, "Sexual purity should be the goal of every dating couple."
8. The statement on dating also states, "sexual fulfillment is reserved by God for heterosexual marriage."

9. In another section, the handbook states, "Outside of heterosexual marriage, interpersonal sexual activity in all its forms is sin according to God's word. Any student involved in sexually immoral behavior, including premarital sex, adultery, and homosexual acts is at minimum placed on University Probation and may be subject to a Judiciary Hearing." (Emphasis in original.)
10. The handbook states that students accept these terms by signing their application for admission.
11. I am a pansexual woman.
12. I originally attended Grace University after my mother had me try out for their volleyball team. I made the team and was offered a significant financial aid package. The package offered was based on my high school academic record, financial need, and being African-American. My sister also lived in Omaha with my niece and nephew, and I wanted to be close to family.
13. Initially, when I enrolled in Grace University, my sexual orientation was not an issue. I identified as heterosexual, dated men, and was not exposed to other forms of sexual identity and gender expression.
14. In my senior year, I began to question my sexual orientation because I started to have feelings for my best friend, who was a woman.
15. I did not know in detail the consequences of coming out at that time. I did know that the culture of Grace University did not accept homosexuality. I did not even know closeted LGBTQ+ students who attended Grace University then. I knew my coming out would not be accepted.
16. Grace University's code of conduct addressed homosexual acts alongside violations such as premarital sex. After my expulsion, Grace University adjusted its honor code to forbid all same-sex relationships and dating.
17. This language change made me feel relieved and vindicated as I realized other students would not face the same problem I did when it came to misleading language in the code of conduct. Grace university would no longer be able to trick students into attending Grace University and spending money with them through deceitful and coded language in the code of conduct.
18. As a result of coming out, I was separated from my peers and my students in my housing community with less than 24 hours' notice. During the judiciary board process, I was

questioned about my faith and shamed in front of faculty and other students. I was not allowed to spend time alone with my girlfriend.

19. After my expulsion from Grace University, the school demanded that I repay over \$6,000 and refused to release my transcripts until I did. This money was paid in institutional scholarship funds on my behalf. Ultimately, grace University and I came to an agreement when a representative from Grace stated on a radio show that they would not hold my transcripts. This representative also said that there would be no other repercussions if I did not pay these funds back.
20. As a student, I would not have attended Grace University without student loans. I believe that schools should not be able to collect financial aid this way and then discriminate against students because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. Schools should not be able to take government funds and then infringe on their students' civil rights and freedoms.
21. I am participating in this lawsuit to be sure that no student's education is compromised in the way mine was.
22. I have lost so much due to Grace University's actions. I lost respect, equal treatment, vocational opportunities, financial earnings, anonymity, etc. I do not want other students to have to face these same losses.
23. I am a taxpayer and do not feel that my taxes should be spent in furthering the discrimination against me by Grace University.
24. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed this ____ day of February, 2021.

By:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Danielle Powell". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Danielle Powell

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF OREGON
EUGENE DIVISION**

Elizabeth HUNTER; et al., on behalf of)	
themselves and all others similarly situated,)	
	)	Civil Action No. 6:21-cv-00474-
Plaintiffs,	)	AA
v.)	
	)	DECLARATION OF MEGAN
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION and	)	STEFFEN
Suzanne GOLDBERG, in her official capacity as)	
Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights,)	
U.S. Department of Education,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

I, Megan Steffen, declare:

1. I am over 18 years of age and have personal knowledge of the matters stated in this declaration and would testify truthfully to them if called upon to do so.
2. I am a resident of Chicago, Illinois in Cook County.
3. I was born in Bay City, Michigan.
4. I grew up in a conservative, Christian household and attended a non-denominational church.
5. I am 23 years old.
6. I began attending Moody Bible Institute (“MBI” or “Moody”) in Chicago, Illinois in August 2015.
7. MBI’s campus is in the heart of the city of Chicago.
8. I decided to attend MBI for several reasons, many of which had to do with my mental health. I was diagnosed with clinical anxiety and depression in 2014-2015, which I had been dealing with since adolescence. I was self-medicating with alcohol during this time.
9. I picked MBI because of its strict no-alcohol policy, faith-based campus, and the fact that my sister was attending MBI.
10. The strict no-alcohol policy was important to me so that I could maintain my sobriety. It limited my exposure to alcohol and limited my chance of relapse.
11. My family and I also felt that it was important to go to a Christian college as Christianity was offered as a solution to my mental health struggles. The idea of being on a Christian campus was appealing to me at the time, as I was in a vulnerable position.
12. Additionally, since my sister already attended the school, there was some security there for me and my family knowing that someone could help me if any issues or emergencies arose.

13. MBI is a taxpayer-funded religious college.
14. MBI maintains a statement on human sexuality in its student handbook. It states: “[W]e conclude that non-marital sex, homosexual sex, same-sex romantic relationships, and transgender expressions are deviations from God’s standard, misrepresenting the nature of God Himself.”
15. The statement goes on to say that “non-marital sexual intimacy, homosexual sexual intimacy and same sex relationships, and gender identification that is incongruent with one’s birth sex are all violations of biblical teaching from which Moody derives its community standards.”
16. I did not consider MBI’s stance towards LGBTQ+ students at the time I decided to attend as I was not out, even to myself, yet.
17. My early years at MBI were a positive experience for me. It felt safe and like home.
18. I lived on campus in the dorms for three years.
19. However, two years after starting at MBI, I began to come out as lesbian to close friends and family.
20. A majority of the reactions I received from my peers at MBI were negative.
21. When I posted pro-LGBTQIA+ content on social media, I began hearing that students were reacting negatively to my sexual identity. I also had students begin asking me to defend my sexuality and telling me that they thought my identity was wrong and sinful.
22. I ended up on the radar of the school’s administration in Spring of 2018. MBI’s initial concern was that I attended the Women’s March, which was not an approved event by MBI administration.
23. I was required to meet with a member of MBI administration often. I realize now that the purpose of these meetings was to enable the school to monitor me.
24. On some occasions, other MBI students would turn me into the administration for my LGBTQ+ related postings.
25. I had a total of approximately ten meetings with one particular MBI administrator. They often expressed concerns about my online posts, my relationship status, and other problems the administration had with my sexual identity.
26. I received anonymous hate mail during this time telling me that I should be ashamed of myself for coming out as lesbian.
27. I found myself in an environment that actively hated me and wanted me gone.
28. I felt like I was in survival mode every day.
29. Attending MBI, which had felt safe and supportive before I came out, had become a place of fear that had turned against me.
30. The same people who supported me in my mental health journey, turned their back on me after I came out and said hurtful things to me that harmed my mental health.
31. I felt isolated and alone.

32. While all of this was happening at MBI, the head pastor and associate pastor of my church sat me down and told me that I was wrong for who I was and for exploring my sexuality.
33. It felt like God telling me there was something wrong with me.
34. In fall of 2019, I received an official warning from MBI's Dean of Student Life about a social media post where I said I was a lesbian.
35. I had been turned in this time by a faculty member.
36. Exhibit A is a copy of that official warning letter from MBI.
37. In the letter, the Dean informed me that I was "being placed on Warning Status through the remainder of the semester" and that my behavior was "dangerously close to the probationary level."
38. The letter also stated that my Warning Status was MBI's "way of indicating to you our disapproval of your actions and giving you fair warning that further unwise behavior on your part will result in you being subject to more stringent disciplinary measures."
39. The Dean went on to say "Megan, during this period of time I will expect that you appropriately align yourself with the policies governing student life and am hopeful that there will be no more need for disciplinary measures."
40. Because of this warning, I agreed to remove the post where I described myself as a lesbian and to no longer make social media posts about my sexuality or LGBTQ+ issues.
41. At this point, my anxiety came back in force. I did not want to get out of bed. I was scared of running into an administrator on my way to class.
42. I followed my agreement with MBI to no longer post about my sexuality or LGBTQ+ issues until the spring of 2020, when I had finished all my classes and was awaiting graduation. At that time, I posted about an LGBTQ+ event I attended in New York.
43. MBI saw this post and threatened to prevent me from graduating because of it, even though I had finished all my course work and was no longer living on campus.
44. According to MBI, several professors expressed concern about my being allowed to graduate and approached the school's administration. The concern was that they did not want MBI's reputation tainted by having a known lesbian graduate.
45. The result from this was that, less than a week before graduation, I had to defend why I deserved to get a diploma.
46. Two MBI administrators grilled me about my relationship status, sexual history and asked whether I would date women after graduation.
47. The process was humiliating.
48. It was clear during this meeting that I would not get my diploma unless the answers I gave to their questions aligned with MBI's policies about sexuality and marriage. Because I had been placed in an impossible situation and my hard earned degree was on the line, I told MBI that I agreed with their non-affirming policies and planned to live according to them. As a result, MBI allowed me to receive my diploma.

49. It was as if MBI put on one final show of shaming to satisfy the people at MBI who wished I had never been there.
50. I graduated in May 2020 with a B.A. in Human Services through the counselling program.
51. However, I was so traumatized from this experience, that for several months after graduation, I was scared to do anything that would upset Moody.
52. I cannot imagine ever finding myself in as abusive and manipulative of an environment as I did at Moody.
53. I felt so unsafe, unsupported, and unprotected by my peers, MBI staff, and administration. MBI's policies on sexuality, dating and marriage contributed to this sense of fear and vulnerability.
54. I literally had nowhere on campus to turn to for help with the harassment and discrimination I was experiencing.
55. The majority of my peers and staff on MBI's campus regularly participated in and perpetuated ideas of queerphobia. I would have to face this queerphobia in classes, in casual conversations, and in direct comments.
56. During the time that I was out on MBI's campus, my depression and anxiety became very severe. I had regular appointments with a therapist and psychiatrist during this time so that I could cope and heal from the homophobia I dealt with on a daily basis. I experienced panic attacks, inability to get out of bed, insomnia, and suicidal thoughts. I graduated a year later than planned because I had to withdraw from some classes for mental health reasons.
57. I was not forced to participate in conversion therapy, but during my meetings with MBI administration it was strongly encouraged that I meet with Christian leaders to work through my sexual identity issues. This would essentially be a "softer" form of conversion therapy.
58. Other queer students at MBI have been turned in by other students after disclosing their sexuality. Some of these students have been forced into counselling or required to meet with a professor.
59. I am participating in this lawsuit for two reasons. One is that I want justice for myself and for other LGBTQIA+ students who have been harmed by government-funded religious schools. The other reason is that I want to prevent further harm to LGBTQIA+ students on these campuses.
60. I am a federal income taxpayer in the United States. I received grants from the U.S. Department of Education to attend Moody Bible Institute.
61. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed this 24th day of March, 2021.

By: 
Megan Steffen (Mar 24, 2021 19:17 CDT)

Megan Steffen

Megan Steffen

Megan Steffen Declaration

Final Audit Report

2021-03-25

Created:	2021-03-24
By:	Lauren Swain (lauren@paulsouthwick.com)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	[REDACTED]

