

Professor Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer

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TO: Boston University Faculty and Staff

FROM: Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer
Crystal Williams, Vice President and Associate Provost for Community & Inclusion

DATE: July 15, 2021

SUBJECT: Opening of the LGBTQIA+ Center for Faculty & Staff; Appointment of Dr. Debbie Bazarsky as Inaugural Director

In fall 2019, we [announced](#) the findings of a task force charged with recommending ways to improve the workplace experience of Boston University’s LGBTQIA+ faculty and staff. Among the core priorities [put forth](#) by the Task Force on LGBTQIA+ Faculty and Staff was the creation of a professionally-staffed center on campus to support and connect employees who identify as LGBTQIA+. We are excited today to formally announce **the opening of the LGBTQIA+ Center for Faculty & Staff at Boston University on September 2, 2021.**

When it opens this fall at 808 Commonwealth Avenue, the LGBTQIA+ Center for Faculty & Staff will serve as a hub for our workplace community, bringing together LGBTQIA+ colleagues from across our Charles River, Medical, and Fenway campuses through programming, services, events, and shared gathering space. The Center is the culmination of extensive input, guidance, and collaboration from the BU community, and we want to give special thanks to task force co-chairs Karen Warkentin and Judi Burgess for their efforts working to incorporate it into the [2030 Strategic Plan](#) as a key initiative of the “Diversity, Equity & Inclusion” pillar. The Center will report to Vice President and Associate Provost for Community & Inclusion Crystal Williams.

As we prepare for the Center’s opening on the first day of fall classes, we are excited to also **announce the appointment of Dr. Debbie Bazarsky as its inaugural director, starting July 30.** Debbie is a nationally respected leader around LGBTQIA+ topics in higher education and joins BU from the Pennsylvania College of Art & Design, where she has served as Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Dean of Enrollment, Engagement, and Diversity since 2019. She has taught for 14 years as a faculty member in Widener University’s Center for Human Sexuality Studies and College of Health and Human Services, and was the founding director of two nationally recognized LGBT centers at Princeton University and the University of California, Santa Barbara. Debbie served as co-chair of the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals and has also served on several national LGBTQ task forces and

advisory boards. She holds a PhD and master of education in human sexuality from Widener University and a master's in college student personnel and bachelor's in social work from Miami University.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Bazarsky to this important new role. We hope to see many of you at the Center in the fall. In the meantime, we would like to extend our gratitude to the members of the LGBTQIA+ Center for Faculty & Staff Director Hiring Committee, listed below, for their excellent work over the last several months and, once again, to the Task Force on LGBTQIA+ Faculty & Staff, whose contributions have advanced our efforts to make BU a more inclusive and welcoming campus environment.

LGBTQIA+ Center for Faculty & Staff Director Hiring Committee

Chair:

Jason Campbell Foster, Senior Associate Dean of Students

Members:

Alana Anderson, former Director of Programs, Diversity & Inclusion

Derek Howe, Vice President for Budget & Capital Planning

Merav Opher, Professor of Astronomy, College of Arts & Sciences