Today, as a University community, we recognize and celebrate National Coming Out Day (NCOD). On college campuses, this day is an opportunity to educate the community about how LGBTQIA members are often silenced, as well as demonstrate ways to support individuals during their coming out journeys. While this day may provide an educational opportunity for potential allies, it holds even more meaning for our LGBTQIA community members who want to be authentically seen and recognized.

For 29 years, NCOD has been celebrated as a way to remind LGBTQIA individuals about the power that is coming out and how LGBTQIA people can use the day to rewrite their history. This day also holds great significance for many as it may be the first time that an LGBTQIA individual gets the opportunity to feel affirmed in their identity while having the support of the larger campus community.

Understand that everyone’s coming out experience is different and the process is never-ending. At MU, we have faculty, staff and students who are members of the LGBTQIA community that we celebrate. Even on NCOD, we recognize that not all folks are ready and/or able to “come out” and we affirm them. The process of the development of a positive LGBTQIA identity is very long and difficult. Individuals may experience loss via family and friends and even be confronted with homophobic/transphobic attitudes and discriminatory practices along the way.

To celebrate this national day that brings awareness to the coming out process and the importance of understanding and appreciating the experience of LGBTQIA people, Millersville University will be hosting Pridefest 2017 on Friday, October 13 from 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. in the Student Memorial Center. This annual celebration will consist of opportunities to learn about local and regional LGBT organizations, learn about LGBTQIA issues and ways to become an advocate. The celebration will also consist of a Drag Show highlighting MU student drag performers, and special guest Shangela from RuPaul’s Drag Race. I invite you to join us from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. in the Student Memorial Center.

Let’s celebrate our LGBTQIA community today, tomorrow and forever.

Jas Whitlow
Director, Intercultural Center
Pronouns: She/They

Dr. Tiffany Wright
Chair, President’s Commission on Gender and Sexual Diversity(PCGSD)
Pronouns: She/Her