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OPEN to Raise Awareness and Prompt Discussion

Winthrop University

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OPEN to Raise Awareness and Prompt Discussion

Quick Facts

- The OPEN campaign, held Oct. 1-5, will raise awareness about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.
- The campaign will include seven events on Winthrop's campus.

ROCK HILL, S.C. - Winthrop student groups will hold an **OPEN campaign** Oct. 1-5 to raise public awareness and promote discussion of issues facing **lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people**.

Events include forums, an allies march, a marriage debate and a foreign film. OPEN is the brainchild of **Angad Chera**, a senior integrated marketing major from Greenville, S.C. He worked with the **Social & Behavioral Research Lab** to survey nearly 1,000 Winthrop students about their attitudes toward homosexuality. Nearly 89 percent of those responding said they strongly agreed/agreed that they would be comfortable working with someone who is openly gay/lesbian. In addition, 60 percent stated that they strongly agreed/agreed would be comfortable living with a gay/lesbian roommate.

Chera gained support from 20 student organizations and departments who agreed to collaborate on sponsorship of a week of events. They are:

- **Panel and forum on gay and lesbian issues**, 7 p.m., Oct. 1, **Tillman Auditorium**, sponsored by the Council of Student Leaders. The panel will consist of Connie Vetter, a Charlotte, N.C., attorney, and Anita Case, executive director of Catawba Care Coalition. The two will discuss laws regarding adoption, partner benefits, housing, privacy laws, health care and medical needs. The event will be followed by a reception featuring Turkish food.
- **"Debate of Ideas on Marriage,"** noon, Oct. 2, front steps of **Byrnes Auditorium**, sponsored by the Department of Political Science. The discussion will consist of statements from Amnesty International, Global, Phi Sigma Alpha, Socialist Student Union and the Young Republicans. Those attending will be allowed to vote for same-sex marriage, eat wedding cake and drink coffee. Participating students will dress up in wedding attire to call attention to the social institution of marriage.
- **"Saving Face,"** a romantic comedy movie, 7 p.m., Oct. 2, Tillman Auditorium, sponsored by Amnesty International. The movie revolves around two Chinese-American lesbians and a traditional Chinese mother in New York City.
- **"Don't Ask, Don't Tell"** lecture by **Eric Alva**, retired staff sergeant and first American soldier injured in the Iraq war, 8 p.m., Oct. 3, Tillman Auditorium. As spokesman for the Human Rights Campaign, Alva speaks out against the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. Cost is \$5 with Winthrop ID; \$7 general admission, sponsored by Dinkins Student Union.
- **Lecture on historical and cultural perspectives** on gay and lesbian culture, 7 p.m., Oct. 4, Tillman Auditorium. Speakers are Shelley Hamill, associate professor of health and Deana Morrow, associate professor of social work. Sponsored by Multicultural Student Life.
- **OPEN Ally March** by members of the campus community, 2:30 p.m., Oct. 5, starting at Byrnes Auditorium, sponsored by SOAR. Students, faculty and staff members from the 20 sponsors and others will march across campus to raise awareness and to draw support.
- **Face 2 Face**, 8 p.m., Oct. 5, Tillman Auditorium. Sponsored by Global. An educational discussion on gender roles will be followed by an entertaining performance by drag queens. Cost is \$2. Proceeds will benefit the Catawba Care Coalition and OPEN.

For more information, contact Chera at 864/386-1327 or cheraa2@winthrop.edu.

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