



Rhodes College

Dear Rhodes Community,

Last week Tennessee Governor Bill Lee signed into law two bills targeting the LGBTQ+ community, and particularly transgender and nonbinary persons. The first law bans gender-affirming care for persons under 18 years of age. The second law restricts public adult cabaret performances. These laws, together with proposed and enacted legislation in various states throughout the country, could negatively impact the lives of members of the LGBTQ+ community and their families. We are deeply concerned about the impact of these various bills and stand in strong support, now and always, of the LGBTQ+ community at Rhodes.

We invite faculty, staff, and students to learn more about actions that will promote a more inclusive Rhodes community and a more just, civil, and equitable society. We describe a range of possibilities for action and support below:

- Learn more about these issues. Organizations such as the [Human Rights Campaign](#) and [GLAAD](#) have valuable resources available on their websites. The Rhodes [LGBTQ+ Working Group](#) is also a valuable resource. Established in 2010, the working group has played an important role in assessing the College's LGBTQ+ policies and environment to ensure that we offer the broadest possible inclusivity, in keeping with our values and vision.
- Take meaningful action to address this and all forms of prejudice and stigmatization. At Rhodes, bias or harassment towards community members who identify as LGBTQ+ will not be tolerated. Bias incidents may be reported through the Bias Education Response System (BERS) found [here](#).
- Stand in solidarity with members of the community who have been victimized or affected by anti-LGBTQ+ violence and harassment. The LGBTQ+ Working group is developing a set of resources for Rhodes community members who want to support this work.
- [Counseling@Rhodes](#) offers the following:
 - 24/7/365 Support Line: Call 843-434-1217
 - On-Campus Services are available by appointment by calling 901-843-3128
 - Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (closed 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.)
 - The Counseling Center website lists the full range of services: [Counseling Center | Rhodes Sites](#)
 - LGBTQ+ Discussion Group – Thursdays at 4:00, starting March 23. To participate, students should call 901-843-3128 or email counseling@rhodes.edu for more information.

We are firmly committed to fostering a warm, supportive, fair, and equitable environment for every member of the Rhodes community, and especially for LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming individuals at this time.

Jennifer Collins

President

Sherry Turner

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