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LGBA celebrates

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UB's Lesbian Gay Bisexual Alliance hailed National Coming Out Day as a great success for the entire community.

After much anticipation, the University at Buffalo was, for the second year, the only state-funded college or university in the country to have a female-impersonator perform on-campus.

"Increased visibility will, we hope, strengthen our cause and combat misguided homophobia and ignorance," said Chevon Davis, the professional drag queen LGBA hosted.

Earlier attempts to intimidate the gay community by putting up anti-gay fliers around campus on Friday, and tearing down the National Coming Out day fliers, were unsuccessful deterrents. Despite these threatening actions, there was a minimal show of anti-gay sentiment during the performances by Davis.

Pink and black balloons (which symbolize the pink and black triangles lesbians and gays were forced to wear in Nazi concentration camps during WWII) decorated the stage as Davis danced on from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The LGBA's National Coming Out celebration also included a display of the rainbow flag, composed of colored stripes to symbolize diversity.

"I have seen better entertainment and I've seen worse entertainment. I think that something like this will raise the issues for everyone in a very non-threatening manner. I think that's very healthy," Dean of Students Dennis Black said.

Shawn Carey, a law student, echoed the sentiment of the majority of students in attendance. "It's great that they can express themselves this way," he said.

Craig Brown, another law student added, "I would equate gay rights with religious freedom of expression, both [are] protected by the First Amendment."

Many students were surprised by the performance. Others were shocked by the open display of homosexual pride.

"By raising up her dress like that, I think she's crossing the limit of good taste," Tim Higgins and Jody Yaro said.

"I think it's disgusting. Men dressing like women and doing that with each other," said a UB student named Dray in reference to some dancing between Davis and Limrod, a LGBA member.

Limrod thoroughly enjoyed the experience. "It was fun doing that stuff. Being from New York City I'm used to it. I'm glad to see students taking pride in their identity. Hiding your true self—your identity—is to me worse than being in prison."

Turnout for the event was better than previous years. "This event is



Susan Seo/The Spectrum

GO SANG, MISS THANG! Chevon Davis raises her arms in celebration of National Coming Out Day, yesterday.

important because by increasing our visibility, we can show people the whole spectrum of our group—those who look and act like straight people to those who are more visible like the drag queens," said Vic Fusilero, president of the Graduate Gay and Lesbian Alliance.

The enthusiastic crowd around the stage was composed mostly of LGBA members. Cheering on Davis, shouting back at a group of hecklers and eventually crowding on stage during the final moments of the performance—LGBA was out in force to increase their visibility.

The other crowd of students that encircled the lobby, while

much less vocal in their support were, nonetheless, affected by the display. Reactions ranged from curious grins to shock and bursts of laughter.

"If I can make one person happy by putting on this show or open one person's eyes to the gay community, then it will all be worthwhile," concluded Davis.