

Timeline – University of Miami’s LGBTQ History Milestones

1975

- April: Gay Alliance was formed in early April 1975. Ana Roca and Buzz Stearns were the prime movers of the organization.
- October: Gay Alliance organized the first social event attended by 125 guests. They were recognized as an official UM organization. Edward Graziani was listed as president. Professor Marian Grabowski, Rev. Tom Crowder (UM chaplain), and Open Door were listed as supporters. UM program “Open Door” was a gathering place for students staffed by student volunteers selected and trained by the Counselling Center psychologists.

1977

- February: Professor Marian Grabowski, who had a column titled “Across Mrs. G’s Desk” in TMH, wrote an essay titled “Gays Deserve Same Rights, Justice, and Liberty.”
- June: Anita Bryant’s anti-gay rights movement emerged and remained a hot topic among students for the next few years. Her name appeared in Ibis from 1978 to 1980.

1978

- April: On-campus celebration of the National Gay Blue Jeans Day raised an exchange of opinions by gay and straight students.
- The last time TMH listed a program by Gay Alliance was October 10, 1978.

1980

- February: Ad in THM shows that UM provided counseling on homosexuality for students.

1982

- April: TMH’s supportive coverage of gay lifestyle was criticized by one student and two students responded supporting the newspaper.

1985

- October: Sal O’Neal, UM Senior, wrote the article “Gay Student Seeks to Inform” about the gay community at UM and in Miami. He also wrote that Gay Alliance flamed out in 1977 after the graduation of the leader Dan Abraham.

- October: Report on homosexual activity in the Learning Center's men's room started a discussion about moral on campus including sexual behavior and AIDS.

1987

- February: UM Institute for Family Living provided counseling for homosexual and bisexual men and women.

1990

- March: TMH's Insight Magazine published a feature article "Sex, Lies, and Homophobia" (on UM campus) reporting that there is no gay-support organization at UM.

1991

- September: Student columnist wrote an article titled "Campus Hate Activities Must Stop."
- October: TMH reported that there is a new organization Gay Lesbian Bisexual Community (GLBC) on campus.
- December: A group of students began to organize AIDS Awareness Task Force.

1992

- October: The first celebration of the "Coming Out Day" was held on October 8th.
- October: Student columnist Jeff Lurie wrote his experience of coming out.

1993

- April: Over 20 UM faculty and students participated in the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian Gay and Bisexual Equal Rights and Liberation.
- October: Supporters of the "Coming Out Day" wore blue jeans and white shirts.

1994

- October: The Faculty Senate approved an amended policy on non-discrimination including sexual orientation.
- October: GLBC started publishing a monthly newsletter "Pride Report" earlier this year.

1995

- October: Rainbow ribbon tying was a tradition at the Coming Out Day.

1996

- October: The name "Coming Out Week" appeared for the first time this year.
- October: Student columnist wrote that "our school is very conservative."

1998

- March: GLBC implemented a Gatekeeper Certificate Program.
- April: A member of GLBC was assaulted Off-Campus.

1999

- February: Students contributed to the Student Government's campus AIDS quilt display for "A Week of Life." Greg Louganis, a former member of the UM's diving team and two-time gold medalist in 1984 and 1988 Summer Olympics, was a guest speaker.
- April: GLBC hosted a discussion by five faculty members titled "Homophobia vs. Acceptance: Life at UM" as a Spring Awareness event.
- October: GLBC organized a memorial for the gay Wyoming student during the Coming Out Week.
- October: GLBC wins a Senate seat.

2002

- October: Student wrote in recommending that GLBC should include Transgender in its name.

2003

- January: the name "SpectrUM" appeared in TMH for the first time. Chris Vasquez, the president, stated that the name change is in response to the student opinion in 2002.
- October: Jarrod Stokes, SpectrUM president, told THM that UM is open and accepting.

2005

- April: During the Spring Awareness Week, more than 130 students and a couple of administrators participated in OUTspoken's mock marriages to protest the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment.

2008

- April: The Tunnel of Oppression, a multimedia exhibit designed to challenge people's ideas and perceptions of issues dealing with oppression, comes to the UM for the first time.
- November: a UM professor and students protested at the Miami Beach City Hall for gay marriage rights.

2009

- "Hurriqueen" had a column in TMH (2008 and 2009) to answer gay-related questions from students.

2010

- July: Gay-friendly fraternity, Delta Lambda Phi, was adopted.
- October: SpectrUM organized a candlelight vigil for anti-gay discrimination during the Coming Out Week.

2011

- November: Florida Republican Congresswoman Iliana Ros-Lehtinen, UM alumnae (Ph.D. in Education, 2004), was the first GOP member to back marriage equality. She was named as Distinguished Presidential Fellow at the University of Miami in October 2018.

2012

- April: TMH celebrated the 20th anniversary of SpectrUM by reporting that "the secretly started group Gay Lesbian Bisexual Community was recognized by the Student Organization Committee in 1992, got an office in the University Center in 1998, and they changed their name to SpectrUM in 2003 to make them more inclusive."
- September: Student Government Senate rejects Chick-fil-A bill that would have prohibited the chain to open a restraint at the U.

2013

- June: LGBTQ Task Force was organized by Dr. Patricia A. Whitely, VP, Student Affairs, to assess the level of services and support for LGBTQ students.
- July: Women, Gender Studies program offers minor in LGBTQ studies.
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- November: LGBTQ Faculty and Staff Network was formed.
- December: “Star Trek ” icon George Takei visited UM and spoke to students about his life struggles and vision for a future with equality.

2014

- June: Jacob Rudolph was chosen to be the first UM recipient of the 2014 Rim-Freeman Point Scholar, which is the nation’s largest scholarship-granting organization for LGBT students of merit.
- February: SpectrUM hosted the first show, DragOut to raise awareness of and support for the LGBTQ community and its diversity.
- August: SpectrUM changed its name to UPride with controversy. They returned to SpectrUM in the following year.
- October: Miami Herald reported that OUTLaw, the UM Law School’s LGBT Awareness Group, held a mentoring and networking event in Brickell.

2015

- March: Miami Herald reported that LGBT organizations of the UM, FIU, St. Thomas, and Nova hosted a happy hour in Wynnewood.
- April: The first IBIS (I Believe In Solidarity) Ally Network training was given to establish and sustain a support group at the University. Miller School of Medicine has a similar program called Safe Space.
- April: The first Lavender Celebration was held for LGBT graduating seniors sponsored by the LGBTQ Student Center and the Alumni Association.
- August: Alumnus Ryan Aquilina sent an open letter to President Frenk advocating gay rights on campus.
- September: UM launches a website that lists LGBT resources.

- September: TMH reported that gender-neutral housing to open in fall 2016 in Eaton Residential College and the University Village.
- October: UM Miller School of Medicine's student group MedicOUT published the first monthly newsletter "LGBTQ+ Newsletter."
- December: President Frenk announced the establishment of the University of Miami Standing Committee on Diversity and Inclusion and creation of LGBTQ resource center.
- Alumni Association's LGBTQ 'Canes established. (Month? Year? Contact Dorean Williams)

2016

- January: 12 Gender-neutral bathrooms became available in multiple locations at CG campus.
- February: UM Division of Student Affairs brought Ronni Sanlo, a national authority on LGBTQ matters, to help the University to lead strategic sessions for the creation of the forthcoming LGBTQ Center.
- August: LGBTQ Student Center opened on August 31. Dr. Van Bailey was the inaugural director.
- October: "Glee" star Alex Newell visited to kick off the U's commemoration of LGBTQ History Month.

2017

- January: LGBTQ Center for Wellness, Gender, and Sexual Health opened at the UM, which is the first of its kind in the southeast US.
- September: UM increased its Campus Pride Index rating from a 2-star in 2016-17 to a 4-star campus for the 2017-18 academic year.
- October: LGBTQ+ Mentorship Program offered the first time.
- November: Abby Stein, a transgender activist, visits campus to share her story with students.

2018

- March: LGBTQ Student Center kicks off its inaugural Pride Awareness Speaker Series with the interactive workshop Beyond Binaries: Identity, Sexuality and Movement Building, developed by educator, speaker, and grassroots activist Robyn Ochs.

- April: UM's float wins the best entry in the 10th Annual Miami Beach Gay Pride Parade on Sunday, April 8th. Approx. 90 students, faculty, staff, and alumni participated in the event.
- August: TMH reported that Tanner Wilfong is the first openly gay athlete at the U. (swimming and diving, represented Team USA in 2014 in Malaysia.)
- November: Law School hosted the first LGBTQ Alumni event honoring Law School Professor Marc Fajer.