

TGEA Presents TransGender Information to a Georgetown University Class

By Randi Johnson

On April 7, 2017, TGEA was invited to make a presentation to a class at Georgetown University during a seminar series in Transgender Issues organized by Dr. Kathleen Guidroz. The course is based on a growing field of transgender/ transsexual (or "trans") studies, starting with the ideas that individuals are born into a society whereby gender is socially constructed. The course discusses transgender identity and gender expression by challenging the gender binary. TGEA President and board member, Randi Johnson, attended the class in early April and presented her transition experience as they discussed emotional issues and resilience.

Randi pointed out that it was important to have supportive people around when transitioning for emotional, spiritual and mental support. This can be especially true because often friends and family members can be very unsupportive of a person transitioning. Randi explained that she needs support from people in order to stay functional. She pointed out that she was one of the more-fortunate people transitioning because she has a large group of people supporting her in her transition from her church, her neighborhood, her work place, and in the trans community. Unfortunately others don't have the support they need and can feel hopeless because they see no hope in either staying in their current gender or transitioning to their true gender. This hopelessness can often lead to thoughts of suicide, thus the large percentage of the transgender community that has contemplated suicide (>40%).

A general question and answer/discussion followed the presentation. It was important that the class meet a number of people from the transgender community since every person's story and life is unique. Hopefully the connection between TGEA and Georgetown University will continue into the future.