

UW-Madison: UW System honors Charek Briggs for LGBTQ+ advocacy

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MADISON — Katherine Charek Briggs, assistant director of UW-Madison's Gender and Sexuality Campus Center, has been honored with the 2021 Dr. P.B. Poorman Award for Outstanding Achievement on Behalf of LGBTQ+ People.

Charek Briggs is one of 11 honorees to receive the annual award from UW System, given to LGBTQ+ people or their allies who have helped to create a safer and more inclusive climate for LGBTQ+ people. The award celebrates the memory and legacy of Dr. Paula B. Poorman, a highly regarded faculty member at UW-Whitewater dedicated to improving the lives of LGBTQ+ people.

"Katherine works with intentionality and commitment to help shape an environment where all people feel safe and welcome," Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Lori Reesor says. "Katherine's dedication to create policies on gender-inclusive restrooms and the institutional use of preferred names and pronouns resulted in important milestones in campus inclusivity."

Charek Briggs' leadership to expand collective knowledge and action on LGBTQ+ issues, campus accessibility and inclusive programming extends beyond campus, Reesor says.

"We are grateful for their ongoing work to create a just community, especially for our LGBTQ+ students."

Charek Briggs has been instrumental in implementing campus-level projects serving LGBTQ+ students, staff, faculty and community members at UW, including the Gender Inclusive Restroom Facilities policy, informed consent transition care at University Health Services, a name and pronoun policy in Canvas, and the OutPages

faculty and staff directory.

Charek Briggs has also represented the GSCC at several national conferences presenting on trans health, informed consent, and white supremacy culture in LGBTQ+ spaces, as well as by serving on the board of the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals for several years, helping lead an organizational shift focused on transparency and accountability.

Charek Briggs is a 2021-22 co-president of United Faculty and Academic Staff (AFT Local 223), has been a core organizer for the LGBT Books to Prisoners project since 2014, and spent several years working on trainings for clinicians and community with the Wisconsin Transgender Health Coalition.

Recipients of the award, now in its 13th year, were honored Nov. 4 during a ceremony hosted by UW System Senior Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer Warren R. Anderson.

“This year’s award recipients are doing important and significant work to enhance equity and opportunity for our students, faculty and staff,” says Anderson. “The UW System is honored to recognize their dedication to making our campuses and broader communities more welcoming places to live, work, and learn.”

For more information about the award and past recipients, go to <http://wisconsin.edu/grants-awards/poorman-award/>.