

April 4, 2018

President Christian and Dean Rozell:

The tradition of Lavender Graduation began at the University of Michigan in 1995 with just three graduates. Dr. Ronni Sanlo, then Director of the University of Michigan LGBT Campus Resource Center, coordinated the first Lavender Graduation in order to acknowledge the achievements of LGBTQ+ graduates. By 2001, over 45 institutions were holding Lavender Graduation Ceremonies and the tradition continues to expand to additional colleges and universities across the country.

AB 1018 expands the community college equity plan support to our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students. This is a helpful change to support and recognize our underrepresented community. While I understand there is much more work that is needed to be done, many of us would like to start by hosting a ceremony which is common among many community colleges and universities: Lavender Graduation. Similar to the Latinx, Black, and Veteran graduation recognition ceremonies, a group of students, faculty, staff, and community members have come together in hopes of hosting the first BC Lavender Graduation.

SAGA Club, working in cooperation with BC Student Government and the Office of Student Life, ask for your support as we move forward to host BC's first annual Lavender Graduation.

Signed:

*Gilbert Colpitts, club member*

*Robert J. ... ICC Rep.*

*Helen Costa, club advisor*

*Juan B. Contreras, President*

*Reg Autwell club member*



April 6, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

The Center for Sexuality & Gender Diversity supports Bakersfield College in their efforts to hold a Lavender Graduation event.

People within the LGBTQ community often experience feelings of being outside of the wider community. This is so true when celebrating life milestones like graduation. LGBTQ students can struggle to gain acceptance from their families.

A Lavender Graduation event empowers LGBTQ students to celebrate their authentic selves at a powerful milestone in their lives and represent themselves to their community and family. Bakersfield College would make an important step forward in empowering and uplifting LGBTQ students at the important time of commemorating their accomplishments and stepping forward into life as their full selves.

Thank You,

Emily A. Fisher  
President, Board of Directors  
The Center for Sexuality & Gender Diversity  
Cell: 661-302-3581  
Pronouns: Them/theirs

Dear Bakersfield College and Associates:

I am Dezi Von Manos, the BCSGA President, and current BC Student, and I am writing this letter in support of the addition of pre-commencement graduation celebration, known as, the Lavender Graduation. I am aware of the significance that a graduation ceremony holds among our student body. It is a time in which students are able to stand proud, as they receive recognition for their outstanding efforts to achieve an admirable life milestone, which is, graduating from college. For this, every student should be able to feel as if they can take on the world, while all the while being supported by the institution in which they are graduating from. At BC, I understand that there are a few culturally distinguished ceremonies that take place, such as the Chicano/Latino Pre-Commencement and the African American Pre-Commencement, and as grateful as I am that BC takes the time to recognize our diverse student population, I believe that it's time to expand that recognition. Therefore, a ceremony such as the Lavender Graduation, which is a pre-commencement graduation celebration, would be an encouraging celebration, acknowledging the LGTBQ Community, in which the students of the LGTBQ Community, here at Bakersfield College, may receive recognition that allows them to venture off into world with confidence, knowing, that having a different sexual orientation or preference is not a factor in a person's plan to academically succeed, and Bakersfield College recognizes that.

Respectfully,

Dezi Von Manos

FY 17-18 BCSGA President