Check out what Ari Schaaff, a Research Assistant, is doing!

Ari Schaaff - Research Assistant

Ari Schaaff is a senior pursuing her undergraduate degree as a Psychology and Sociology double major, and also a Queer Studies minor. She is currently the Chair of UNH Alliance, which supports LGBTQ+ students and allies. She is also a Student Coordinator for SAFE Zones which is a group that raises awareness about LGBTQ+ issues.

During her sophomore year Ari wrote a paper on suicide rates of lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals. This project sparked her interest in societal and familial support for the LGBTQ+ community. Ari has been a Research Assistant since her sophomore year, working under Professor Katie Edwards and graduate student Kateryna Sylaska. In the spring of 2013 she applied for a summer SURF grant through the Hamel Center, was accepted and became the primary researcher of the study. Ari’s research was titled: Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Adults Experiences of Minority Stress Specific to their Sexual Orientation. She also looked at how minority stress (stress that an individual feels because of the discrimination and subordination of being part of a minority group) can influence the reality of whether individuals choose to disclose their sexual orientation and how social support can moderate that effect.

During the summer of 2013 Ari distributed a survey across the country. Along with receiving quantitative data through the survey, she also gathered qualitative data through telephone interviews with participants. Not only did she enjoy doing the qualitative research, she also believes it was empowering for the participants who were speaking out about their personal experiences.

After the research was complete, Ari presented a poster to the Association for Women in Psychology Conference in Columbus, Ohio. She is also currently writing her quantitative data paper for UNH Inquiry, a student research journal. Her ultimate career goal is working as a Higher Education Student Affairs Administrator and helping people in the LGBTQ+ community through her work. Right now, Ari would like to take some time off to catch up on such things as reading books for pleasure and graduate school applications. We look forward to seeing all that Ari does in the future and how UNH and the Women’s Studies Program continues to support this bright and passionate student.

Upcoming Events

Girl Rising, Film Screening and Discussion
Wednesday, April 23rd, 2014, 7pm, MUB Theater I

Women’s Studies Graduation Celebration
Wednesday, May 7th, 2014, 5pm, MUB Theater II