

Queer Student Luncheon



Ty Stober, guest speaker at the Queer Student Luncheon (*right*) stands with Rosalba Pitkin and Clark College Peer Mentors who help host the event.

Vancouver Mayor Pro Tem Ty Stober was the guest speaker for the Fall Queer Luncheon on October 10 in the Penguin Student Lounge. The free event is presented each term by Clark's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The luncheon is designed to create community for students who identify as queer and allies.

Stober is one of seven councilmembers for the city of Vancouver. He is Mayor Pro Tem, which means he serves as mayor in the mayor's absence. He has served on city council for eight years.

Stober is also gay. He told the group that only 0.23% of elected officials nationwide identify themselves as LGBTQ.

"Our voices are radically underheard in politics," he said, noting that he is the only LGBTQ elected official in a geographic area that includes six Washington counties. "I am standing here today so that students can see that

representation in government is possible.”

Stober grew up in Canby, Ore., a conservative small town in Clackamas County. He was closeted in high school.

“I wanted so badly to fit in that I put on as good an act as I could of being straight,” he said. “I lived in constant fear that I’d slip up and be exposed.”

He graduated from Canby Union High School and earned his bachelor’s degree in business administration from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma. He earned his MBA at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

“I was very, very closeted when I was in college,” he said.

After grad school he was working in Baltimore when he met the man who would become his husband. They have been together for 20 years.

Stober first got involved in politics in 2009, when as a citizen, he canvassed for passing Referendum 71, which legalized domestic partnership in Washington. It was the first statewide referendum in the U.S. that extended to LGBT people the rights and responsibility of domestic partnership.

In 2012 he chaired the organization that backed Referendum 74, which legalized gay marriage. It became law in 2012. He has been a Vancouver councilmember since 2015.

Stober encouraged Clark College students to get involved with local politics. There are opportunities to attend city council meetings in person or online. People also can send an email to all the councilors. Learn more about Vancouver City Council meetings [here](#).

“If you don’t feel safe in our community as an LGBTQ person or as a person of color, come speak at city council,” he said.

Stober invited people to start by getting involved in

Vancouver by providing public comment to a variety of community projects in an online community forum, BeHeardVancouver.

“You need to tell us what you want,” Stober said. “If you want affordable housing, say, ‘I want affordable housing.’ If politics interest you, reach out to me.”

Stober has a two-decade career in sales, marketing and operations, with leadership experience in medium-sized, publicly traded and entrepreneurial organizations. He last served as an energy efficiency program manager for an organization supporting all utilities in the Northwest.

Upcoming DEI events:

- Students with Disability Luncheon, Tuesday, Oct. 24 at noon in PUB 161
- Students of Color luncheon, Tuesday, Nov. 7 at noon in PUB 161

To learn more, visit the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion’s website.

Ty Stober, Council Seat 5

Current Assignments and Certifications

- National League of Cities: Vice Chair – Race, Equity and Leadership Council
- National League of Cities: Board of Directors and Board Policy Committee
- National League of Cities: First Vice President, LGBTQ+ Local Officials
- National League of Cities: First Tier Suburbs Council – Past Chair

- C-TRAN Board of Directors
- Vancouver Strategic Planning Executive Steering Group
- Vancouver Fire and Police Pension Boards
- Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (alternate)
- Metro Policy Advisory Committee (alternate)
- SW Regional Transportation Council (alternate)
- Association of Washington Cities Advanced Certificate of Municipal Leadership
- National League of Cities University Bronze Certificate
- Community Involvement
- NAACP, Member

Photo: Susan Parrish/Clark College