

## *Religious Institutions Resource Guide*

### **Key Considerations:**

- Exemption from Title IX creates variable climates between athletic departments at religiously affiliated institutions.
- Religious frameworks for LGBTQ+ affirmation also vary between denominations, faith traditions and college campuses.
- Informed, affirming voices stand out and can create progress towards LGBTQ+ inclusion within institutions.
- Athlete Ally wants to understand what your experience in your department is like, and how doctrines of your faith influence policy and practice. We are available for individual conversations with department personnel, student athletes and campus stakeholders. We also host recurring group conversations that provide a space for folks across religiously affiliated institutions to connect and learn from each other.

### **Learn More:**

**NCAA Common Ground Initiative** is an ongoing project creating opportunities for teams competing in the NCAA to engage on varied inclusion efforts, including LGBTQ+ inclusion; offers trainings, educational resources  
(<https://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/inclusion/common-ground>)

**The Pluralism Project** is an open ended project facilitated by Harvard to create collaboration and understanding across religious practices and worldviews  
(<https://pluralism.org/>)

**Inside Higher Ed on LGBTQ+ Students on Religious Campuses** describes the experiences of LGBTQ+ students on campuses with restrictive policies around inclusion  
(<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/03/15/survey-finds-lgbtq-students-attending-religious-colleges-struggle-belonging>)

**Julie Rodgers on LGBTQ+ People and Christians Collaborating** outlines steps towards opening dialogue and identifying common goals for people and groups with a range of

identities

([https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/conservative-christians-and-lgbtq-people-dont-have-to-be-enemies/2018/08/02/a31caabc-95d6-11e8-8ffb-5de6d5e49ada\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/conservative-christians-and-lgbtq-people-dont-have-to-be-enemies/2018/08/02/a31caabc-95d6-11e8-8ffb-5de6d5e49ada_story.html))

**Athlete Ally** offers free trainings on an ongoing basis and open-ended meetings for staff and athletes at religiously affiliated institutions to connect and learn from each other.

### Take Action:

- Explore options for organizations that support LGBTQ+ students (some religious institutions have underground student groups/GSA groups/ally groups, etc.) and take steps to establish one on campus or connect with your LGBTQ+ campus center, student group or community center for resources, training and events specific to your institution.
- Create an LGBTQ+ alumni or fan network (some examples include Lafayette's [Queer Archives Project](#) and Holy Cross's [LGBTQ Alumni Network](#)). Some organizations also have a written constitution (see the University of Indiana's [Association](#)) that can include care for the college athlete population.
- Form a group or committee that includes representatives from across athletics or even across campus to tackle issues of inclusion and provide support, such as [Marist's IDEA Committee](#) and the [University of Portland's DEI Committee](#).
- Team to team support may look like attending each other's games or sharing meals or celebrations together; these efforts can be supported by administration and staff by participating in events.
- A book club of affirming folks within your department or institution can be a great place to start these conversations. A great idea from Santa Clara University is to run parallel groups for staff/coaches and student athletes. Two groups can read the same book at the same pace, but discuss separately. The groups can come together for a final meeting and share their thoughts with each other. Here are some books and articles to consider:
  - *Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians* by Austen Hartke (<http://austenhartke.com/>)
  - *Outlove: A Queer Christian Survival Story* by Julie Rodgers (<https://www.julierodgers.com/>)
  - *Outside the Lines: How Embracing Queerness Will Transform Your Faith* by Mihee Kim-Kort (<https://www.mkimkort.com/>)



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