



The **Rainbow** Book

A Student-Written Guide to LGBT Life in Rochester and URSMD

*Presented by Members of Spectrum at the University of
Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry*

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PREAMBLE

Hello and congratulations, Class of 2025!

We are so happy, grateful, and excited to have you here. The LGBT contingent of URSMD is growing exponentially and every new addition has made incredible contributions to their class and to our institution as a whole.

It's not easy to be queer in medicine, whether you are a patient or a provider. In many ways you are a pioneer. LGBT providers remain a minority in our healthcare system, and LGBT-specific medical training can be hard to come by. However, this is less and less true as time goes on, and we pride ourselves at URSMD for improving the rates of both. Medicine continues to grow and change in ways our predecessors could never have imagined and LGBT medicine specifically is experiencing a time of great innovation. Despite this there may be times when you feel intimidated, isolated, or misunderstood due to your identity. So above all, remember this: **You are not alone.** We, the LGBT contingency of URSMD, are always here, and beyond that there are many outstanding networks of LGBT medical students, doctors, researchers, and more out there just waiting to meet you. Whatever identities you may hold connect you to a long history, powerful present, and promising future of LGBT students passionate about supporting and empowering future LGBT generations, providers and patients alike.

In truth your queerness is a great strength in medicine. You are entering this field with profound insight into the sociocultural aspect of medicine we all value so much. Understanding the many ways in which discrimination impacts care, valuing diversity and inclusion, and being able to communicate unique lenses through which to look at the world-- these are all things you already have a head start in.

Where you choose to go with your extraordinary potential is up to you, and we greatly look forward to getting to know you along the way.

With love and pride,
Spectrum

OVERVIEW/FAQ

1. What is the purpose of this book?

We, the LGBT contingency of URSMD, wish to properly welcome all LGBT students into our community. The purpose of this Rainbow book is to address all your LGBT-specific wants and needs as you begin this new exciting part of your journey.

2. Who created this book?

This guidebook was created by *Spectrum*, a student-run LGBT club and resource for graduate and medical students at UR. Each year Spectrum hosts a variety of events ranging from monthly potlucks, to educational seminars, to student-created and student-run initiatives related to LGBT health and wellness. Anyone is welcome to join Spectrum, including allies!

For more information on Spectrum, you can always reach out to Spectrum@lists.rochester.edu

3. Will being openly LGBT hurt or otherwise affect my application?

“Being openly LGBT will not negatively affect anyone’s applications to URSMD, and we encourage and embrace all backgrounds, identities, and experiences.”

-Dr. Nobay, Associate Dean for Student Affairs



WHERE TO GO

Rochester as a whole is a very LGBT-friendly city, and there are a variety of places to go that specifically cater to the queer community. There is even a phenomenal Rochester Pride Parade in the summer! More places and events can be found at:

https://rocwiki.org/LGBT_Community

Community

Out Alliance - CLOSED

About: A community organization that has many events and resources, such as their “T-35 Trans Support Group”, an LGBT library, and LGBT gallery shows.

Contact: 100 College Ave, 585-244-8640

Ambush

About: As an alternative to the lack of lesbian bars in the area queer women and allies take over a different straight bar on the second Friday of the month. This is meant to be a low-key, fun, casual way to hang out with your friends and meet other lesbians and queer-identified women from the WNY area.

Contact: <https://www.facebook.com/ambushrochester/>

Neighborhoods

Park Ave and South Wedge are both local neighborhoods known for being LGBT-hotspots. Many queer people live here, and you can find lots of queer-friendly shops and events!

Food

Equal Grounds

About: A popular LGBTQ cafe where you’ll find many students studying on weekends. Alongside food and drink they also have queer board games and books.

Contact: 750 South Ave, 585-256-2362, <https://equalgrounds.com/>

Edibles Restaurant

About: A gay-owned upscale bistro that hosts a popular drag brunch event.

Contact: 704 University Ave, 585-271-4910, <https://www.ediblesrochester.com/>

Exercise

YogaVibe - CLOSED

About: YogaVibe hosts a pay-what-you-can Queer and Trans Yoga Class. Check online for the schedule.

Contact: 80 Rockwood Pl, ~~585-242-0059~~

Gay Varsity League

About: National organization that is the largest Queer+ Recreational Sports league, featuring Dodgeball and Kickball in Rochester.

Contact: <https://varsitygayleaguerochester.leagueapps.com/>

Bars/Pubs

Abilene

About: Intimate venue known for its regular live music shows, with a limited menu & back deck with views. Queer friendly spot that hosts events occasionally.

Contact: 153 Liberty Pole Way, <http://www.abilenebarandlounge.com/>

Avenue Pub

About: Queer bar with pool, \$10 card minimum. 5 stars on yelp. A favorite of locals.

Contact: 522 Monroe Ave, <https://www.parkavepub.com/>

Bachelor Forum

About: Gay landmark providing weekly drink specials in an old-school space, plus TVs, a pool table & darts.

Contact: 670 University Ave, <https://www.bachelor4m.com/>

140 Alex Bar

About: Laid-back, LGBT-friendly watering hole with a classic pub grub menu & weekend drag performances.

Contact: 140 Alexander St, <https://140alex.wordpress.com/>

ROAR

About: LGBTQ+ bar with live bands, drag shows (kings and queens), country line dance with lessons, happy hours, karaoke, brunch and dinner shows, and party club nights.

Contact: <https://www.roarroc.com/>

Phone: [\(585\) 434-1248](tel:5854341248)

Sole Rehab

About: A monthly queer-focused rager that showcases regional talent in the underground techno and house community

Contact: <https://www.facebook.com/SoleRehabRoc/>

The Spirit Room

About: Drag shows and Queer inclusion

Contact: 139 State St, <https://www.spiritroomroc.com/>

Haircare

Barbatorium

About: LGBT+ inclusive stylists (who also sign!). Side shaves, Tom boi cuts, longer hair trim, special etchings all for an affordable price.

Contact: Nico Merritt, 25 Circle St #202, 585-271-8120, <https://barbatorium.com/>

World Hair - CLOSED

About: Super approachable to all, walk-ins welcome, they have at least two out trans stylists on staff!

Contact: 121 Park Ave #13, 14607, 585-473-5452

HEALTH RESOURCES

Resource Centers

University Health Services: Counseling

About: This mental health service is free for students and includes several LGBT-identified counselors on staff. They also host an LGBT-specific support group.

Contact: River Campus, UHS Building, Floor 3, 738 Library Road, 585-275-3113

Trillium Health

About: A health center with LGBT-specialized care, including mental healthcare, STI screening, and reproductive health services.

Contact: 259 Monroe Ave, 585-545-7200

Planned Parenthood

About: LGBT-friendly healthcare center

Contact: 866-600-6886

Location 1: 114 University Ave, 14605

Location 2: Greece, 2824 W Ridge Rd, 14626

Center for Disability Rights

About: LGBTQ-friendly disability resource center

Contact: 497 State St, 585-546-7510

Non-Discrimination Policy & Reporting

The University of Rochester is committed to equal opportunity for all individuals regardless of age, color, disability, domestic violence status, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status, military/veteran status, national origin, race, religion/creed, sex, sexual orientation, or any other status protected by law.

You may find info on how to report discrimination here:

<https://www.rochester.edu/respect/how-to-report-an-incident/>

TRANS/NON-BINARY RESOURCES AT U of R

Registering Your Gender

You can register your gender at URSMD by doing the following:

1. Log in to Medsis
2. Go to the Settings menu→ My profile→ Self Identity information
3. Select the Self Identification Tab. The gender identity is the top section with the self-identification in the bottom section. Please verify/update each section one at a time.

If you have any trouble please access the following link:

<https://admissions.urmc.rochester.edu/oe/mdorientation/index.html>

Go to Helpful Information→ Informational Videos→ MedSIS Part 1. A more detailed explanation on changing your self-identification information on Medsis will be found within the 8:50-9:33 minute markers.

Pronoun Recognition

Email Sign-Offs

Many students edit their Rochester email sign-offs to reflect their new status as students. Some students and faculty of all genders have chosen to include their pronouns as part of this.

For example, a common sign-off is:

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your Pronouns

MD(PhD) Candidate, 20XX

University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry

In order to edit your sign-off, turn on your iPad and go to Settings→ Mail→ Signature. Here you can write whatever you want!

Notifying Faculty

You may wish to speak directly with your teachers about pronouns. Don't worry, you aren't the first! In the past students have communicated their pronouns to faculty through email, before class, and during initial/class introductions. Your AD (advisory dean) or a faculty member from the ally list can also help you figure out which method is most comfortable for you.

A suggested email script:

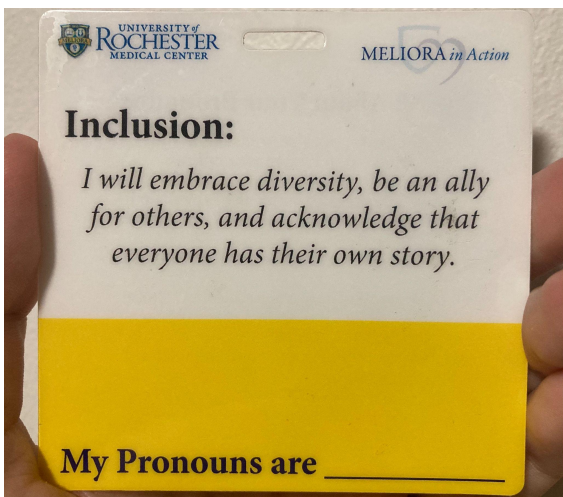
Dear _____,

My name is _____, and I am an MS1 about to begin your course in _____. I wanted to make sure the faculty was aware that I use the pronouns _____. I greatly look forward to meeting you in person!

A suggested in-person script:

Hi Professor, my name is _____. I just wanted to let you know before we start that I go by _____ pronouns. Thanks!

ID Pins



We encourage everyone no matter what their gender identity or pronoun use to use pronoun cards or pins to help make URSMD a more informed and accepting space! If you'd like a URSMD pronoun badge addition, please email Spectrum.

Pronoun pins and pronoun stickers can be acquired online, at many LGBT events, and at LGBT organizations like Trillium and Spectrum.

Pronouns in Lecture

We as a society are still learning and creating the best terminology for all types of bodies and identities. You will at some point note binary language used in class, in text, and in your overall career. That said, many people are adjusting their language, changing from wording such as “men and women” to “biological male”, “genetic female”, and more. It is not perfect, but it is a work in progress, and in the past both students and faculty have successfully worked together to change things for the better in our curriculum. Your input is always welcome!

All-Gender Bathrooms

There are multiple all-gender bathrooms scattered throughout the school and hospital. These bathrooms are single occupancy and lockable. Students may choose to use them as an alternative to the assigned men’s and women’s locker rooms. The all-gender bathrooms closest to first-year classes are:

- On the ground floor past student services there is a bathroom between the elevators and the women’s locker room.
- On the first floor inside Miner Library there is an all-gender bathroom to the right of the entrance area printers.
- On the second floor there is a hallway between the elevators and the FLEX rooms. If you go down this hallway and to the right the bathroom will be on your left.

If you have any difficulty finding these bathrooms a member of Spectrum would be happy to guide you. Access to a unisex locker room is also available upon request at Student Services.

An in-depth map of local all-gender bathrooms can be found at:

<http://www.rochester.edu/lgbtq/resources.html>

Further Resources

The “Trans at Rochester” handbook for UR undergraduates is very comprehensive and can be found at: <https://www.rochester.edu/lgbtq/assets/pdf/Trans%20Booklet.pdf> and

<http://www.rochester.edu/sba/resources/trans-uofr/>

CURRICULAR INCLUSIONS

Required Lectures

The following lectures focus on LGBT inclusion and education and are a required part of our curriculum:

Taking Sexual History in ICM

Intersex Talk in MTC

LGBTQ Health Day in Scope/PCC

Optional lectures

There are many optional lectures outside of class time that students may attend. Many of these are related to addressing diversity in healthcare. Examples of past LGBT-related lectures include:

Mental Health in LGBT Refugees, by Dr. Messih

Primary Care for LGBTQ Communities, by Dr. Bill Valenti

Transgender and LGB Patients: Addressing Disparities and Health Care Needs, by Dr. Cullen

The Impact of Universal Healthcare on LGBTQ People, by Dr. Hartman

Adolescent & LGBTQIA Care, by Dr. Greenberg and Dr. Tran Ngoc

In Their Own Words: A Narrative Medicine Approach to the Transgender Transition Memoir, by Allison Shen

PBLs

At URSMD we have a class called “Problem-Based Learning” in which we work through a medical case in small groups and try to diagnose what is wrong. Many of these cases are based off real life examples and some include LGBT patients and issues.

Electives

There are several LGBT-specific electives offered in the 3rd and 4th years if you would like to explore specific health concerns for LGBTQ+ populations, such as an adolescent medicine elective focusing on gender affirmation (procedures, mental health, etc).

Conferences

Students may apply for medical LGBT conferences and even receive a budget to attend them. Some well-known conferences include:

Yale's Q-Med: Building LGBTQI+ Leaders in Health Care Conference, March

UCSF's National Transgender Health Summit, April

Emory University's National LGBTQ Health Conference, May

TSER's Trans Youth Leadership Summit, July

Philadelphia Trans Wellness Conference, July

QUEER PROJECTS AT U of R

At UR you will find many opportunities to create and be part of a variety of LGBT-related events, initiatives, research, and more. Below are examples of past and present projects done by UR students!

Admissions, Second Look, Orientation, and Graduation

Spectrum reaches out to all students who mark an interest in learning more about/hearing from Spectrum in their initial applications. Students can email, call, or meet face-to-face with Spectrum participants throughout the application process. There are also several LGBT student hosts who welcome prospective students to stay in their homes when visiting Rochester (you can find their names and contacts on the general hosting list).

Graduating students will be invited to attend *Lavender Graduation!*

Rallies, Petitions, Advocacy

Rainbow Book: A student-produced resource made to supplement the student Blue Book

Trans Rights Rally: A Spectrum-run rally in response to President Trump's transphobic bills

LGBT Rights Petition: In Opposition to Department of Health and Human Services memo

Research

In the past, students have engaged in the following LGBT research projects:

"Evaluating Interest in and knowledge change after LGBT-focused trainings for HIV/STD/HCV clinicians", 2018

"A Comparison of the Unique Language Use Among Transgender Communities in Healthcare Settings in London and New York", 2019

Outreach/Volunteering

Spectrum can be a phenomenal way to engage in outreach to the larger community. If you have specific passions you would like to enact, you may find the financial and human resources you need through Spectrum. You may also volunteer your time with any of the major LGBTQ+ organizations in Rochester, such as Trillium (medical clinic) or the Out Alliance (general LGBTQ+ resource).

Language Improvement

Class Profile Initiative

The 2019 class profile is the first to feature non-binary applicants and students at URSMD. This initiative was even featured on the local WROC news!

Mandatory Peer Assessments

The binary language of the mandatory peer assessments every class must take was changed to trans-friendly gender-neutral alternatives.

Curricular Improvement

Students in the past have been able to partner with faculty in order to make the URSMD curriculum more inclusive and LGBT-friendly. Examples include editing the terminology of the lecture on taking sexual history and encouraging asking pronouns when learning how to do patient intake interviews.

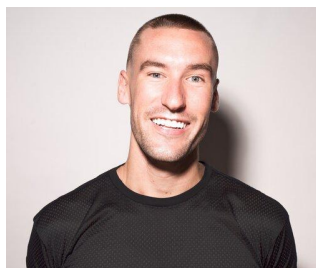
CURRENT SPECTRUM EXECUTIVE BOARD

Daniel Lopez, URSMD Class of 2024



Daniel identifies as queer and is typically referred to with he/him/his pronouns. However, Daniel is not attached to his gender and is fine with the use of any pronoun; in fact, Daniel encourages those who are unfamiliar with using pronouns to practice on him/them/her! Daniel is a part of the e-board for Spectrum and LMSA at URSMD, as well as a student leader for the Psychiatry and Dermatology Interest Groups. Please feel free to reach out to [Daniel Lopez@URMC.Rochester.edu](mailto:Daniel.Lopez@URMC.Rochester.edu) for anything, whether that be for mental health like anxiety/depression, being POC & LGBTQ+, gymnastics and yoga, or to hear the tea!

Deaton Jones (he/him/his), URSMD Class of 2024



Deaton is originally from Raleigh, North Carolina, and moved to NYC in 2009 for college at Columbia where he majored in Economics and Philosophy. After graduating, Deaton worked in fashion, advertising, and then fitness (like Jane Fonda aerobics) before deciding to pursue a career in medicine. Deaton then completed a postbac premed program at Columbia before moving to Rochester in 2020 to start at URSMD. Aside from Spectrum, Deaton is involved with the Medical Student Pride Alliance and is a member of the AMA-MSS Standing Committee on LGBTQ+ Affairs. And outside of school, Deaton is always looking for opportunities to move, be it working out, dancing, tennis, or otherwise.

Dennis Phan (he/him), URSMD Class of 2024



Dennis is originally from Queens, NY and graduated from NYU with a major in Biochemistry last year. Throughout his time in college, he enjoyed playing tennis, chemistry experiments, and teaching sexual and mental health workshops throughout NYC public high schools. At Rochester, you can catch him in bubble tea shops or looking for new food to try! He actively volunteers at URWell and Street Outreach and is a part of APAMSA and the Surgery Interest Group. He is always open to talk about life at URSMD or life in general!

Hannah Jackel-Dewhurst (they/them, she/her), URSMD Class of 2024

Hannah is a Rochester native and majored in Neuroscience at Oberlin College. They spent two years working on a mobile medical unit that provides care to homeless individuals in New York City before returning to Rochester for medical school. They are also on leadership for Family Medicine Interest Group, Addiction Medicine Interest Group and Students for a National Health Program. Reach out to them at Hannah_Jackeldewhurst@urmc.rochester.edu if you want to talk with them about cooking, celebrity gossip, campaigning for universal healthcare, or queer life in Rochester!

Lana Markova (she/her/hers), URSMD Class of 2028

Lana was born in Ukraine and raised in Russia. She moved to the United States as a political asylee and started her new life in Brooklyn, NY. She studied biology in the City College of New York and conducted cancer immunotherapy and radiation oncology research in Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and Massachusetts General hospital before joining the Medical Scientist Training Program in the University of Rochester as an M.D./Ph.D. student. As a former CSTEP student, she is passionate about advocating for increasing access and providing opportunities to STEM research and education for the underrepresented students at all stages of education. Lana moved to Rochester, NY for its almost Russia-like perfect winter, picturesque hiking trails, and kind and supportive diverse community.

URMC FACULTY “OUT AND ALLY” LIST

URSMD has compiled a list of faculty who have identified themselves as LGBT and/or an ally to the LGBT community. These are great resources to reach out to, and linked is the list that URSMD updates:

<https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/inclusion-culture-development/urmc-resources/urmc-faculty-out-and-ally-list.aspx>

Spectrum Advisors:



Chunkit Fung, MD - He, Him, His

As a clinical and administrative leader in the Division of Hematology/Oncology in the Department of Medicine and through his role in the Faculty Senate, Dr. Fung makes every effort to support diversity and inclusivity. Dr. Fung has led efforts in promoting an inclusive environment for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ) community as an advisory for SPECTRUM, as a participant of the URM LGBTQ Advisory Committee, and in developing the URM Out & Ally List. In addition to his advocacy for inclusivity for URM’s LGBTQ community, Dr. Fung has been a strong advocate for gender equality in medicine.



Scott Hartman, MD, FAAFP - He, Him, His

Dr. Hartman is a family physician with a passion for promoting health equity and caring for marginalized populations. Dr. Hartman cares for patients in the URM Primary Care Network and supervises residents at Highland Family Medicine and Highland Hospital, and also serves as an advisor for the SPECTRUM student group. He has served as a strong advocate for LGBT+ health issues by serving as the Co-Convener for the LGBT Caucus of the American Academy of Family Physicians, and also by serving on the Academy’s Subcommittee on Health Equity.

LGBT HISTORY

Never forget that you are now part of a stunning, resilient, and powerful history of LGBT folx in medicine. Below is a small sampling of famous LGBT doctors in both the past and the present who have made great contributions to LGBT health. We can't wait to add your name to the list!



Marci Lee Bowers (1958-Present)

Dr. Bowers is considered the “rock star” of gender confirmation surgery. She is the first out transgender woman to do such surgeries (over 4000 in total!) and has made great innovations in the gynecological field.

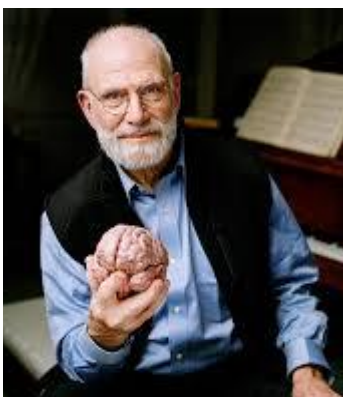
"I believe the surgery should be responsibly performed... It is the only morally responsible approach to this problem... and I will live to see that change be made globally."



Ben A. Barres (1954-2017)

Dr. Barres, a brilliant neurobiologist, was the first openly transgender scientist in the National Academy of Sciences. He has done astounding work on CNS glial cells and on being transgender in medicine in his book, *The Autobiography of a Transgender Scientist*.

"I marvel at how far the world has come in recent years... I did not know of any successful transgender scientists, and I worried... [but] My career went on as before without a hitch."



Oliver Sacks (1933-2015)

Dr. Sacks was a gay Jewish neurologist and prolific medical writer who spoke openly about his own struggle with depression and prosopagnosia. He in many ways defined the field of novelistic, humanitarian and patient-centered medical literature and did seminal work on innovative therapeutic treatments for previously-thought incurable or untreatable neurological conditions, such as the use of musical therapy and levodopa on post-encephalitic patients.

"What I write shows respect and appreciation, not any wish to expose or exhibit for the thrill... In examining disease, we gain wisdom about anatomy and physiology and biology. In examining the person with disease, we gain wisdom about life."



Louise Pearce (1885-1959)

Dr. Pearce was a lesbian feminist activist in the field of medicine. She was an American pathologist who graduated at the top of her class from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in 1912 and proceeded to become the first woman researcher at the Rockefeller Institute. Dr. Pearce helped develop a treatment for trypanosomiasis at a time when it was decimating entire populations worldwide. She also did seminal work on syphilis and cancer research. She lived with Dr. Baker and her life partner Ida Wylie from the 1930s until their deaths.



Pío del Río Hortega (1882-1945)

Dr. Río Hortega was a gay leftist sociopolitical activist and physician whose research on glial cells and discovery of oligodendroglia and microglia (also known as Hortega cells) got him nominated for a Nobel Prize in Medicine twice. He led Spain's national cancer institute in the 1930s studying brain tumors specifically and during the civil war rescued 5,000 histological preparations for radiotherapy.

"Whoever possesses a refined sensitivity for artistic manifestations will appreciate...the science of histology."



Sara Josephine Baker (1873-1945)

Dr. Baker was an out lesbian suffragist who saved millions of lives with her minority public health innovations. Her practices, detailed in her autobiography *Fighting for Life*, continue to be utilized worldwide, like the required presence of school nurses.

"I have, perhaps unwittingly, done my share to bring state medicine into existence. I am reasonably certain that the next generation will see it immeasurably advanced."



Magnus Hirschfield (1868-1935)

Dr. Hirschfield, a gay Jewish socialist who lived through Nazi Germany, defined the field of sexology through his Scientific Humanitarian Committee's motto *'Justice Through Science'*. He used medicine as a stepping stone towards LGBT equality, estimating over 43 million types of sexualities and genders.

"Soon the day will come when science will win victory over error, justice a victory over injustice, and human love a victory over human hatred and ignorance."

Do you have physicians you'd like to add to the list? Please shoot us an email- we welcome all contributions!