Reader supports equality at Purdue

I would like to bring to your attention two sections of the Purdue University nondiscrimination policy:

"Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Purdue University prohibits discrimination against any member of the University community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability or status as a disabled or Vietnam era veteran."

I feel that by printing Josh Zacher's letter entitled "Group's unacceptable acceptance alters campus climate" (Nov. 17), you have proven how much this policy is needed. It's unfortunate that in an era which has made great strides to move forward in creating social equalities, certain students are unable to move ahead. There is little I could say that would cause Mr. Zacher to grow up and see that it is not the GLBT community, that is unusual, therefore I

Letters

Homosexuals back traditional unions

Chris Mays, next time you write a letter (Nov. 25), please put some research into it. It is rather simple to go to http://www.marriageprotection-week.com to see that nearly all of the articles on there are "to defend and promote traditional marriage between a man and a woman" from homosexuals. More than 60 percent of the articles are about that, rather than something that really

screws marriage up, like spousal abuse. Honestly, if your marriage needs protection, you're more likely to need a little thing called "marriage counseling" than anything else.

The entire thing was put together by Jerry Falwell and his crew — you know, that guy who said that gays caused Sept. 11 by existing? That is what Bush endorsed — institutionalized homophobia, beginning on the day Matthew Shepard died.

I don't know where you were that week — the week of October break — but there was a lot going on, and The Exponent covered it. Maybe you missed the protest that went on that week, and me standing out on Memorial Mall with a sign between classes.

Before you spit out, try looking for factual information instead of making assumptions.

Emily Jo Salcido
Junior, School of Liberal Arts

Affirmative Action belongs at Purdue

There has been an active discussion at Purdue on Affirmative Action. As the director of the Affirmative Action Office, I believe we need to include in this dialogue a better understanding of Affirmative Action.

There are many myths and misconceptions about Affirmative Action. Affirmative Action is not about quotas. Quotas are illegal. Affirmative Action is not about hiring unqualified individuals or admitting unqualified students. Affirmative Action is not outdated. It is still very much needed.

Affirmative Action is the breaking of barriers, the creation of equal access and equal opportunity. Affirmative Action is the ability for all qualified people, including women and people of color, to contribute to the social, political and economic fabric of this University and this country.

The history of this country includes many instances where individuals were excluded from participation in social, political and economic life by our laws, laws created by Congress and court systems. For example, the Jim Crow laws of the late 1800s and early 1900s reserved the best jobs, neighborhoods and schools for white people. Black people were used to certain amenities, such as lavatories and drinking fountains, marked "Colored." Women were not granted the right to vote until 1920, when Article XIX was added to the Constitution. These are two of the many examples that excluded the participation of women and people of color from participation in the civil life of this country.

Because of the reality of these barriers, President Johnson signed Executive Order 11246 in 1965 creating Affirmative Action dictating that the federal government and federal contractors may not discriminate against any applicant or employee on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Affirmative Action was created to provide access and opportunity where access and opportunity did not exist for women and people of color.

Diana Prieto
Director, Affirmative Action Office

Writer apologizes for immature prank

This past Sunday (Nov. 23), I was driving past the Co-Rec around 9:30 p.m. There was a lot of standing water, and there was a pedestrian at the intersection. I found this combination too tempting to resist, so I cut the corner way too close to the pedestrian with the intent of drenching the aforementioned pedestrian by driving through the puddle. Upon reflection, I realized this was a really immature prank. I deeply regret it, and I hope that person will accept this apology.

Chris Zahrt
Purdue alumni

Exponent Letters Policy

It is the Exponent's intent to print all submitted letters for public discussion, granted they meet the following guidelines. Letters must be no longer than 300 words. No more than 15 letters will be printed on the any single topic. Letters should be typed or legibly written. No anonymous letters will be printed. The Exponent reserves the right to edit and/or reject letters for grammar, style, spelling, obscenity and tone.

Letters should be addressed to the opinions editor and can be hand-delivered to The Exponent at 460 Northwestern Ave; sent through Campus Mail to opinions editor c/o The Exponent (EXPT/VIC/CPGNW) or through U.S. mail to P.O. Box 2506, West Lafayette, IN 47996; or sent as an e-mail to opinions@purdueexponent.com. Include your name, classification, school, local address and phone number so the authorship of the letter can be confirmed.