Ideas for UMHS Pride Network Allies

Below are some suggestions about how you can contribute to UMHS Pride Network as an Ally and help make our workplaces and communities more inclusive. Even if you follow just a few of these, you are making a difference!

1. Demonstrate zero tolerance for hateful or discriminatory behaviors of any kind.
2. Believe that all persons - regardless of age, sex, race, gender, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation - should be treated with dignity and respect.
3. Respect the degree of confidentiality that each participant in UMHS Pride Network desires.
4. Dispel any personal stereotypes you may have held about gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender people and challenge others who still hold these.
5. Do not tolerate any speculation about a person's sexual orientation.
6. Challenge those who use offensive terms when referring to gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender people.
7. Confront any personal prejudices that you may hold.
8. Be intolerant of demeaning and degrading jokes about any person or group.
9. Prepare your response to offensive comments so you are prepared to handle these appropriately and with confidence.
10. Evaluate your own opinions about the transgender, bisexual, lesbian or gay (TBLG) community - and discuss your perceptions with others.
11. Understand the principles of equity - that it is not "special treatment."
12. Support the initiatives and activities of all of UMHS’s employee networks - we are all ultimately working towards a common goal of an inclusive workplace.
13. Be available to support and counsel your TBLG co-worker, but also recognize your limitations and when additional help may be needed.
14. Learn about homophobia, transphobia and heterosexism and how you can help with change.
15. Visit the UMHS Pride Network website regularly.
16. Attend local UMHS Pride Network events.
17. Educate others on the roles of allies in UMHS Pride Network.
18. Display your UMHS Pride Network “Ally” button in your workplace.
19. Wear your UMHS Pride Network “Ally” button at work.
20. Learn about diversity within the TBLG community (which is no less diverse than the non-TBLG community).
21. Volunteer to help out with the various UMHS Pride Network strategy implementation teams.
22. Read about UMHS’s policies and benefits programs to understand how they are (or are not) inclusive of TBLG employees and their families.
23. Talk to your family and friends about what you are doing in UMHS Pride Network.
24. Bring your spouse or partner to a local UMHS Pride Network event.
25. Have UMHS Pride Network materials (brochures) available to share with co-workers.
26. Ask someone to join UMHS Pride Network as an ally as a birthday gift to you.
27. Ask your leader(s) to join UMHS Pride Network as an ally.
28. Include UMHS Pride Network participation in development or other goals.
29. Write your personal testimonial of "Why I am an Ally" - and share this with others.
30. Talk with a TBLG co-worker to learn about their experiences of intolerance at work and outside of work.
31. Learn about a TBLG co-worker's journey of "coming out" at work, to friends and family.
32. Read a book about personal "coming out" stories.
33. Extend your support to your TBLG family members.
34. Compliment someone each time you hear them use inclusive language.
35. Challenge your values: How would you respond if your son or daughter revealed to you that he/she is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered?
36. Make sure your interview teams understand all of the "do's and don'ts" of interviewing and recruiting.
37. Promote the use of inclusive language when inviting co-workers' family members to social events, e.g. "Spouse, Partner or Guest."
38. Learn the preferred vocabulary and use it.
39. Understand the distinctions of life vs. lifestyle, orientation vs. preference, etc.
40. Understand your TBLG colleagues' views on "Is It a Choice?"
41. Acknowledge the life events of TBLG co-workers on par with others (partner / family illness, birth / adoption, bereavement, etc.).
42. Take a non-UMHS Pride Network co-worker to lunch with a TBLG participant.
43. Attend a local gay Pride parade or festival event
44. Read a book by an openly TBLG author.
45. Pick-up and read a copy of the local TBLG community newspaper (Between the Lines).
46. Attend a TBLG film festival.
47. The next time you're in a larger city, go to dinner at a restaurant in the local TBLG neighborhood (ask your TBLG co-workers for a recommendation).
48. Introduce your family to a TBLG colleague or friend.
49. Learn about the important symbols of TBLG identity, e.g. pride flag, rainbow, inverted pink triangle, the Greek letter lambda (λ), etc.
50. Help organize a National Coming Out Day event with your local UMHS Pride Network colleagues.
51. Volunteer to help with a UMHS Pride Network booth the next time one is hosted in your area.
52. Attend UMHS Pride Network speaker events / conferences.
53. Volunteer with a local TBLG charity, or support them in their fundraising events.
54. Support UMHS Pride Network's community outreach activities such as AIDS Walks, Habitat for Humanity, etc.
55. Recognize the legal powers and privileges that heterosexuals have and which TBLG people are denied in your city, state, and country.
56. Learn about other countries' positions on TBLG issues.
57. Learn about the supportive religious organizations that openly welcome TBLG participants.
58. Understand how your own personal religious faith and Organization views TBLG issues.
59. Attend a religious service at church / synagogue / mosque whose clergy or members include a substantial portion of TBLG faithful (ask a TBLG colleague for a suggestion - or ask to join them the next time they go).
60. Visit your local TBLG community center to learn more about activities, events and organizations that you can become involved with.
61. Learn about your local PFLAG chapter (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).
62. Learn about key events of TBLG history.
63. Learn about prominent TBLG individuals from the past - and today.
64. Upon hearing a derogatory statement, personalize your response with a positive example of a respected person who happens to be a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered.
65. Challenge your community leaders to be receptive and supportive of TBLG issues.
66. Read about and stay informed about social issues covering areas such as employment non-discrimination, civil / human rights, marriage / civil union rights for TBLG couples, etc.
67. Learn about what other companies are doing on TBLG issues.
68. Support a gay-owned or gay-friendly business in your community.
69. Talk about partner's relationships (with their approval) as part of normal conversations.
70. Make every effort to befriend UMHS Pride Network participants, because it is on the face to face level that values really change.
71. Recognize that while the AIDS epidemic has had tragic impact on the TBLG community, it has also unified it in constructive and beneficial ways for all of society.
72. Attend a viewing of the AIDS Memorial Quilt (the NAMES Project Foundation) when on display in your area - or view these on-line at www.aidsquilt.org.
73. Don't belabor yourself with accepting or understanding the whole community at once - challenging and changing your values is not an easy thing.
74. Do what you can to help UMHS Pride Network participants, at a rate you can live with.
75. Come to the understanding that it doesn't matter which UMHS Pride Network participants are allies or TBLG's.
76. Invite UMHS Pride Network participants to gatherings where they can interact with new people.
77. Come to the understanding that being gay is not something that is "caught," but is part of a person's core identity (whether it was hidden for a long time or not).
78. Learn details about real TBLG UMHS employee experiences, both positive and negative. Without using names these can be used as powerful examples about what's right and what's wrong with our company culture when discussing TBLG issues.
79. Work your own support for UMHS Pride Network into any conversations about employee issues such as recruiting, diversity, networks, events, etc.
80. Become a career mentor to a TBLG employee.
81. View every discussion about diversity, respect & responsibility, inclusiveness, employee issues, values, etc. as an Ally recruiting opportunity.
82. View every document/presentation that touches even briefly on people/value issues as an opportunity to "share the message."
83. Visibly acknowledge and associate with TBLGs in the workplace, especially those that are out. Validate their worth and equality by association (e.g. in the lunch room, in the hall, at the water cooler, in their office, etc.)
84. Look around your immediate workplace and assess what can be changed to make it a more inclusive environment.
85. Challenge outside organizations / charities that you work with (or contribute to) to be fully inclusive of TBLG participants and employees.
86. Within your family or circle of friends, point out stereotypes and cultural misinformation depicted in movies, TV shows, computer games and other media.
87. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper if they show bias or implicit support for intolerant viewpoints.
88. Find occasion to speak positively and actively to external contacts about UMHS Pride Network and its benefits to UMHS employees, UMHS communities and to the health system, (e.g., customers, vendors, trade associations, civic groups, friends, relatives, unions, schools/universities, etc.)
89. Develop a display about UMHS Pride Network for your local bulletin board.
90. Support TBLG co-workers who bring partners to company sponsored or social events. Reach out to make them feel included.
91. Learn about, and use, examples of prominent TBLG role models in the business world.
92. For TBLG co-workers who are out, speak of their partners as naturally as you would another co-worker's spouse. Let our attitudes reflect our acceptance.
93. Imagine what your life might be like if you were a person of another race, gender or sexual orientation, and how might "today" have been different for you.
94. Be patient. Listen to the views of others if you want them to hear yours.
95. VISIBLY SHOW THAT YOU CARE.