Diversity Journal 1 Entry

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Today I had the opportunity to attend a company Civil Rights & Inclusion initiative sponsored by the LGBTQ & Women in Power at the New York Power Authority. The guest speaker was Donna Zaccaro (Zaccaro, Pride Month Speaker and Discussion, 2018) and she discussed the LBGTQ movement and history. In addition to the guest speaker NYPA played a full documentary on the LBGTQ history (Zaccaro, To a More Perfect Union: U.S. v Windsor, 2017). The presentation was video streamed to all NYPA locations and to be viewed by all NYPA employees; participation was voluntary not mandatory.

The Niagara location had a conference room reserved on the 3rd floor of the administration building. Niagara has about 225 employees and there was a total of 12 people that attended. Niagara provided lunch with pizza, salad and pop.

I was in awe that only 12 people showed up to the free lunch to watch the video and presentation. The speaker, Donna, was a lesbian and spoke about her journey as a lesbian. The presentation was very touching, and I had a new appreciation for the journey of a gay person.

The documentary was extremely educational and informative. I learned that being gay in 1967 was considered a mental illness by doctors. In addition, I learned that the first gay marriage was in 2002 in Massachusetts. Edie Windson was huge advocate, and lesbian herself fighting for the rights of legal gay marriage.

Prior to watching the documentary my feelings towards the LBGTQ community was not much different than after watching the documentary and guest speaker. However, I had a new appreciation for the gay community and the struggles they had in becoming accepted in society. Personally, I do not care what your sexual orientation is; please don’t flaunt it. I don’t run up and down the streets yelling that I am not gay. I believe that you have one life, so you should live it how you want to live it, not how you are forced to live it. I support gay people, and I strongly oppose those who act with violence towards gay people. NYPA is a huge proponent of organizational diversity and inclusion, which includes LBGTQ. I believe employees at NYPA respect gay people, but through scuttlebutt I hear that employees are tired of NYPA making a spectacle of diversity and inclusion making it disingenuous.

# References

Zaccaro, D. (Director). (2017, December 20). *To a More Perfect Union: U.S. v Windsor* [Motion Picture]. Retrieved from Thank you for being late: A conversation with Thomas L. Friedman: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVPPRVP3oIU

Zaccaro, D. (2018, June 8). Pride Month Speaker and Discussion. *Civil Rights & Inclusion*. Lewiston, NY, United States of America: NYPA.

# Appendix 1

