

Letter of Collaboration

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Hello,

I am writing to Dr. Ethan Dahl as an expert in LGBTQ+ outcome data within North Dakota, a statewide community organizer, and a trans survivor of suicide. The University of North Dakota (UND) reached out to me to discuss their CDC proposal to tackle suicide prevention within our state and with a focus on rural communities and LGBTQ+ youth. While we have the infrastructure to create meaningful change for a population that struggles with homelessness, self harm, and suicide, we lack the funding to realize a better future for these kids.

I served as the co-chair for the North Dakota Department of Health's Queer Equity Board. I've written the ND LGBTQ+ School Climate Report, which is a comprehensive breakdown of our queer youth outcome data compared to school policy. I've written and got approval for sexual orientation and gender identity data to be included in our Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and Youth Risk Behavior Survey. I've written for years about the high suicidality, reported on the data across the state, and I've offered meaningful solutions that have always been met with issues related to lack of personal and funding.

When I tell you that UND's proposal is the only life raft that could be in the water, I'm not exaggerating. I've worked hard to communicate our community needs to UND, addressed the community partners that exist in our state, and if approved will do everything within my power to collaborate with UND to assure this grant is successful, accountable, and the best use of CDC resources possible.

I believe that UND is committed and able to undertake this project and we have every tool to make it successful between state data, well organized collaborative infrastructure, and the ability to have sustainable impact on the communities we aim to serve.

I thank you for your time and consideration and ask that you fund UND's effort. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Faye Seidler
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