

Mohawk College Alumni Profile: Lyla Miklos
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It's hard to meet up with Lyla Miklos and not expect an interesting answer when you ask her the age-old rhetorical question, "What's new?" As anyone who knows Lyla can attest to, you know you are going to get a fascinating rundown of everything this powerhouse woman is up to.

Lyla, 27 and single, is currently working for CHUM Television as the Programming Coordinator for Bravo!, SPACE and Drive-In Classics. Prior to working for CHUM, she was the Traffic Coordinator for Vision TV.

She is also the Host and Producer of Centre Stage, a celebration of musicals from both the stage and screen. Lyla has been an on-air personality on C101.5 FM (formerly CHMR) for over six years.

She has been a member of HTI (Hamilton Theatre Inc.) for over eight years, as a former board member, and now the company's Publicist. She has performed onstage in community theatres across Southern Ontario for over a decade. Theatre companies she has performed with include HTI, The Hamilton Players' Guild, Theatre Aquarius, Theatre Ancaster and more.

She is also an accomplished vocalist and has sung the national anthem at Ivor Wynne and Copps Coliseum and she recently had her first recording gig singing background vocals on Scott Cameron Smith's latest CD.

I first met Lyla when she came to work for the Alumni Office, while studying at Mohawk College. She later served on the Alumni Board of Directors after graduation. She was awarded numerous awards while at Mohawk, including two Radio Corp Awards, The Hamilton Community Foundation Award, The Mohawk College Alumni Award, The Judge William K. Warrender Award and many more.

It was during her time at Mohawk that Lyla, along with several other students, started Mohawk Pride, the College's first social and support group for GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender) students. She is currently the Chair for Hamilton Pride, which consists of a 12 member Executive, 36 fee paying members and more than 20 volunteers. Lyla identifies herself as bisexual.

She is serving her fifth year on the planning committee of Hamilton Pride. This is her first year as Chair. She along with a dedicated team of volunteers helped organize four days of events (June 13-16, 2002) including the 3rd annual Hamilton Pride march and rally. The weekend of events kicked off with a reception at the Art Gallery of Hamilton, followed by men's and women's dances, a march from City Hall to Dundurm Park, six hours of live entertainment as well as vendors, BBQ, licensed bar, all ending with an outdoor brunch at Whitehern.

This was a far cry from the event a few short years ago, when it started off as a quiet picnic at Bayfront Park. The event has now ballooned to four days of festivities. This year the event boasted 60 sponsors, 3000 attendees, with nearly 300 at the march and rally.

Lyla says Hamilton's gay citizens should feel comfortable holding hands and kissing everyday, rather than on designated days. "We're not good enough to adopt kids or give blood," she says. "Some people feel that we have no right to exist at all."

"It's about not having to justify our existence. It's about acceptance, not merely tolerance. We still have a long way to go. We still live in a heterosexist and homophobic society. We are still kicked out of our homes, ostracized by our families, shunned by our religious communities, wrongfully dismissed by our employers, our marriages aren't considered legal and some people would say we have no right to exist at all."

One step of many to go, but with determined, unwavering advocated like Lyla we comes one step closer to living in a society free from discrimination and harassment.