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UNSAINTLY PERSECUTION

STUDENTS CALL OUT BYU'S ANTI-LGBTQ PRACTICES

By **DIEGO HIGUERA**

Brigham Young University seems so far from Chula Vista. It is 713 miles away, an 11-hour drive through four states.

Culturally, it is a light year from diverse, progressive South San Diego County. BYU is in the heart of red state Utah, a bastion of conservative politics since the late 1840s.

BYU seems like the last place a kid from the South Bay would want to attend, but there is a quiet pipeline from our multiracial blue coastal strip to the

“Mormon Harvard.” There may be as many as 14,000 Mormons in the South County who have high regard for BYU’s deserved reputation as an excellent academic university with an affordable price tag.

Often, though, culture shock consumes BYU’s overwhelmed LGBTQ students. Ugliness ensues.

Last semester when campus clubs and student organizations were invited to insert brochures and handouts in a Welcome to BYU bag for incoming freshmen, campus officials removed all materials from LGBTQ organizations.

One of the purged clubs was the BYU Rainbow Collective, an organization whose stated mission is “to create and identify safe spaces for BYU’s LGBTQIA+ students.” Rainbow Collective organizes back-to-school Pride events, DEI training and a popular art show.

Rainbow Collective PR Manager Haley Malesich said the move was hurtful. ▶



UNITED IN UTAH

BYU attracts Mormon students from across America with its affordable tuition and generally good academics. Students from the South County are among the leaders of a growing movement to push BYU toward full acceptance of marginalized LGBTQ students.