

GSS: looking for recognition on campus

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The status of the Gay Student Services at Texas A&M remains a mystery at this time. Last month, Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox gave the University permission to appeal the 5th District Court of Appeals' decision that required Texas A&M to recognize the GSS.

But GSS President Marco Roberts says they will continue the fight.

"We'll take it as far as we have to and we're almost sure we're going to win," he says. "So if the Supreme Court decides they want to hear, of course we'll continue on."

"I think we're going to win and I think A&M knows we're going to win. Right now, it's just a question of keeping us off campus as long as possible."

The move for recognition by the GSS started at Texas A&M

eight years ago and Roberts says that, at that time, nobody realized how far it would go.

"The curious thing is that in the beginning GSS didn't want recognition, they just wanted to put up fliers," he says. "But A&M said you had to be recognized to do that."

"So a few people went over to the student activities office to get help and to see how you go about getting recognition. In fact, the goals of GSS were designed and patterned from the advice of the Director of Student Affairs. That's why everybody thought everything was fine, then they said no."

Roberts says the University has not helped its image by pushing the case this far up the judicial system.

"There is no doubt about it that A&M has hurt itself, not just with this GSS case, but with a lot of decisions when it comes to civil rights," he says.

"They do not have to agree with us being gay and everything, we have never said that. But the fact that they feel they can deny someone the right to express an idea, simply because they don't agree with it, says something about the way they think."

"As it is right now, our group is probably the most well-known gay student organization in the state — all because A&M refuses to recognize us."

"You keep hearing world class university — a lot of people don't even know what that is — and that is a toleration for all ideas. It doesn't matter what they are like. The kind of image at this University is that we have no toleration of any ideas other than our own."

The University has stated that it is continuing court proceedings because the GSS does not fulfill the criteria as a service organization. Roberts says otherwise.

"GSS is not based on socializing," he says. "So for anyone to claim that we are a dating service — I can assure you that that person has never been to one of our meetings or has any idea of what we do."

Roberts says that what they do can be summed up in two sentences.

"First," he says, "we want to help the gay community out there deal with the gay issues, help them develop and inform them on all the variety of aspects of their lives. On the other hand, we also want to educate the non-gay population so that there will be a little more understanding about the gay lifestyle and therefore a little more tolerance."

Roberts says GSS is continuing the fight because recognition will help them fulfill these goals and because it will also

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