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**Contact:** Cheyenne Chavez, Public Relations Assistant  
cheyenne.chavez.265@my.csun.edu  
Michael Niles, Marketing Manager  
University Student Union  
California State University, Northridge  
michael.niles@csun.edu  
(818) 677-2875

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Pride Center Launches “Peer Mentor Online Chat” as a Safe Space  
for LGBTQ and Questioning Students**

Northridge — The Pride Center in the University Student Union (USU) invites all LGBTQ and questioning CSUN students to participate in its new “Peer Mentor Online Chat”. The program begins on Monday, January 25 from 7 to 9 p.m. and will continue every Monday during the Spring 2016 semester. The Pride Center is excited to extend the inclusive and safe environment of its Sol Center space to an online forum where students can comfortably share their stories and experiences with their sexuality and gender identity, get advice regarding a family member or friend coming out and much more during the “Peer Mentor Online Chat”.

“CSUN students can utilize the Peer Mentor Online Chat as one of their resources when they need answers and may not be able to come physically into the Pride Center,” said Pride Center Coordinator, Sarina Loeb, “It’s important for LGBTQ and questioning students to know that they are not alone and the Pride Center is here to help them with whatever concerns they have, either in-person or online.”

In order to create a safe online space for students, all chats with Peer Mentors are kept private. Students can feel free to share their questions knowing that nothing they say will be repeated. All participants will be able to select their own username and password to remain anonymous in the chats unless the student wishes to disclose their identity.

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The program hopes to specifically reach out to students who are not “out” yet or may be questioning their sexuality and/or gender identity by encouraging them to ask questions and seek advice they may be scared or unable to ask in person. The chats are open to all questioning students who don’t feel ready to physically come to the Pride Center yet and are intended to provide the same support and guidance.

Students can begin participating in the “Peer Mentor Online Chat” by creating an account at [www.csun.edu/pride/chat](http://www.csun.edu/pride/chat). The Pride Center encourages you to have fun during all chats, while still making sure to follow the guidelines.

For more information and a full list of guidelines and disclosures, please visit [www.csun.edu/pride](http://www.csun.edu/pride) or contact the Pride Center at [pride@csun.edu](mailto:pride@csun.edu).

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*The University Student Union (USU) is committed to inclusion, diversity and personal growth for all students while providing services such as study areas, a computer lab, TV lounge, games room and wireless printing kiosks in addition to a variety of food options and a wide range of events. The USU includes the Student Recreation Center, Oasis Wellness Center, Pride Center and Veterans Resource Center. To learn more, please visit [www.csun.edu/usu](http://www.csun.edu/usu).*