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## 2020: Chloé Massie-Costales

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*During Women's History Month, the University of Dayton Women's Center coordinates, as an experiential learning opportunity for students, an annual exhibit highlighting the contributions women have made at the University of Dayton.*

*Theme for 2020: Voices of Courage*

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## 2020: Chloé Massie-Costales

*Written by Laura Gentner Hutchinson,  
Coordinator, LGBTQ+ Student Services*

As a first-year student, Chloé Massie-Costales had a bit of a rough start at UD. As a queer Latina woman, she found that her first-year peers saw her as an anomaly or even a curiosity. Feeling frustrated and isolated, Chloé found refuge among the students in Spectrum, UD's gender and sexuality alliance, and their corresponding Ally House. The student leaders of Spectrum welcomed her into their home, gave her a place to be herself, and connected her with resources on campus. This support enabled her to take on the challenge of discovering herself.



Chloé came to UD with a hunger to do something, but she wasn't yet sure of what that would be. It turned out that she has done a lot in her 5 years as a student, though she probably wouldn't claim most of those accomplishments. In addition to being a highly academically engaged student, Chloé has been an active student leader with LGBTQ+ Student Services, Spectrum, the Immigration Working Group, the Moral Courage Project, and the campus Unity Picnic in May of 2019.

Inspired by her own experiences, and the experiences of family and friends, Chloé is deeply passionate about LGBTQ+ inclusion, advocacy for undocumented immigrants, and activism at the intersections of marginalized identity. No matter which topic she is focused on at the moment, Chloé always makes sure to bring in elements of her other passion areas, resulting in a holistic and intersectional approach to advocacy. Her core identity is being an advocate. During her time at UD, she has learned to use her own experience, her story, and her voice. Yet, she is committed to using her privilege to magnify other marginalized voices. She described her

activism as “standing up when I can, helping others to stand, and giving a microphone so others’ voices are heard.”

When asked what it was like to be called a trailblazer, Chloé had a bit of trouble wrapping her mind around it at first. “I’ve done some things, but I’ve had a lot of help.” She sees her leadership style as inherently collaborative, crediting peers and mentors for her success. With the help of these people, and more, Chloé has found her voice, her strength, and a sense of community, where she tries to see more people as neighbors, especially when it is most difficult. She has also gained an appreciation for the combination of advocacy, education, and clear vision.

Chloé encountered some significant health challenges in her fourth year as a student. At the time, she was in more than one formal leadership position and balanced an academically challenging schedule. Finding she could no longer physically give the way she wanted to, she began to change how she approached leadership, moving from a “do all the things!” approach, toward a more trusting and empowering approach. She took a step back, asked for help, and her peers stepped up, resulting in each of those students gaining experience and wisdom to become the leaders that they always could be. When she graduates in May, Chloé will leave a strong legacy of empowering others to become leaders.

Chloé looks forward to seeing the UD community continue the work it has done during her time here. She hopes to see student advocacy for intersectional rights grow, and for having hard conversations, particularly about representation of LGBTQ+ identities. She envisions a time when each LGBTQ+ person knows they are welcome and safe at UD, and have a place to go and be fully authentic with themselves and with others. Chloé believes the University of Dayton functions at its best when it holds dignity and humanity at the center of its focus, and it is these values that have guided Chloé in her time as a student leader at the University of Dayton.