

Pence joins HAF+WRCF as new board member

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Humboldt Area Foundation + Wild Rivers Community Foundation is proud to announce its newest board member: Eli Pence, sociologist, trans activist, and academic advisor at Cal Poly Humboldt.

“We are excited to welcome Eli as a new board member,” said Charlie Jordan, Chair of HAF+WRCF’s board of directors.

“He brings his experience in education and sociology to the board and provides representation of the LGBTQ+ community, which furthers our ability to serve all within our area.”

Pence, who grew up in Branscomb, California, earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Sociology and Anthropology from Mills College in 2005 and a Master’s Degree in Sociology from Cal Poly Humboldt in 2010. For the last 10 years he has worked as a lecturer at the university with emphasis on ethnic and women’s studies.

He also serves as an academic advisor with Humboldt’s TRIO Student Support Services Program, helping low-income, first-generation students gain success in college and beyond.

Before joining the university, Pence was the Student Research Program Director at the California Center for Rural Policy (CCRP), where he created a research program for low-income and indigenous middle and high school students that combined community service, college readiness and self-efficacy.

“It is an honor to be able to leverage my privilege and connections to help our local communities in real, material ways,” Pence said. “I’m so excited to support amazing social justice initiatives and programs, as well as represent the interests of the queer-trans community in my service.”

When he’s not teaching, advising and grant writing at the college level, he volunteers as a steering committee member for the Eureka Bike Kitchen and, previously, for Food For People, the Humboldt County food bank. His personal interests include road cycling, hanging out with his dogs, and doing yard work.

Pence is one of 15 board members of HAF+WRCF, which serves Trinity, Del Norte and Humboldt counties in California, and Curry County in Oregon, as well as the 26 Tribal Nations and Indigenous Territories across this region.

The foundation’s strategy focuses on building a “Just Economy, Healthy Ecosystems and Environments, Thriving Youth and Families, and Racial Equity.”

The foundation’s board oversees affiliates such as the Humboldt Health Foundation, the Native Cultures Fund, the Redwood Region CORE Hub, and other major initiatives.

For information, visit hafoundation.org.