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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SpeakOUT Boston Announces New England Collegiate GLBTQIA
Speaker Training: October 1 & 2**

“Ask Us Anything” Approach Drives Organization’s Success

Boston, Mass. – September 8, 2011 – SpeakOUT Boston, the nation’s oldest gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex and allies (GLBTQIA) speakers’ bureau, will hold its bi-annual speaker training on Saturday, October 1 from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm and Sunday, October 2 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on the campus of Wellesley College (Wellesley, MA), 106 Central St., Wellesley, MA, 02481.

This Fall’s training is shaping up to be one the biggest training events ever offered by SpeakOUT in recent history. It is being held as a symposium for college students, but ALL are welcome, not just students. Leah Fygetakis, a member of the Board of Directors of SpeakOUT Boston, as well as the Director of Services and Programs and Advisor for LGBTQ Students for The Office of Intercultural Education for Wellesley College is spearheading the event. Leah notes to any prospective student wishing to sign up, that she has “personally been involved with SpeakOUT Boston since the mid-1980’s. I can tell you that this training will provide you with a safe and valuable opportunity to self-assess your readiness and level of passion for taking on the role of an educator through self-disclosure. I can also say that any student who goes through this intensive training weekend will come out of it having developed some highly transferable skills to your future as a presenter and as a leader at work or within your communities”.

This training will benefit anyone seeking new skills and self-awareness, students and non-students alike.

“Our motto is ‘Ask Us Anything,’” said SpeakOUT Co-Chair Julie Dorley. “We tell our stories, speaking from our own experiences and answer audience questions honestly and openly. Our approach helps put audiences at ease and builds greater understanding about GLBTQIA lives and issues.”

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Since 1972, SpeakOUT has provided training in public speaking to build the skills of its volunteer speaker network – speakers who conduct informal, interactive speaking engagements in settings like high schools, colleges, businesses, churches, and community service organizations. The group’s mission focuses on using personal storytelling as a way to create a world free of homo-bi-trans-phobia and other forms of prejudice by telling the truths of people’s lives.

The training, based on a proven format of sharing stories and answering questions, gives youth and adults an intensive two-day preparation for conducting speaking engagements. Once training is completed, participants choose engagements that fit best into their schedule. However, they’re not obligated to speak for SpeakOUT; many participants take the training as a way to grow personally and professionally.

During the training, participants learn valuable skills, such as setting the right tone, shaping and telling a story, overcoming fear, working with your co-speaker, and answering difficult questions.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided on Saturday and Sunday. On Saturday evening, there will be an opportunity to join other trainees and members of SpeakOUT for dinner.

“There’s nothing like the power of a personal story,” said SpeakOUT Co-Chair Alex Lucchesi. “Whether you’ve never spoken in front of a crowd or speak publicly regularly, SpeakOUT gives you access to a unique audience that’s eager to listen.”

Training is \$75 for both days with a reduced rate of \$35 for students. Group rates and need-based reductions are also available. Space is limited, so registration is required. Please see www.speakoutboston.org/programs_services/speakertraining.html for more information. For directions to the campus and for further campus information, please refer to <http://web.wellesley.edu/web/>

About SpeakOUT

SpeakOUT Boston is the nation’s first gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender speakers’ bureau. Since 1972, our mission has focused on creating a world free of homo-bi-trans-phobia and other forms of prejudice by telling the truths of people’s lives. Today, our membership includes more than 100 volunteer speakers. We conduct informal, interactive speaking engagements in settings like high schools, colleges, businesses, churches, and community service organizations. Sharing our lives and experiences publicly helps us support those struggling with sexuality and gender identity – and helps us dispel stereotypes to create positive cultural change.

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Calendar Entry

October 1 and 2: SpeakOUT bi-annual speaker training, campus of Wellesley College. Training for GLBTQI people and allies who want to use personal storytelling as a way to create a world free from homo-bi-trans-phobia. Cost: \$75 for both days. Reduced rates for students, groups and low-income individuals. Registration required. For more information or to register, visit www.speakoutboston.org/programs_services/speakertraining.html