# Gay waiter turns ‘fag’ slur into gold



A distressing event at a Wichita restaurant has turned into an unexpected wave of support for a young waiter after a customer's homophobic slur substituted for a tip, igniting outrage and generosity from the community.

Noah Bierig, a 19-year-old server at Bubba's 33, recounted an unsettling experience that transpired two weeks ago. As he served a group of young men one Sunday, he noticed one individual glaring at his painted nails and pride bracelet, gifts symbolising his coming out journey.

During their encounter, Bierig sensed discomfort from the group, particularly from one man. Despite receiving dirty looks and suppressed laughter every time he approached the table, Bierig maintained his professionalism.

However, his resolve was tested when he discovered what was written on the receipt. Instead of a tip, there was a homophobic slur: 'fag'. "I’m not the type to cry at work,” said Noah, "but that was definitely the first time that had happened to me."

Bierig's friend, outraged by the disrespect, posted an image of the receipt online. The post, displaying the customer's name, James Blick, rapidly garnered attention and indignation. The ensuing backlash prompted Blick to issue an apology on Facebook, acknowledging the inappropriateness of his actions but also noting his dissatisfaction with the service. "I know it was wrong of me to write what I did," the post read. "I am very sorry. The overall dining experience wasn’t that great, but I shouldn't have dealt with it by saying what I did."

Despite Blick's attempt at an apology, it was met with disapproval from the online community, leading him to express concerns about receiving "hateful comments, messages, and phone calls" before he subsequently deleted his social media accounts. Blick noted he had unsuccessfully tried to contact the restaurant to apologise directly to Bierig.

In an uplifting turn of events, Bierig’s friends initiated an online fundraiser through the local LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce. The fundraiser, aimed at compensating Bierig with the rightful tips he was denied, has since raised thousands of dollars. Bubba's 33 has praised the outpouring of support and committed to matching the donations. All proceeds are set to benefit GLSEN, an organisation dedicated to minimizing discrimination, harassment, and bullying experienced by individuals of diverse sexual orientations.

Reflecting on the remarkable response, Bierig expressed his gratitude. "It's absolutely insane. I never thought anything like this would happen based off just a couple of Facebook posts from my friends and family."