



OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE

JUDY SHEPARD TO MAKE FINAL OFFICIAL PRIDE APPEARANCE & SERVE AS GRAND MARSHAL OF THE 41ST ANNUAL NYC LGBT PRIDE MARCH

(New York – Monday, February 15, 2010) NYC Pride is honored to announce Judy Shepard as one of its Grand Marshals for the 41st Annual LGBT Pride March, which will occur on June 27th, 2010. When first approached about the request to be the NYC Grand Marshal, Ms. Shepard responded with excitement and a sense of honor. Ms. Shepard's selection and acceptance of the honor of NYC LGBT Pride Grand Marshal marks her 3rd official and final appearance as an LGBT pride march Grand Marshal.

In October 1998, Judy and Dennis Shepard lost their 21 year-old son, Matthew, to a murder motivated by anti-gay hate. Matthew's death moved many thousands of people around the world to attend vigils and rallies in his memory. Determined to prevent others from suffering their son's fate, Judy and Dennis decided to turn their grief into action and established the Matthew Shepard Foundation to carry on Matthew's legacy. The Foundation is dedicated to working toward the causes championed by Matthew during his life: social justice, diversity awareness & education, and equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

Judy Shepard is the founding president of the Matthew Shepard Foundation Board of Directors, and served as its first executive director as well, from 1999 to 2009. In her continuing role as board president, she travels across the nation speaking to audiences about what they can do as individuals and communities to make this world a more accepting place for everyone, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, sex, gender identity and expression, or sexual orientation. Speaking from a mother's perspective, Judy also authored a 2009 memoir, "The Meaning of Matthew," exploring the family's journey through the prosecution of Matthew's assailants, the ensuing media coverage and their continuing work to advance civil rights.

Ms. Shepard's selection as an NYC Pride Grand Marshal speaks volumes to struggle for equality among the LGBT community. Since the taking of her son's life in 1998, Ms. Shepard has been a relentless voice of equality and a reminder that LGBT community is not alone in its struggle for liberty and justice for all. Maurice Michaane, NYC Pride March Director, stated that "Matthew's story and his mother's courageous crusade on behalf of the LGBT community is what gave me the strength to come out to my family so many years ago, and for that I will always be grateful to Judy Shepard, and I am grateful that she will be our Grand Marshal for the 2010 Pride March". It is a privileged honor that NYC Pride has Ms. Shepard as Grand Marshal to mark the inaugural year in which the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Bill was signed into law.

New York City's annual Pride March began in 1970 as a commemoration of the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. The March has since grown to become the oldest and one of the world's largest Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) events. This year's Pride March will begin at 12:00 noon on Sunday June 27th. Step-off for more than 350 groups and 500,000 participants will take place on 52nd Street and Fifth Avenue. The March then follows the Lavender Line to its conclusion at the intersection of Christopher Street and Greenwich Street. Longer than St. Patrick's green line by many blocks, the Line is an identifying symbol of New York City's Pride March and will mark all four miles of the March's route. The route moves south on Fifth Avenue and turns right (west) on 8th Street and proceeds to the top of Christopher Street by the Jefferson Market Library. From here, the March will pass down Stonewall Place and the Stonewall Inn, site of the riots in June of 1969.

For further media inquiries please contact the Media Director at media@nycpride.org. For information regarding NYC Pride and Pride Week 2010 events, please visit our website at www.nycpride.org. Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NYCPride or Twitter at http://twitter.com/NYC_Pride