



**PARADISE VALLEY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**



**HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN®**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMMUNITY MEMBERS DISCUSS THE LARAMIE PROJECT
Performance Followed by Direct Conversation about Hate Crimes and Intolerance

PHOENIX, ARIZONA—October 5, 2009—The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Arizona Federal Club and Paradise Valley Community College (PVCC) have partnered to offer a special program that includes tickets to the live performance of The Laramie Project on Sunday, October 18, 2009, a pre-performance reception and an engaging panel discussion with top community leaders on trends, changes and pending legislation impacting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens in Arizona.

The Laramie Project is a brilliantly moving theatrical creation of a real-life tragedy. The savage killing of Matthew Shepard, a young gay man, has become a national symbol of the struggle against intolerance and hate. For a year and a half following the murder Shepard, Moise's Kaufman and his Tectonic Theater Project conducted hundreds of interviews with the citizens of Laramie, Wyoming to create a portrait of a town struggling with a horrific event. The Laramie Project allows those most deeply affected to speak.

HRC Arizona and PVCC teamed together to continue the dialogue with fellow community members. Following the matinee performance, an expert-led panel will discuss how we are all impacted by intolerance and hate and what we must do to prevent such tragedies in the future. The panel includes an open question and answer forum.

The notable panel participants include Mark Stoddard, director of The Laramie Project, State Representative Kyrsten Sinema, Tandra Williams of the Phoenix Police Department, Cynthia Lewis of HRC, Dr. Becky Allison a member of the Arizona transgender community, Michael Weakley from 1n10, Jeff Gish of One Voice Community Center and PFLAG. Tony Felice will moderate the discussion.

The reception starts at 1:00PM followed by the matinee at 2:00PM. The panel discussion begins at the conclusion of the performance. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors and \$8 for students. Purchase tickets by October 9 and receive a 10% discount. Mention the promo code HRC1 to receive the discount when calling 602-787-7738 or enter the code when buying tickets at www.paradisevalley.edu/cpa. Judy Shepard's new book "The Meaning of Matthew" is available for purchase before and after the performance. Personalized autographed copies of the book can be ordered at the event. The Laramie Project contains adult language and themes which may not be suitable for young audiences.

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ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN - The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality. By inspiring and engaging all Americans, HRC strives to end discrimination against LGBT citizens and realize a nation that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all. HRC seeks to improve the lives of LGBT Americans by advocating for equal rights and benefits in the workplace, ensuring families are treated equally under the law and increasing public support among all Americans through innovative advocacy, education and outreach programs. HRC works to secure equal rights for LGBT individuals and families at the federal and state levels by lobbying elected officials, mobilizing grassroots supporters, educating Americans, investing strategically to elect fair-minded officials and partnering with other LGBT organizations. HRC contributed over \$200,000 in Arizona in 2006 and 2008 to its advocacy of equal rights. This included funding the NO to Prop 102 campaign in addition to providing dedicated, experienced staff to work with the campaigns of local candidates supportive of equality and with allied organizations. Visit phoenix.hrc.org for more information about HRC Arizona.

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