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**"MISS HICKORY AMERICA 2001"**  
FRIDAY MAY 18<sup>TH</sup> @ CLUB CABARET

STARRING:

**TYLER KOLE**  
MISS NORTH CAROLINA AMERICA 2000-2001

AND

**JAMIE MICHAELS**  
MISS HICKORY AMERICA 2000

FEATURING:

**ASHYA NUVALL & DOMINIQUE O'DAY**

OVER \$600 IN CASH AND PRIZES TO THE WINNER!!  
REGISTRATION 5 - 7PM / MALE INTERVIEW 7PM

**"MISS GREENSBORO AMERICA 2001"**  
SUNDAY MAY 20<sup>TH</sup> @ WAREHOUSE 29

STARRING:

**TYLER KOLE**  
MISS NORTH CAROLINA AMERICA 2000-2001

WITH VERY SPECIAL GUESTS:

**JAZMUN TOMAS & SELENA**

OVER \$600 IN CASH AND PRIZES TO THE WINNER!!  
REGISTRATION 3 - 5PM / MALE INTERVIEW 5PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON EITHER OF THIS EXCITING  
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**FL high court upholds DP law**

by Peg Byron,  
Special to Q-Notes

FT. LAUDERDALE — The Florida Supreme Court has put an end to right-wing efforts to block domestic partner benefits for unmarried public employees in Broward County, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund said April 16.

"The Court has improved security and peace of mind for many lesbian and gay families, and it has allowed Broward to be a better employer," said Stephen Scarborough, staff attorney with Lambda's Southern Regional Office in Atlanta.

Broward adopted its *Domestic Partner Act (DPA)* in April 1999, creating a domestic partner registry and providing various benefits for county employees' partners and children.

Local resident Lawrence Lowe sued, claiming the county exceeded its authority by enacting the ordinance, and that the DPA conflicted

with state law by creating a "marriage-like" relationship. After the state Circuit Court rejected all of Lowe's claims, he appealed, and last year, the appeals court unanimously upheld that ruling. Lowe then appealed to the Florida Supreme Court, which rejected Lowe's petition for review.

Scarborough noted, "All of Broward wins with this workers' benefits program. The county gains by being able to better attract employees, and the community overall has the advantage of improved security and health coverage available to more of its families."

While scores of states and cities now offer domestic partner benefits to their workers, Broward is among the first public employers in the country also to encourage its contractors, through a bidding preference, to offer family benefits to unmarried as well as married employees. ▼

**Shepard**

Continued from Page 1

LaFontine Odom, Sr., representing Iredell, Lincoln, and Mecklenburg counties, transferred the Matthew Shepard Memorial bill from the Judiciary II Committee to the Appropriations Committee to increase its chances of getting to the floor of the state senate. Behind the scene, hundreds of phone calls, letters, and emails landed in politicians' offices urging passage of the bill.

Hundreds of other citizens attended awareness activities. "We decided to plan something big this year and we received an amazing amount of support," said Joy Pugh, President of UNC Charlotte PRIDE. The "big" event was bringing Judy Shepard to Charlotte by raising \$10,000 for her speaker's fee — a sum that Shepard contributed to the Matthew Shepard Memorial Fund.

Community and campus-wide collaboration raised the money. At OutCharlotte's fall 2000 GLBT cultural festival, UNCC PRIDE sponsored a Kiss-on-the-Cheek Booth where locals donated money. Local drag queens volunteered months later and performed at a drag show in the University's Cone Center to raise funds. Campus student affairs groups — such as the Dean of Students' Office, the Multicultural Resource Center, and the Housing/Residence Life Department — also gave generously from their budgets.

A series of events produced in partnership with community and campus groups (that led to Shepard's speaking engagement on Thursday, April 19) included various efforts to increase the visibility of the GLBT community. Monday, April 16, Metrolina AIDS Project (MAP) and Time Out Youth (TOY) joined UNCC PRIDE in distributing information about anti-discrimination and AIDS at the Belk Tower. Tuesday, students and faculty — to the extent that they could — joined in a "Day of Silence." Participants wore stickers that said "People who are silent today believe that laws and attitudes should be inclusive of people of all sexual orientations." Wednesday, NCEquality PAC/Project distributed postcards for people to sign urging NC legislators to support passage of S392. Thursday, both Judy Shepard and Dr. Philip DuBois spoke to packed houses. And Saturday, TOY held their Alternative Prom for GLBT youth at the Cone University Center.

"Awareness of the problem is part of the solution," said Dr. James Woodward, Chancellor

**Judy Shepard on...**

**Federal hate crimes legislation**

*"I think a federal hate crimes law would send a message of respect that America will no longer tolerate [anti-gay] behavior. I think that message has to come from the top."*

**Her husband's view of her work**

*"He would be doing the same thing if he were here."*

**The origin of intolerance**

*"People have to grow up in an environment that teaches them to hate. We aren't born hating and we aren't born loving; we have to be taught those things. I believe that if hate is learned, it can also be unlearned."*

**Opening people's eyes**

*"I can't tell you how many times in the past two years I've had somebody come up to me after a speaking engagement and say, 'I had no idea I was part of the problem.'"*

**Matthew's figurehead status in the movement**

*"I don't accept that. Matthew had not reached a point in his life where he was a leader in the movement. He was a kid who was still trying to decide who he was."*

**Contact with Rev. Fred Phelps**

*"We talk through email...not. I am apparently on some mailing list because I occasionally get email from his group. And I did see that I'm now on one of his signs."*

of the University, in his opening remarks prior to Shepard's talk.

To make yourself aware of how you can help pass the *Matthew Shepard Memorial Act*, log on to NC Equality PAC's web site at [www.ncequalitypac.org](http://www.ncequalitypac.org) or call 919-829-0343.

To express your views to legislators, log on to the NC General Assembly's web site at [www.ncga.state.nc.us](http://www.ncga.state.nc.us); find the webpage that lists the members of the Senate Appropriations/Base Budget Committee; and e-mail, write, or phone all of them including your local legislators to urge passage of the bill. ▼

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