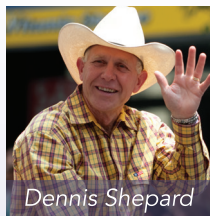


A LETTER FROM DENNIS SHEPARD | THE CHANGES IN SPORTS



Dear Friend,

Two years ago, people in America whispered about high profile athletes – both male and female – and questioned their sexual orientation. Not one amateur or professional athlete, still active in his or her sport, would admit to being anything other than the norm – the straight, toe-the-line, focused-on-winning “jock.”

Then came a stunning announcement in 2013. Jason Collins became the first American athlete still active in professional sports to publicly come out as gay. He was both toasted and roasted by the general public and the media. His courage and desire to live an authentic life, not hidden away in the shadows, provided public discussion and created an atmosphere of acceptance and respect that has allowed others, both athletes and non-athletes, both straight and gay, to more easily acknowledge that everyone is different and that those differences should be celebrated and not shunned.

Judy and I have had the good fortune to spend some private time with Jason. What an incredible young man. Life just bubbles out of him. The fact that his uniform number was #98, in memory of the year that Matt died, makes our time with him more special. It amazes me that Matt’s story still resonates in this country and around the world and that it continues to have a profound impact on people such as Jason.

Now it’s Jason’s turn to help carry the torch higher and farther. His charisma, his warmth, his smile, combined with his Stanford University background, gracious manners, and patience with

others, make him the perfect person to represent sports. His courage, knowing that he would be in the public eye, that his past, his present, and his future actions would always impact the LGBT community, has made it so much easier for other athletes to come out. His desire to live a normal life with someone he loves helps spotlight the topic of equal rights for all Americans, regardless of sexual orientation or gender expression.

Because of Jason’s stand, others have also found the courage to be themselves and to focus 100% on their sport, their future careers, and their lives – not on wasting precious time and energy pretending to be someone else. Additionally, they are receiving public acceptance and support from their teammates!

There are many beneficiaries of Jason’s courage – soon-to-be-wed couple Brittney Griner and Glory Johnson (both of the WNBA), Derrick Gordon (University of Massachusetts basketball), Michael Sam (NFL), Chip Sarafin (Arizona State University football), and countless other young athletes who want nothing more than to play their sport and live an authentic life.

I’m so pleased that Jason will be honored this October in Denver at our Foundation’s annual gala and fundraiser. It’s a small way for the Matthew Shepard Foundation to say thanks for being himself, for pushing the envelope, and for giving hope to so many young people in this country. I can’t wait to see him and to do what I do best – give him a Dad hug! Matt would be pleased with both Jason’s recognition and with my hug.

All the best,

Dennis Shepard

Matthew Shepard Foundation Calendar of Events

For more information or ticketing, go to www.MatthewShepard.org/event

September 12-27 2014	The Laramie Project at Center New York Playhouse, Syracuse, NY
September 27 2014	5th Annual Erase Hate Rehoboth benefit for the Matthew Shepard Foundation, Rehoboth, DE
October 10-11 2014	The Laramie Project at Auburn Players, Auburn, NY
October 10 2014	Matthew Shepard Foundation Family Game Night, Denver, CO

October 11 2014	The Matthew Shepard Foundation Honors, Denver, CO
October 20 2014	The Legacy of Matthew Shepard by Judy Shepard at the University of Alabama, Birmingham, AL
Oct. - Nov. 24 to 2 2014	The Laramie Project at Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
October 28 2014	The Legacy of Matthew Shepard by Judy Shepard at the Community Colleges of Baltimore County, Dundalk and Essex, MD

COMING OUT ASEXUAL | A NEW SERIES ON MATTHEWSPLACE.COM

When Stormy O'Brink reached out to MatthewsPlace.com to share her story – we just had to hear more.

Stormy wanted to talk about asexuality and the asexual community. The young writer, with journalism and public relations training, gave us all an introduction with her personal story. Thanks to Stormy's compelling story, we have been able to add more about asexuality to MatthewsPlace.com with the special Ace Talk: Asexuality Uncovered series.



MatthewsPlace.com launched in 2007 as a safe space where young LGBTQ people could find resources regardless of where they lived. It was an online community center for those who didn't live near a brick-and-mortar center and a place of support for those who didn't feel like they could go to a physical center. Visitors to Matthew's Place could find people who were like them and get resources for coming out, starting a gay-straight alliance, or just read personal stories from other LGBTQ people.

Now, seven years after its launch, Matthew's Place is continuing to provide content and resources for a broad spectrum of gender and sexual minorities.

Stormy wrote: *"Language is a very powerful thing. Having the words to describe your identity helps you communicate what you're feeling and articulate who you really are. Unfortunately, I didn't have the language to accurately describe myself until I was 20. I lacked words and awareness for my asexual identity."*

"An asexual person is someone who does not experience sexual attraction. They may or may not experience romantic attraction (falling in love with people)..."

"I couldn't stand the idea of being different. I was convinced that I would lose my girlfriend and be unlovable if I didn't start expressing some sexuality. I began going to therapy in my freshman year of college to see if I could cure my asexual tendencies. I thought I just had to work through some things to blossom into a sexual butterfly."

"My supposedly LGBT-friendly therapist told me I couldn't be asexual when I questioned it. This sent me further into denial. I was determined to "fix" myself and checked out every self-help book I could get my hands on. Yet everything I read convinced me to hate myself even more. Time passed by, but I never seemed to make any progress. I spiraled further and further into self-hatred. I decided to take a break from therapy, and I started to recognize that I wasn't going to change."

Stormy has also shared with us "Asexuality 101: Answers to the Most Frequently Asked Questions" and "Master List of Asexual and Aromantic Vocabulary." Articles about asexuals coming out and asexual relationships are coming soon to MatthewsPlace.com.



Stormy O'Brink 22, is a homoromantic (lesbian) asexual writer, artist, and activist from Iowa. A graduate of Iowa's Matthew Shepard Scholarship Program, Stormy has been involved in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, pansexual, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQPIA) rights movement for nearly a decade. She studied public relations

and journalism at the University of Northern Iowa. Stormy hopes to never lose her passion for the queer rights movement. Her writing can also be found in LGBTTeen and The Northern Iowan. Tweet her at @StormyOBrink.

"NOT ALONE: THE POWER OF RESPONSE": THE TRAVELING LETTERS EXHIBIT

The historic outpouring of sympathy over Matthew Shepard's vicious 1998 murder was captured in the thousands of letters sent to Dennis and Judy Shepard. This fall, a powerful and evocative exhibit capturing the most poignant of these messages will begin touring the country.

"Not Alone: The Power of Response" is an archive of dozens of these letters shaped into a traveling exhibit to educate the public.

Ford's Theatre created the original "Not Alone" exhibit for its 2013 Lincoln Legacy Project, centered on a production of the play *The Laramie Project*. A Ford's team traveled to Wyoming and made representative selections to compose the installation.

The letter-writers came from all walks of life: political and religious leaders, mothers, teachers, even school-age children who sent drawings. They express grief, outrage, heart-wrenching personal stories, and calls to action.

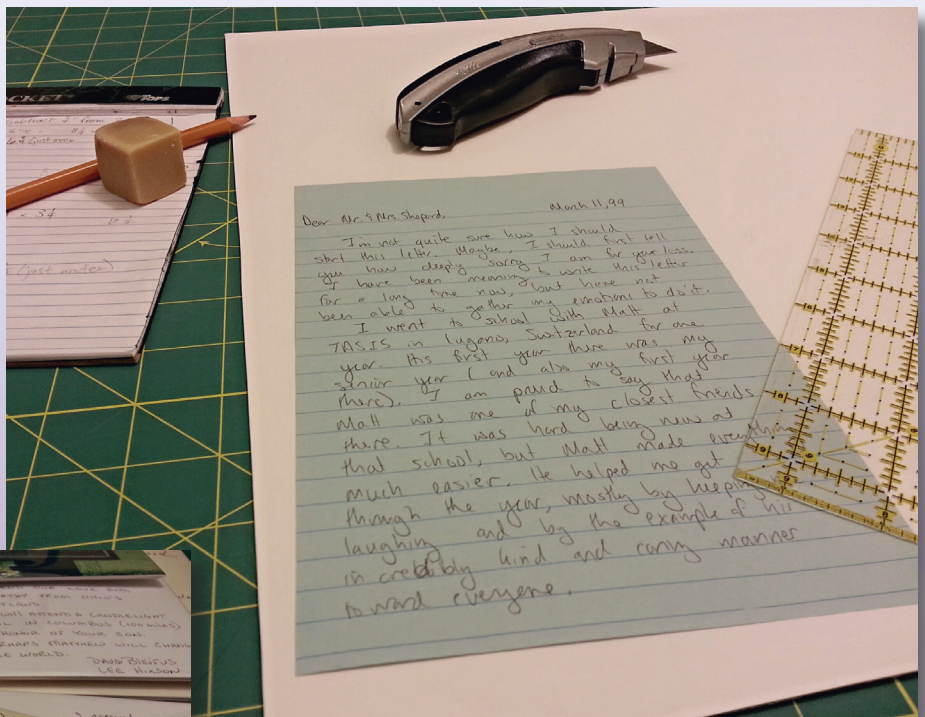
Now the D.C. show is reborn as a traveling exhibition, allowing these letters to be shared nationwide. Exhibition Curator Heather Hoagland has chosen pieces embodying three ideas: Embrace Empathy, Take Responsibility, and Take Action.

"I am honored and humbled by the opportunity to turn these letters into an exhibit that will allow them to touch so many lives," Heather said. "I am moved every day by their power to inspire and restore faith in the essential

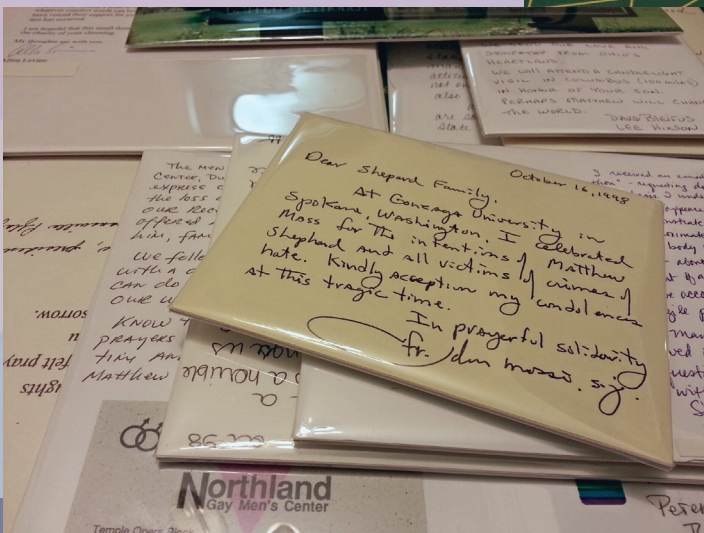
goodness of humanity – even, and especially, in the face of brutality. I hope every person who sees this exhibit feels that power too."

That's the Foundation's intent as well. "History is full of brief whirlwinds of public emotion, but few of them leave a written record," Foundation Executive Director Jason Marsden added. "These letters are that rare evidence and now they can also drive further social progress."

The exhibition's first appearance is planned for October at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, in conjunction with their production of *The Laramie Project*.



This exhibition was created by Ford's Theatre Society, Washington, D.C., and Split Rock Studios, Minn., as part of The Lincoln Legacy Project, Fall 2013.



LARAMIE PROJECT SUPPORT PROGRAM CONTINUES TO GROW

Our unique support program for productions of *The Laramie Project* and *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later* is now in its fourth year of existence. Laramie Project Specialist Susan Burk has helped hundreds of productions across the country and overseas, offering historical context and personal perspective, media and archival resources, and much more including on-site visits for post-show discussions and community conversations. For more information on our program contact Susan at susan@matthewshepard.org.

MSF TARGETS HATE CRIMES REPORTING

Despite a federal law, hate crimes are still vastly underreported. And the Matthew Shepard Foundation wants to do something about it.

Progress was made when President Obama signed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act into law in 2009 – creating stiffer penalties for crimes targeting actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. There's still work to be done because it's voluntary for law enforcement agencies to report hate crimes to the FBI.

Numerous cities nationwide including Baton Rouge, La., Eugene, Ore., Houston and Kansas City, Kan. just didn't even bother filing a report with the FBI in 2012.

Judy and Dennis Shepard worked tirelessly for years to get the federal act passed with good reason. Wyoming, where Matt was attacked, didn't consider LGBT people a protected class. James Byrd Jr., a black man, was dragged behind a truck by two white supremacists and then decapitated in Texas, which had no hate crimes protections whatsoever. These two cases illustrate why the federal act was needed, but now we see that more needs to be done.

In the coming months, the Matthew Shepard Foundation plans to unveil a new program targeting hate crime reporting that will help the federal law bearing Matt's name expand its reach. The Foundation plans to leverage our unique position to take action to correct underreporting and non-reporting agencies.

Each year, the FBI gathers the voluntarily reported hate crime data from more than 18,000 city, university, county, state, tribal and federal law enforcement agencies. In 2012, nearly 6,000 jurisdictions failed to make a report. Some cities filed a report, but claimed zero hate crimes occurred.

For example, Houston, the nation's fourth largest city, boasts a population of nearly 2.2 million residents, yet it failed to submit paperwork for the FBI report in 2012. In fact, that same year other Texas cities failed to report including Dallas, San Antonio, El Paso, or Austin. It is highly unlikely that in 2012 no hate crimes were committed in these cities.

Hate crimes not being reported to the authorities only compounds the issue of an incomplete hate crimes report. Last year the Bureau of Justice Statistics released a monumental study on the rates of hate crime reporting to police from 2003 to 2011.

"The percentage of violent hate crime victims who did not report the crime because they believed the police could not or would not help increased ... to 24% in 2007–11," the report said. For that same time period, only 35% of hate crimes were reported to the police.

Nearly two out of every three hate crimes were not reported to the police.

The study pointed out many reasons why victims of hate crimes do not report them to local law enforcement officials. The most common reason for not reporting the violent hate crime to police was that it was dealt with in another way or that the victim considered it a private or personal matter. Many do not report the



Dennis & Judy Shepard

crime because they believe that the police could not or would not help. Some violent hate crime victims told the Justice Department that they feared reprisal, or that getting the offender in trouble was the most important reason for not reporting the crime to the police.

A full and truthful picture of hate can only come to light with an accurate and complete hate crimes report from every law enforcement agency across the nation. Since it is clear that we do not have that kind of a report, the Matthew Shepard Foundation is pursuing this new program.

MSF HONORS SPOTLIGHT DIVERSE, ACCLAIMED TRIO

The Matthew Shepard Foundation will host its Honors gala Oct. 11 in Denver. The Honors awards will recognize a diverse group of people who all have dedicated energy and time to promoting equality and erasing hate.

This year, we are pleased to present the Making a Difference Award to Stephen Fry and Jason Collins. Stephen Fry is an English actor, screenwriter, author, playwright, journalist, poet, comedian, television presenter, film director and all around national treasure.

Fry's acting roles include the lead in the film *Wilde*, Melchett in the BBC television series *Blackadder*, the titular character in the television series *Kingdom*, a recurring guest role as Dr. Gordon Wyatt on the crime series *Bones*, and as Gordon Deitrich in the dystopian thriller *V for Vendetta*, Mycroft Holmes in Warner's *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* and *The Master of Laketown* in Peter Jackson's *Hobbit* trilogy. He has also written and presented several documentary series, including the Emmy Award-winning *Stephen Fry: The Secret Life of the Manic Depressive*, and is also the long-time host of the BBC television quiz show *QI*. He played Prime Minister Alistair Davies in the 9th season of Fox TV's *24: Live Another Day*.

As a proudly out gay man, his award-winning "Out There," documenting the lives of lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender people around the world is part of his 30-year advocacy of the rights of the LGBT community.

As well as his work in television, Fry has contributed columns and articles for newspapers and magazines, appears frequently on radio, reads for voice-overs and has written four novels and three volumes of autobiography: *Moab Is My Washpot*, *The Fry Chronicles* and his latest, as yet untitled.



“HOMOPHOBIA IMPACTS
ALL OF US.
IT DIMINISHES OUR HUMANITY.”

- Stephen Fry



Our continued thanks to MillerCoors, our premier national corporate partner, for their support of the Matthew Shepard Foundation and our work to erase hate.



We would also like to thank State Farm for their support of MatthewsPlace.com and Matthew Shepard Foundation Honors.

MSF HONORS SET FOR OCT. 11

Our second honoree, Jason Collins, made history in the spring of 2013 when he came out of the closet, becoming the first active player in the NBA to identify as gay. Since his initial announcement, Collins has become an outspoken advocate for LGBT equality in professional sports.

For much of his career, Collins has chosen to wear number 98 on his jersey, a subtle but meaningful remembrance of Matthew Shepard.

In 2014, Collins was signed by the Brooklyn Nets and was featured in Time Magazine's "100 Most Influential People in the World".

“OPENNESS MAY NOT COMPLETELY
DISARM PREJUDICE, BUT IT'S A GOOD
PLACE TO START.”

- Jason Collins



This year, the Matthew Shepard Foundation is pleased to introduce the Dennis Dougherty Award for Community Leadership in memory of a loving, generous and inspiring member of the MSF family. Dennis was a friend, mentor, philanthropist and visionary who was instrumental in giving the Matthew Shepard Foundation a strong beginning and a vision for a future. Dennis passed away in February 2014 and we are pleased to be able to honor his memory with this new award. We are delighted to present this new award to Leslie Herod.



Leslie Herod is passionate about making a difference in her community and the world around her through advocacy and civic engagement. Leslie has been a long time supporter of the Matthew Shepard Foundation and dedicates her time and career to organizations and causes that make a difference and change peoples' lives. Leslie

is particularly dedicated to organizations that support equality for all people regardless of race, sexual orientation or gender expression. She focuses her energy on LGBT equality, anti-bullying, youth homelessness, and ending the school-to-prison pipeline.

Leslie is a strategic planning and community partnerships professional. Prior to starting her own consulting practice, Leslie was a program officer with the Gill Foundation where she led philanthropic initiatives focusing on LGBT equality and alliance building with communities of color. Her previous professional experience includes senior policy advisor to Governor of Colorado, Bill Ritter Jr., and the Deputy Political Director for President Obama's 2012 re-election campaign. Leslie serves on multiple community boards and commissions including as a gubernatorial appointee to the state's Judicial Performance Commission and a mayoral appointee to Denver's Cultural Affairs Commission. She also serves on the boards of Urban Peak, Colorado's leading homeless youth service agency, and the Colorado Women of Influence Leadership Circles. In 2006 Leslie co-founded New Era Colorado, the state's leading organization focused on the civic engagement of young people. This year, Leslie was one of three emerging Rocky Mountain Region leaders named a 2014 international German Marshall Fund Fellow.

MATTHEW SHEPARD FOUNDATION
Honors 2014

**SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 11, 2014**

For more information, visit
www.matthewshepard.org/honors

MEET THE STAFF | BRENNAN JOHNSON | Events Assistant



Hi!

I'm Brennan Johnson. I have had the pleasure of being with the Foundation for over a year. As events assistant, I handle the logistics of the Foundation's events and make sure everything runs smoothly from start to finish. Like the rest of the MSF staff, I hold our mission to Erase Hate close to my heart and am honored to be part of the progress made for equality.

I grew up in Melbourne, Australia and moved to Colorado with family when I was 15. By the age of 18 I had grown accustomed and responded to "that Australian guy," a label I regretfully solidified the day I caught a 6-foot snake with my bare hands before proceeding to show and educate the neighbors. They continue to refer to the experience as "the best Animal Planet show ever."

I am finishing up my degree in finance at Metropolitan State University and live in South Denver with my wonderful partner, Trevor. Outside the office I don a near-identical alter ego as the lead singer in the Denver-based band AMZY. Our sound is a fun-pop mix of modern and old organic styles, but ultimately we just want to have fun and dance with everyone. At the risk of making this sentence sound like a shameful plug, GO CHECK OUT OUR MUSIC AT AMZYMUSIC.COM!





1530 Blake St., Suite 200
Denver, CO 80202



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2014

For more information, visit www.matthewshepard.org/honors

“ I’M MUCH HAPPIER SINCE
COMING OUT TO MY FRIENDS
AND FAMILY.

BEING HONEST AND GENUINE
MAKES ME HAPPY.”

- Jason Collins, NBA Basketball player for the Brooklyn Nets.