



# Heritage of Pride, Inc.



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## **OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE**

### **CONSTANCE MCMILLEN TO MAKE FIRST PRIDE APPEARANCE & SERVE AS GRAND MARSHAL OF THE 41<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL NYC LGBT PRIDE MARCH**

*(New York – Tuesday, April 13, 2010)* NYC Pride is honored to announce Constance McMillen as one of its Grand Marshals for the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual LGBT Pride March, which will occur on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Constance McMillen, a Mississippi high school honors student who fought back when her school told her she couldn't take her girlfriend to the prom, has been announced as one of the Grand Marshals for the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual LGBT Pride March in New York on June 27, 2010.

"I never dreamed so many people would support my fight to take my girlfriend to the prom, much less that I'd end up being asked to be a Grand Marshal at NYC Pride," said McMillen, an 18-year-old high school senior from Fulton, Mississippi, adding, "I'm really honored and touched to be asked to be part of this celebration."

McMillen is the plaintiff in an American Civil Liberties Union lawsuit challenging her school's decision to cancel the prom rather than let her bring her girlfriend as her date and wear a tuxedo to the prom. According to McMillen, who has been out as a lesbian since she was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Itawamba Agricultural High School officials told her that she could not arrive at the prom with her girlfriend and that they might be thrown out if any other students complained about their presence at the event.

A federal judge ruled that the school had violated McMillen's First Amendment rights but stopped short of ordering IAHS to put the school prom back on the calendar because of assurances that an alternative "private" prom being planned by parents would be open to all students. But when McMillen went to the event on April 2, she was one of only a small handful of students from her school present. Later local news reports revealed that the rest of the students from IAHS had spent the evening in a nearby town at another private prom to which McMillen wasn't invited.

While McMillen has been ostracized and harassed by her classmates at IAHS over the prom cancellation, her struggle has attracted national and even international support. She was invited to attend the GLAAD Awards with Wanda Sykes, was presented with a \$30,000 scholarship check on The Ellen DeGeneres Show, and a Facebook group supporting her has attracted over 400,000 supporters.

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 39th Street and Fifth Avenue. The March then follows the Lavender Line to its conclusion at the intersection of Christopher Street and Greenwich Street. 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.

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

Organizer & Producer of New York City's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Pride  
Rally, March, PrideFest & Dance