



## Greater Palm Springs Pride® Announces Grand Marshals in Concert with Landmark SCOTUS Decision on Same-Sex Marriage

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**July 16, 2015, Palm Springs, CA** – Greater Palm Springs Pride announced today the Grand Marshals for the annual Greater Palm Springs Pride Parade. This year's marshals are:

- **Evan Wolfson**, founder and president of Freedom to Marry, one of the lead legal and political organizations in the marriage equality fight, will be the National Grand Marshal. Wolfson has been called "the godfather of gay marriage" by Newsweek / The Daily Beast, and, "the indispensable man in bringing marriage equality to America" by Andrew Sullivan and is among those credited with the United States Supreme Court's historic ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*. In a 5 to 4 ruling, the Court determined that the Constitution guarantees every American the right to marry the person they love.

Kate Kendell, the executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights said, "It is not hyperbole to say that Evan Wolfson occupies the top slot when it comes to leaders responsible for winning marriage in the country. Evan's many years' commitment and dogged determination rallied both the LGBT community and non-gay allies to support our full dignity and equality. Long before others, Evan believed we could win this fight. I am honored that he is my colleague and friend."

- Honored, as Grand Marshals, are plaintiffs in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, **Paul Campion and Randell Johnson** who married in Palm Springs on July 3, 2008, in the legal "window" before Prop 8 prohibited same sex marriages. The Supreme Court struck down DOMA in 2013, which protected the Campion-Randell marriage in California. However, the couple did not settle with their 4 children in California, preferring to live in Louisville, Kentucky, where neither the marriage nor family was recognized. On April 28, they and their children, along with plaintiffs from the 5<sup>th</sup> District appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States and were litigants in the historic SCOTUS decision announced Friday, June 26, 2015. As

Grand Marshals for the Palm Springs Pride Parade, Campion and Johnson will provide a local connection to a national event for the LGBTQ community.

- Recognized as Community Grand Marshals is the nightclub business trio of **Mark Seymour, Jennifer Seymour and Patrick Volkert** who co-own Hunters Palm Springs. The business partners are recognized for having a positive impact in the region through the support they have provided to community organizations and fundraising efforts large and small.

"We are honored and truly excited to have Evan Wolfson, the person responsible for bringing the issue of marriage equality to the forefront of our struggle for civil rights, along with Paul and Randy as Grand Marshals and outstanding business owners Mark Seymour, Jennifer Seymour and Patrick Volkert as Community Grand Marshals for the Palm Springs Pride Parade," stated Palm Springs Pride president, Ron deHarte. "As we celebrate the life changing decision by the Supreme Court of the United States guaranteeing every American the right to marry – having those that played a role in this legal decision resonates with all of our guests, participants and allies. It truly means we have amazing Grand Marshals this year."

When asked about the impact Evan Wolfson has had on achieving marriage equality, civil rights activist, best-selling author and the 1996 Grand Marshal David Mixner said, "Evan Wolfson, without a doubt, is the modern day founder of the marriage equality movement. In good part, we have achieved our most recent victory in the Supreme Court because of his leadership and vision. He is a hero of mine."

"30 years ago Evan Wolfson set out to change history, and did. He understood that winning the freedom to marry for same sex couples would drastically reduce prejudice and make the lives of millions of LGBT individuals and their families immeasurably better. He is a passionate advocate who saw an injustice that needed to be addressed, created a long term plan and built a movement to get it done. He is a true hero." Geoff Kors, Member, Freedom to Marry Board of Directors

deHarte added, "With this decision, loving and committed same-sex couples can finally rest knowing their families are protected and their dignity is no longer up for public debate. But as we celebrate this watershed victory for fairness, we are reminded that marriage equality is a benchmark, not a finish line, and our work to bridge the gap to full acceptance and equal rights for LGBT people continues."

Awards will be presented to all Grand Marshals at OUT PSP: A Kick Off to Pride, on November 6, 2015. The marshals will ride vehicles along the parade route, which begins at Tachevah and proceeds downtown on Palm Canyon Dr. to the main entrance of the Pride Festival at W. Amado Rd. Tickets and event details for OUT PSP are available at [www.pspride.org/OUTPSP](http://www.pspride.org/OUTPSP).

### **About Greater Palm Springs Pride**

Greater Palm Springs Pride ([pspride.org](http://pspride.org)) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community enhancement organization founded to promote the public education and awareness

of individual rights and civil liberties of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. Established in 1986, the organization continues to serve as a catalyst for celebrating the strength, equality, dignity and self-determination of the LGBT community locally and globally.

For more information about Greater Palm Springs Pride, visit [www.pspride.org](http://www.pspride.org). Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/palmsprings.pride](http://www.facebook.com/palmsprings.pride). The 2015 Palm Springs Pride Celebration is scheduled for November 6-8.

Greater Palm Springs Pride is also seeking entertainers, sponsors and exhibitors. For more information on the Festival and Parade, please visit: [www.PSPride.Org](http://www.PSPride.Org).

### **About The Campion-Johnson Family**

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/20/paul-campion-randy-johnson\\_n\\_7057500.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/20/paul-campion-randy-johnson_n_7057500.html)

### **About Evan Wolfson**

<http://www.freedomtomarry.org/pages/evan-wolfson-founder-and-president>

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