



PRIDE LIVE PARTNERS WITH VISIT PHILADELPHIA FOR THE STONEWALL NATIONAL MONUMENT VISITOR CENTER

The alliance will cross-promote New York City and Philadelphia as hubs for queer history and celebrate the cities and its communities' contributions to the LGBTQ+ equality movement.

Stonewall Pioneer and Philadelphia Gay News Founder Mark Segal connected the nonprofits and will be curating an exhibit at the Visitor Center, which opens June 28.

NEW YORK – May 14, 2024 – [Pride Live](#) – a leading social advocacy and community engagement organization for the LGBTQ+ community – and [Visit Philadelphia](#), today announced their partnership for the [Stonewall National Monument Visitor Center](#) (SNMVC), the first LGBTQ+ visitor center within the National Park Service. Pride Live and Visit Philadelphia's alliance draws visitors to learn about New York City's and Philadelphia's queer history and contributions to the LGBTQ+ equality movement. The SNMVC will open to the public on Friday, June 28, marking the 55th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion.

The SNMVC commemorates the Stonewall Rebellion of 1969 and the significant historical moments that followed in the queer equality movement. In realizing the visitor center's potential, Pride Live – the founders of the SNMVC – recognized the opportunity to showcase communities across the globe who have fought for LGBTQ+ rights.

"The Visitor Center celebrates the trailblazers who came before us, not just those who were at Stonewall but also the activists from our global community," said Ann Marie Gothard (she/her), Chair of the Board of Directors, Pride Live. "Philadelphia has had many milestones in LGBTQ+ history, and we invite all generations and communities to learn about this legacy at the SNMVC and Philadelphia's landmark sites and join the ongoing fight for full equality."

While the Stonewall Rebellion stands as a cornerstone in LGBTQ+ history and a catalyst for the equal rights movement, numerous cities and their communities beyond New York City have been instrumental in fighting for equality and building on progress. From demonstrations and sit-ins at Rittenhouse Square in the 1960s to the founding of the gay activist group Janus Society (active 1962-1969), Philadelphia has been a focal point for the queer movement. The Visitor Center will feature video content to highlight these important historical moments and encourage guests to visit Philadelphia as their next destination to learn about LGBTQ+ history.

"Philadelphia was the site of some of the earliest demonstrations for LGBTQ+ rights, occurring four years before the historic events at Stonewall Inn. These LGBTQ+ activists gathered at Independence Hall, advocating for equal opportunity and employment, and continued to do so every July 4th until 1969," said Angela Val, president and CEO of Visit Philadelphia. "As we celebrate the unveiling of the new Stonewall National Monument Visitor Center in New York, we

acknowledge the significant events that occurred across the country, contributing to the early stages of the LGBTQ+ rights movement in the United States. We take great pride in Philadelphia's integral role in this movement and are eager to share this important part of American history.”

From 1965 to 1969, LGBTQ+ groups protested in Philadelphia to highlight the lack of basic civil rights and protections for members of the LGBTQ community. These demonstrations occurred annually on July 4 at Independence Hall in Philadelphia and were known as The Annual Reminder, some of the earliest LGBTQ+ demonstrations in the United States.

One of Philadelphia’s prominent LGBTQ+ leaders, Mark Segal, nurtured the relationship between Pride Live and Visit Philadelphia, igniting the idea for an inspiring partnership that celebrates the local community. Segal will be curating an exhibit at the SNMVC to spotlight testimonials from the Pioneers at the Stonewall Rebellion and other activists.

Having protested at the Stonewall Rebellion, Segal is a Stonewall Pioneer who later returned home to Philadelphia where he founded the award-winning Philadelphia Gay News. He was also one of the founders and former president of both The National Gay Press Association and the National Gay Newspaper Guild. Throughout his career in journalism, Segal has continuously focused on the importance of sharing queer experiences from across the globe.

Visit Philadelphia has a longstanding commitment of supporting the LGBTQ+ community and showcasing that the city is a welcoming destination for all. This includes campaigns such as the 2003 groundbreaking campaign “Get Your History Straight and Your Nightlife Gay®,” which made Philadelphia the first U.S. destination to produce a TV commercial specifically for the LGBTQ+ traveler. Another recent example is the award-winning 2023 ad spot, “Drag Queen Story Time,” part of the “In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union” series, which featured drag performers reading to families with historic Independence Hall as a backdrop.

A recent study by Community Marketing & Insights, a leader in LGBTQ+ market research, revealed that two thirds (63%) of LGBTQ+ travelers to Philadelphia cited the city as LGBTQ+ friendly, further underscoring the success of Visit Philadelphia's efforts in promoting inclusivity and diversity.

Culminating nearly six years of development and a \$3.2 million investment, the SNMVC will serve as an educational resource, offering an immersive experience and a rich tapestry of LGBTQ+ history and culture through a variety of engaging programs, including in-person and virtual tours, informative lecture series, captivating exhibitions, a dedicated theater space, and inspiring visual arts displays. Upon entering the space, visitors will have a multifaceted learning experience that speaks to today’s generations, encouraging them to carry forward the Stonewall legacy and the ongoing fight for full LGBTQ+ equality.

The SNMVC officially opens on Friday, June 28, and entry for the public is free of charge. For more information on the SNMVC, please visit <https://stonewallvisitorcenter.org/>.

MEDIA INQUIRIES

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ABOUT PRIDE LIVE

Founded in 2012, Pride Live is a 501(c)3 organization dedicated to accelerating awareness and support for the LGBTQ+ community via social advocacy and community engagement to advance the fight for full equality. From working with the most marginalized and underrepresented organizations, to supporting the effort leading up to the declaration of Stonewall National Monument, and to conceptualizing and developing Stonewall Day, a benefit concert to elevate and boost awareness of the Stonewall rebellion and LGBTQ+ activism – Pride Live works in service of the LGBTQ+ community. To learn more about Pride Live visit www.pridelive.org.

ABOUT VISIT PHILADELPHIA

Visit Philadelphia® is our name and our mission. As the region's official tourism marketing agency, we build Greater Philadelphia's image, drive visitation and boost the economy. On Greater Philadelphia's official visitor website, visitphilly.com, visitors can explore things to do, upcoming events, themed itineraries and hotel packages. Compelling photography and videos, interactive maps and detailed visitor information make the site an effective trip-planning tool. Visitors can also find loads of inspiration on Visit Philly's social media channels.

Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of visitphilly.com/mediacenter.

ABOUT MARK SEGAL

Mark Segal is a pioneering figure in LGBTQ+ activism, known for his involvement in the Stonewall riots and founding membership in the Gay Liberation Front. He served as a marshal during the first Gay Pride March in 1970.

In 1972, Segal initiated a campaign against LGBTQ+ invisibility on television, disrupting shows like the CBS Evening News. Collaborating with Pennsylvania Governor Milton Shapp in 1974-75, he helped enact the nation's first executive order banning discrimination in state government, leading to the creation of the first official cabinet-level commission on LGBTQ+ affairs.

In 1976, Segal founded the Philadelphia Gay News and later raised \$1.2 million for HIV/AIDS awareness through a July 4th Concert featuring Elton John. As President of the Dr. Magnus

Hirschfeld Fund, he partnered with the Obama Administration to develop the nation's first LGBT-friendly affordable senior apartment building.

Appointed to the Comcast NBC/Universal Joint Diversity Council in 2011, Segal published his memoir "And Then I Danced: Traveling the Road to LGBT Equality" in 2015. His papers and artifacts from over 53 years of activism are part of the Smithsonian Institute's American History Museum's LGBT Collection.