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### CALIFORNIA

#### Gay Teen Remembered

Seventeen memorial services, marches and vigils have been set up around the country for Larry King, the 15-year-old Oxnard, Calif., student who was shot and killed Feb. 12 by a classmate in an alleged hate crime.

King, who identified as gay and sometimes came to school in makeup and women's clothing, was said to have been teased by his 14-year-old gunman, Brandon McInerney.

A close family friend has set up RememberLarry.com, a Web site devoted to sharing memories and photos. It has received hundreds of comments from across the country, including some by national gay rights organizations.

Authorities have declined to comment on King's alleged sexual orientation, but his parents reportedly offered their support when he came out to them.

Jay Smith, executive director of the Ventura County Rainbow Alliance, a queer advocacy group, says he has been getting more than 200 e-mails a day since the shooting. He believes the bullying of gay students expands beyond the tragedy in Oxnard. He said, "This is a global issue."

#### Partnering with Boy Scouts Might Violate Nondiscrimination Policy

Lambda Legal is urging the city of Los Angeles to cut ties with the Boy Scouts of America, saying it does not adhere to the city's nondiscrimination policy. Lambda Legal announced Feb. 26 that it sent a strongly worded request to Los Angeles City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo, criticizing a Boy Scouts affiliate that administers youth programs for the Los Angeles Police and Fire Departments.

Learning for Life is a national program that provides career education for youth. While its mission statement says it does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or religion, it is essentially an arm of Boy Scouts of America, which does.

"Only a tissue-thin layer of corporate formality, if even that, separates Learning for Life

from the Boy Scouts," said Brian Chase, senior staff attorney for Lambda Legal. "The organizations share offices, intermingle finances and share directors and personnel. This is an attempt by BSA to skirt anti-discrimination policies of Los Angeles and other cities by setting up a not-so-separate corporate entity."

In 2000, the Boy Scouts of America fought Lambda Legal all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Boy Scouts of America v. Dale* and, as a private organization, was allowed to continue its policies barring gays, lesbians, agnostics and atheists. But Los Angeles City Code reads that anyone contracting with the city must agree "not to discriminate in employment practices against any employee or applicant for employment" because of religion or sexual orientation, among other bases.

The letter explains that any city affiliation with Learning for Life is illegal and that the Los Angeles Police Department should sever all ties with the program. It encourages the city to develop its cadet program in a way that rejects discrimination and is more consistent with city codes.

#### Marriage Ban Challenged in California Supreme Court

The California Supreme Court heard arguments March 4 concerning the constitutionality of Proposition 22, the state's same-sex marriage ban.

Fifteen same-sex couples, Equality California and Our Family Coalition were represented at oral arguments by Shannon Price Minter, legal director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, which is serving as co-counsel with Lambda Legal, the American Civil Liberties Union, Heller Ehrman and the Law Office of David C. Codell.

The marriage cases were filed in March 2004. San Francisco Superior Court Judge Richard A. Kramer ruled that the exclusion of same-sex couples from marriage violates the California Constitution. In a 2-1 vote, the California Court of Appeal reversed Kramer's ruling. Shortly after the Court of Appeal's decision, the California Supreme Court granted review of the cases in order to consider the constitutional questions itself.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said that the California Supreme Court should decide the constitutional questions posed by the marriage statutes when he vetoed two measures passed by the Legislature in 2005 and 2007 that would have permitted same-sex couples to marry.

The marriage cases are among the most heavily briefed cases in the history of the California Supreme Court. Late last year, more than 20 counties and municipalities filed a friend-of-the-court brief in support of marriage for same-sex couples, including some of the most populous cities in California. Also registering their support for marriage equality were numerous legal and bar associations, including the Los Angeles County Bar Association. More than 250 religious and civil rights leaders and organizations also filed briefs supporting same-sex couples seeking the right to marry.

The California Supreme Court typically issues its decisions within 90 days of oral arguments.



Attorney Gloria Allred has accompanied two same-sex couples attempting to marry to the Beverly Hills Courthouse every Valentine's Day since 2004. Their lawsuit prompted the California Supreme Court hearing on Proposition 22, the state's same-sex marriage ban.

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