



Press Contact:  
Stephanie Coen, Associate Artistic Director  
scoen@trtc.org or 732.345.1400 ext. 1829  
Box Office: 732.345.1400 or www.trtc.org

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**LEADING CIVIC, ARTS, AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS PARTNER TO LAUNCH TWO RIVER PRIDE,  
RED BANK'S FIRST ANNUAL OFFICIAL PRIDE EVENT, ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20 FROM 6-9 PM  
AT TWO RIVER THEATER**

**A community event that will be open to all, Two River Pride will focus on supporting the voices of youth and will include an "open mic" and a proclamation read by Red Bank Mayor Pasquale Menna**

RED BANK, NJ— On Wednesday, June 20, leading civic, arts, and social organizations will partner to launch a new annual event, **Two River Pride**, Red Bank's first annual official Pride event. **Two River Pride** is co-sponsored by the **Borough of Red Bank Council Members Kathy Horgan and Ed Zipprich**; the **Borough of Red Bank Human Relations Committee Chair David Pascale**; **Two River Theater Company**; and **Make It Better for Youth**, the Monmouth County Consortium for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Youth.

June has been officially declared the nation's Pride month by Presidents Clinton and Obama. Each year, thousands of Pride events around the country celebrate the achievements and commemorate the struggles of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender community. A community event that will be open to all, **Two River Pride** will focus on supporting the voices of youth, who will have opportunities to share their own stories and hear from adult role models.

**Two River Pride** will be held at Two River Theater, 21 Bridge Ave., on Wednesday, June 20 from 6-9pm. The mayor of Red Bank, the **Honorable Pasquale Menna**, will read and formally sign a special Pride Proclamation. The event will also feature performances and remarks in the Marion Huber Theater, with **JP Nicolaides** as MC. These will include an "open mic" for participants to share spoken word, songs, poems, or any expression of their personal stories. There will also be a performance by the **Giving Voice Choir** directed by **Penny Gnesin**.

Guest speakers will include community advocates **Detective David L. D'Amico**, who investigates bias crimes for the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office, and **Brenda S. "Sue" Fulton**, Executive Director and co-founder of Knights Out, an organization of LGBT West Point graduates and their supporters, and a founding member of OutServe, which represents actively serving LGBT military personnel.

In the Two River Theater lobby, personal stories from youth will be filmed and edited for a video that will be shared peer-to-peer as part of anti-bullying efforts in local schools. In addition to the performance elements noted above, Two River Pride will include a reception for all members of the community, with food donated by local restaurants including Dish, Sugarush a Sweet Experience, and Via 45; a screening of the documentary film *Stonewall Uprising*; and more.

**Councilman Ed Zipprich** says, “I am proud to be a founding member, together with Councilwoman Kathy Horgan, of the first Pride celebration in Red Bank. Over the years, many members of our community have asked why Red Bank does not sponsor a Pride event. This thought has propelled us to take action, and we are grateful for the rapid response by our elected officials, our Human Relations Advisory Committee, Two River Theater, and the Make It Better for Youth organization to make this event a reality in 2012. Red Bank is an inclusive community and we are celebrating LGBT Pride appropriately—not only with a proclamation declaring June Pride month, but also with a live celebration that will let young LGBT people know that we support their success as contributing members to society.”

Says **Kate Okeson**, an artist, teacher, and activist who is a co-founder of the Make It Better consortium, “Over the last year, in large part because of statewide Harassment, Bullying, and Intimidation legislation, attention to the rights of our community’s youth are at the center of the conversation, and remain especially close to the hearts and minds of many due to the coverage of the tragedies surrounding LGBTQ-identified youth nationwide. **Two River Pride** intends to make a place for youth and community voices to join together to discover LGBT history, use their voices to tell their stories, and help make change—and make it better—for future generations.”

“We are very pleased to be partnering with so many local civic leaders to present this event,” says Two River Theater Artistic Director John Dias. “Theater is an essential part of an inclusive and democratic society. **Two River Pride** will create a space for our community, especially young people, to gather together and share conversation and stories, and stand up for equality. We are excited to be part of this event.”

**Two River Pride** is open to the public; a \$5 contribution is suggested, which will support Make It Better for Youth, <http://makeitbetter4youth.org/>.

For more information, please contact [pride@makeitbetter4youth.org](mailto:pride@makeitbetter4youth.org) or visit <http://www.facebook.com/events/23444659995279/>.

Two River Theater Company is supported in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a division within the Department of State and a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, The Hickory Foundation, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, The Stone Foundation of New Jersey, Monmouth University, Durso Wealth Management Group at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney, OceanFirst Foundation, Springpoint Senior Living Foundation, and many other generous foundations, corporations and businesses.

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**TWO RIVER THEATER COMPANY** is under the leadership of Artistic Director John Dias and Managing Director Michael Hurst. Founded in 1994 by Joan and Dr. Robert M. Rehnitz, Two River Theater is a member of the League of Resident Theaters (LORT), Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the New Jersey Theatre Alliance, and ArtPride New Jersey, and has been designated a “Major Arts Institution” by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. For more information, visit [www.trtc.org](http://www.trtc.org).