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“Navy Pier Pride 2016” Celebration Salutes Chicago’s LGBT Community *Chicago’s first-ever family Pride celebration outside of Lakeview* *takes place at Navy Pier on Saturday, June 25*

CHICAGO – As it marks its 100th anniversary, Navy Pier will make Chicago history as it proudly hosts “Navy Pier Pride 2016,” the city’s first LGBT Pride celebration outside of the Lakeview neighborhood. This family-friendly event features entertainment and events throughout the Pier on **Saturday, June 25**. As part of the celebration, and for the first time in 28 years, Navy Pier is especially honored to display Chicago-centric sections of the internationally renowned The NAMES Project’s AIDS Memorial Quilt. All events for “Navy Pier Pride 2016” are free and open to the public, as part of the Fifth Third Bank Centennial Celebration®.

As one of Chicago’s top cultural destinations, “Navy Pier Pride 2016” is one of Navy Pier’s new arts, cultural and community programming initiatives. In addition to a lively atmosphere and a pier adorned in rainbows, highlights of this special Pride day-long event will include (times are approximate):

- Noon - About Face Theatre’s IT’S FOR REAL is a collection of stories that connects issues around race, class, sexuality, age, gender, self-esteem, and family. Based on the true experiences of the performers in the show.
- 1 p.m. - A kickoff parade, led by the Lakeside Pride Marching Band.
- 1:30 p.m. – Performances by the legendary MILLY’s ORCHID SHOW, featuring Brigid Murphy as “Milly” and with an entire cast of such celebrities as Yuri Lane (“The Harmonica Beatbox Man”) and introducing rising gay icon, his 8-year old daughter, Delilah Rose, along with Alexa Grae, Robert Cornelius (former member of the group, “Poi Dog Pondering”), House-O-Matic, and many others.
- 5 p.m. - “Chicago’s Biggest Wedding,” officiated by Angelica Ross (a leading figure in the movement for transgender and racial equality, and star of the hit series, “Her Story”). Make history with us and your loved one, as we hold a massive marriage ceremony on The Pier.

- 7 p.m. - For outdoor dancing, with the Chicago skyline as a backdrop, join house music superstar and Grammy Award-nominated producer, DJ RALPHI ROSARIO, in the Miller Lite Beer Garden.
- 10:15 p.m. -Guests will observe a moment of reflection to honor those lost in the tragic events in Orlando, followed by a celebration of life with a special Pride-themed fireworks spectacular.

Another historic and moving part of the day is the return of The NAMES Project's AIDS Memorial Quilt. The much-celebrated Quilt began to take shape in 1987 with a single 3 x 6 foot panel created in San Francisco. Today, it weighs 54 tons and is composed of more than 48,000 individual panels, each one commemorating the life of someone who was lost to AIDS. In 1988, Navy Pier became one of the first venues nationally to put The Quilt on public display.

"Throughout its 100-year history, Navy Pier has led the way in demonstrating compassion and commitment, while celebrating diversity and inclusiveness. Welcoming people of all backgrounds is at the heart of Navy Pier's core values. We are, truly, 'the People's Pier,'" said Marilyn Gardner, President and Chief Executive Officer for Navy Pier, Inc., the non-profit organization that operates Navy Pier. "We believe 'Navy Pier Pride 2016' will be an event that embraces the ideals of respect, tolerance, love, and inclusiveness."

"Navy Pier Pride 2016" has been in the planning stages for months and is one of the initial projects as part of Navy Pier's bold, new Arts & Discovery programming initiative. Leading the vision and direction of this 18-month Arts and Discovery strategic planning initiative is Navy Pier's leadership team, consultants from Dickerson Global Advisors, as well as more than 100 Chicago non-profit arts and culture organizations. Navy Pier's cultural and community programming is supported by the Polk Bros. Foundation.

Recently appointed Guest Artistic Director, Steve Abrams, brings creative leadership and vision to the first series of Arts and Discovery programs. The programs launch this summer as a pilot initiative. As a driving force in Chicago's diverse cultural landscape for the last three decades, Abrams brings an innovative arts background to Navy Pier. His prior experience includes senior and executive leadership roles at Steppenwolf Theatre Company and the Harris Theater for Music and Dance at Millennium Park, and producing numerous theatrical productions.

For more details on "Navy Pier Pride 2016," and the Fifth Third Bank Centennial Celebration®, please visit the Navy Pier website at www.navypier.com or the Navy Pier Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

About Navy Pier

Located on Lake Michigan, Navy Pier is the top-attended leisure destination in the Midwest, stretching more than six city blocks and welcoming more than 9 million guests annually. Originally opened in 1916 as a shipping and recreation facility, this Chicago landmark showcases more than 50 acres of parks, restaurants, attractions, retail shops, sightseeing and dining cruise boats, exposition facilities and more. In 2016, Navy Pier celebrates its

100th anniversary with a series of special events and programming, the grand opening of its new *Centennial Wheel* and ongoing pier-wide redevelopment efforts as part of the “Fifth Third Bank Centennial Celebration.” Navy Pier, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization, maintains and oversees Navy Pier and its redevelopment into a bolder, greener and more contemporary urban space. For more information, visit our website at www.navy pier.com.

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