

CONTACTS: Arturo Varela
(267) 765-0367, arturo@visitphilly.com
Deirdre Childress Hopkins
(215) 599-2291, deirdre@visitphilly.com
Tweet Us: [@visitphillyPR](https://twitter.com/visitphillyPR)

VISIT PHILADELPHIA® CELEBRATES 50th ANNIVERSARY OF STONEWALL RIOTS
New “Philadelphia Pioneers On The Road To Stonewall” Float To Ride In New York & Philly Parades

PHILADELPHIA, May 30, 2019 – To celebrate Pride Month and mark the 50th anniversary of the history-making Stonewall Riots that launched the LGBTQ civil rights movement, VISIT PHILADELPHIA® has partnered with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld Fund to create the **Philadelphia Pioneers On The Road To Stonewall** float, which will make its debut during Philadelphia’s PrideDay LGBT Parade on June 9. The float will carry its message of equality, unity and welcome in the NYC Pride March (June 30) and the Salute to America Independence Day Parade (July 4, Philadelphia) as well. The hand-painted, 34-foot float features more than a million golden—as in golden anniversary—“eyelashes,” 1,700 feet of rainbow ribbon and almost 42,000 square inches of Styrofoam.

“We are proud to join the worldwide celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots through a unique collaboration with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld Fund,” said Jeff Guaracino, president and CEO, VISIT PHILADELPHIA. “This is the first time that the history of the LGBTQ community will be told comprehensively and authoritatively to the world through mass media. Our city has played an essential role in this civil rights movement, and we’ve worked hard to let people know they are always welcome in the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection.”

LGBTQ pioneers and Annual Reminder participants will ride on the float alongside younger members of the LGBTQ community, symbolizing unity, equality and the impact that all generations continue to have on the movement. A seven-foot replica of the Liberty Bell—one of the world’s most recognizable symbols of freedom—sits at the front of the float, and its back wall is designed to replicate the façade of the Stonewall Inn. People will have a chance to see the float being built at Cherry Street Pier (June 4-7). Then, on June 8 from noon – 3 p.m., the public is invited to send words of encouragement to the community by writing on rainbow ribbons that will be affixed to the float’s base.

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The Philly/Stonewall Connection:

Philadelphia's connection to the LGBTQ civil rights movement is well-documented. The nation's first LGBTQ sit-in took place at Dewey's, a now-gone Center City diner. The city was home to Barbara Gittings, editor of the nation's first lesbian magazine and co-organizer of the Annual Reminders. And Philadelphia's Independence Hall served as the backdrop for the Annual Reminders (1965-1969), the last of which occurred just days after Stonewall and drew 45 demonstrators eager to remind people of the need for rights and protections for members of the community.

"Stonewall is widely recognized as one of the most important events leading to the modern fight for LGBTQ rights, and Philadelphia played an integral role in its development," said Mark Segal, publisher, *Philadelphia Gay News*, and president of the Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld Fund, which provides educational, housing and health resources to the LGBTQ community. "As Philadelphia's only Stonewall participant, I am honored to work with VISIT PHILADELPHIA on the 50th anniversary of the demonstrations to continue our march toward equality."

Summer Advertising:

To promote the city's vast appeal to the LGBTQ community this summer, VISIT PHILADELPHIA will run advertising in New York City, Washington, DC and Philadelphia. During the second half of the organization's month-long advertising takeover of New York's Penn Station, the stairs will receive a rainbow treatment—in advance of the NYC Pride March. Additional ads will run on Penn Station's digital screens, columns, clocks and even on the floor, where an LGBTQ flag will appear with the hashtag #IAmStonewall. Beyond Penn Station, ads will pop up on New York bus shelters, throughout Washington DC's Metro system and in *Metrosource*, *Philadelphia Gay News* and on Philadelphia's 6ABC.

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 and blog, visitphilly.com and uwishunu.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 sites effective trip-planning tools. Along with Visit Philly social media channels, the online platforms communicate directly with consumers. Travelers can also call and stop into the Independence Visitor Center for additional information and tickets.

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