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Inaugural *Indiana Response to Hate Conference* to Raise Awareness of Hate-Based Crimes in Indiana

Judy Shepard, anti-hate crimes activist and mother of Matthew Shepard, to serve as keynote speaker

INDIANAPOLIS – July 27, 2017 – The Central Indiana Alliance Against Hate (CIAAH) today announced it will host the inaugural ***Indiana Response to Hate Conference*** on Thursday, August 17, 2017 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Indianapolis Marriott East Hotel, located at 7202 E. 21st St., Indianapolis, Ind. The first of its kind event will bring together people committed to combating and addressing hate-based crimes and incidents as well as provide hate crime prevention training.

The CIAAH is a project of the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana and was created to reduce the occurrence and combat the consequences of hate crimes and hate-based incidents occurring in Central Indiana. It was formed in March 2017 thanks to a \$125,000 “Communities Against Hate” rapid-response grant awarded to Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana from the Open Society Foundations and has grown to include more than 45 nonprofits, organizations, and businesses plus individual members. The formation of the CIAAH is in response to Indiana being one of only five states in the country without a hate crimes law, despite Indiana being ranked as the 13th state with the most active hate groups in 2016. At least one time per week, on average, Hoosiers are targeted for violence or vandalism because of who they are, where they come from, and/or what they believe, according to FBI data.

“Over the past two years the number of hate crimes and hate-based incidents has increased and escalated in Indiana. It is important that we come together as a community to reduce hate and promote love and acceptance by creating resources for how to respond to hate, and by serving as a network for victims of hate to come to for assistance,” said Amy Nelson, executive director at Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana. The August 17th Conference schedule is as follows:

8:00 a.m. Registration and Breakfast

9:00 a.m. Welcome – Amy Nelson, executive director, Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana

9:05 – 10:00 a.m.

- **David Sklar, Jewish Community Relations Council**
- **Hate Crimes 101**
Presented by Miriam Zeidman, Anti-Defamation League

10:00–11:00 a.m.

- **Tony Mason, Indianapolis Urban League**
- **Documenting Hoosier Hate**
Presented by Jeannine Bell, author and Indiana University Law Professor
- **Rima Khan Shahid, Muslim Alliance of Indiana**

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11:00 a.m. – Noon

- **Using People First Language**
Presented by Amber O'Haver, Indiana Statewide Independent Living Council
- **Crimes Against People with Disabilities**
Presented by Lydia X.Z. Brown, Disability Rights Advocate

Noon-12:30 p.m. **Lunch**

12:30-1:30 p.m.

- **Introduction of the Central Indiana Alliance Against Hate**
Presented by Amy Nelson, Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana
- **The Legacy of Matthew Shepard**
Presented by Judy Shepard, Anti-hate crimes activist and mother of Matthew Shepard

1:30-1:45 p.m. **Break**

1:45 – 2:15 p.m.

- **Jacqueline Patterson, Indiana Transgender Wellness Alliance**

2:00-2:45 p.m.

- **A Community's Response to Hate**
Presented by Pardeep Kaleeka, Serve 2 Unite

2:45-3:30 p.m.

- **Barbara Bolling-Williams, NAACP Indiana State Conference**
- **21st Century Challenge to Hate Crimes: Prevention, Analysis, Solution**
Presented by Hilary Shelton, NAACP-Washington DC Bureau

3:30-3:50 p.m. **Legal Enforcement Panel**

- **Kelly Rota, US Attorney's Office**
- **Ryan Mears, Marion County Prosecutor's Office**

3:50-4 p.m.

- **Kerry Steiner, Indiana Native American/Indian Affairs Commission**

4:00-4:25 p.m.

- **Legislator Panel led by David Skylar**

4:25-4:30 p.m.

- **Performance by Michael Thomas, Spoken Word Artist**
- **Closing Remarks**

[Registration](#) for the all-day event is \$55/person to attend and is open to the public. For further information or to view a full conference agenda, visit <http://www.fhcci.org/events/response-2017/>. Keep up-to-date with the event on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ciNaah/>

About Central Indiana Alliance Against Hate

The Central Indiana Alliance Against Hate (CIAAH) formed in March 2017 and is a group of individuals, nonprofits, and businesses that exist to reduce the occurrence and combat the consequences of hate crimes and hate-based incidents occurring in Central Indiana. More information on the CIAAH is at www.fhcci.org/ciaah/

About Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana

The Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana (FHCCI) is a private, nonprofit fair housing organization founded in 2011 and based in Indianapolis, Indiana. Its mission is to ensure equal housing opportunities by eliminating housing discrimination through advocacy, enforcement, education and outreach. More information on the FHCCI is at: www.fhcci.org

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