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Space Needle Makes a Challenge to the Community to Raise Pride Flag

SEATTLE: In response to a ground swell of support requesting the Rainbow Flag being raised again on Seattle Pride Weekend, the Space Needle has issued an exciting new fundraising challenge. If the community can raise \$50,000 for 4 local charities, the Space Needle will raise the Rainbow Flag on Sunday of Seattle Pride weekend in Seattle. The Space Needle will also kick off the challenge with an inaugural donation of \$5000.00.

According to Jeff Wright, Chairman of Space Needle LLC, "We want to harness the enthusiasm that has built up to raise the flag for the encore performance. Our entire community gets involved in whatever issue is at hand and we think that is what makes us so strong. This challenge can reap great benefits for these worthwhile organizations."

Four charities have been selected to be the recipients of the fundraising challenge-Greater Seattle Business Association (GSBA) Scholarship Program, Lambda Legal, It Gets Better for the Trevor Project and Mary's Place, a homeless shelter for women and children. The \$50,000 will be divided equally between the four organizations.

"It was profoundly meaningful last June to look up and see the Rainbow Flag flying on the top of Seattle's most quintessential icon, our beloved Space Needle. The Greater Seattle Business Association (GSBA) applauded this important gesture of support from the leadership of the Space Needle. Not only will the flag be raised, but the Needle is taking this a step further and asking the community to partner with them and make a donation to one of several organizations selected by Space Needle employees. GSBA is thrilled that the GSBA Scholarship Fund, which gives scholarships to LGBT and Allied undergraduate students in WA State, has been selected to be one of the beneficiaries," said Louise Chernin, Executive Director, GSBA.

"We're proud to have the continued support of the Space Needle as we pursue equality for the LGBT community, and we're pleased to participate in this pride season campaign," said Judi O'Kelley, Lambda Legal's Seattle-based Deputy Director for National Leadership Advancement.

"The It Gets Better Project is about letting LGBT youth know that they have a bright future and that they should never be ashamed of who they are. Involving the entire community in an effort to raise the Pride Flag on Gay Pride Weekend—and doing it in a way that supports services for gay youth and others in our community—makes a powerful statement about our commitment to improving their futures," said Dan Savage.

The Rainbow Flag, flown last year on the Space Needle, will lead the Seattle Pride Parade this year and, if the community challenge is met, it will be raised on the Space Needle when the Parade ends at Seattle Center on Sunday, June 26th. The Seattle Parade has grown in stature for several years now and holds a prominent position on the national scene.

Seattle Out and Proud has already developed a partnership with the Space Needle. "Seattle Out and Proud is eager to join with the Space Needle to find new ways to utilize this powerful symbol of inclusion to unite communities and honor diversity. Not only do we have this new challenge to benefit many organizations in our community, we are also planning a fall fundraiser with the Space Needle to bring hope and to inspire communities nationwide where this flag can march, fly or hang over numerous cities and pride events. We fully support the community fundraiser to fly this flag once again and we hope other area businesses answer the call to do the same," said Elayne Wylie-Weichers, Director of Outreach.

"The Space Needle should be applauded for their generosity and leadership in raising the flag again this year," said Joe Mirabella, Change.org Organizing Manager and a resident of Seattle. "In addition, the Space Needle's decision to use the Pride Flag to help raise money for several LGBT community organizations is a wonderful demonstration of their commitment to improving lives – and saving lives."

"Making this a real community challenge is very heartening for all of us at Mary's Place. The homeless women and children that we serve represent the diversity that our community is known for and this effort to give back by the Space Needle makes us really proud," stated Marty Hartman, Executive Director, Mary's Place.

"Raising the flag last year was a one-time occurrence, as almost all of them are. We strive to keep this very special and do it on a limited basis. It is important, however, that we rotate this rare opportunity through the many worthwhile charities in the coming years. We're excited to see the response to this new community challenge and hope that it is very successful," said Jeff Wright.

To make a donation, please go to the Space Needle Facebook page at [Facebook.com/spaceneedle](https://www.facebook.com/spaceneedle)