

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **SAN DIEGO LGBT COMMUNITY CENTER RESPONDS TO TODAY'S SUPREME COURT RULING**

JUNE 4, 2018 – SAN DIEGO – Today, the United States Supreme Court ruled 7-2 -- in a narrowly defined decision -- that the Colorado baker who refused to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple was not given a fair hearing by the Colorado Civil Rights Commission. The Court did not rule that the Constitution gives a right to discriminate; it reaffirmed its longstanding rule that businesses open to the public must be open to all, including LGBT people.

That complaint was filed with the Civil Rights Commission after Charlie Craig and David Mullins were turned away in 2012 from Masterpiece Cakeshop from ordering a cake for their wedding. The commission found that the bakery had discriminated against the couple, in violation of Colorado law, and that the Colorado courts upheld that decision. The Supreme Court found today was that members of the Commission had made statements evidencing anti-religious bias, and therefore had not given fair consideration to the bakery's claims. Justices Ruth Bader Ginsberg and Sonia Sotomayor dissented.

The San Diego LGBT Community Center has issued the statement below from Caroline (Cara) Dessert, Esq., The Center's Chief Development and Community Engagement Officer and incoming Center Chief Executive Officer.

"The Court's narrow decision today is based on the unique circumstances of the case. When the couple was turned away in 2012 before the United States Supreme Court made marriage equality the law of the land, it was determined that the baker in the case was not given a fair hearing.

Today's decision did not rule that the constitution gives a right to discriminate; the Court reaffirmed its longstanding rule that businesses open to the public must be open to all. The Court refused to accept the argument that would have made basic civil rights unenforceable, and affirmed that states could prevent discrimination, including against LGBT people.

The San Diego LGBT Community Center has been at the forefront of the battle for equality for all LGBT people and our families. While California has civil rights laws that protect LGBT people from discrimination in housing, services and employment, 31 states still lack these

comprehensive and vital protections. This decision reaffirms our collective commitment to the passage of the **Equality Act**, currently before Congress. The Equality Act would establish national non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ people in areas including employment, housing, education, and public spaces and services.

Now more than ever we need our community to vote with our values of equality, tomorrow June 5th and every election thereafter.”

To schedule an interview with Dessert, or for further comment, please contact Rick Cervantes, The Center’s director of communications and marketing, at (619) 692-2077, ext. 220 or at [rcervantes@thecentersd.org](mailto:rcervantes@thecentersd.org).

Additional information is available from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), which argued the case on behalf of Craig and Mullins.  
<https://www.aclu.org/cases/masterpiece-cakeshop-v-colorado-civil-rights-commission>

*The San Diego Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center, Inc. (The Center) is the nation's second oldest and one of the largest LGBT community centers. Functioning as the San Diego LGBT community's anchor organization, The Center is led by a 12-member board of directors, employs more than 55 paid staff and utilizes more than 1,200 community volunteers to achieve its twin goals of promoting LGBT health and human rights. The Center provides direct program services to the many different facets of the LGBT community, including youth, seniors, families, the LGBT Latin@ community members and their families, and those struggling with HIV. Last year, The Center provided more than 73,000 service visits to San Diego community members, and through its events, activities and advocacy, touched the lives of thousands more.*