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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Napa Valley College is selected to remember Matthew Shepard at the Napa Opera House

**Napa Valley College is hosting one of two nation wide events featuring Judy Shepard and a special reading of *The Laramie Project*.**

August 20, 2008 – The Napa Valley College Department of Dramatic Art will present a special reading of *The Laramie Project* in an observance of the 10 years since the death of Matthew Shepard. This one night only event will be held on Sunday, October 19, 2008 at the Napa Opera House at 7:00 pm

Matthew Shepard, a 21 year-old student at the University of Wyoming, was brutally attacked near Laramie on the night of October 6, 1998. After surviving five days in a coma, Matthew died as a result of the severe head injuries he received.

Written by Moises Kaufman and members of the Tectonic Theater Project, *The Laramie Project*, which dramatizes the immediate and ongoing effect of Matthew's murder, has been staged in over 5,000 productions around the country and was applauded at Sundance and played to acclaim on HBO. In 2002, the Napa Valley College Department of Dramatic Art produced this play, directed by Napa Valley College Drama Instructor Jennifer King, and presented it to over 2,000 members of our community.

Directed again by King, *The Laramie Project* special reading will include many local celebrities and member of NVC's 2002 cast. The program will feature Judy Shepard, Matthew's mother and Executive Director of the Matthew Shepard Foundation, as a guest speaker. This is one of only two readings being held in the country at which Mrs. Shepard will be speaking during this significant time. A special V.I.P. reception will be hosted before the program at 5:30 p.m. with Judy Shepard and members of the cast.

"Since its opening night almost eight years ago, the play has been produced over 5,000 times by schools, community theaters, faith-based organizations and mainstream theater groups around the world. This play has become a powerful tool for communities to discuss and explore how hate impacts every part of their society. I encourage you to let this be the beginning. Take the information you receive and share it with your friends and family. Together we can win the fight to erase hate." says Judy Shepard.

All proceeds from this event will benefit the Matthew Shepard Foundation and Napa Valley College Drama Department. The Foundation strives to create and distribute educational materials to youth nationally that support their goal of Erasing Hate with Understanding, Compassion, and Acceptance. To learn more about the important work being done by the Foundation, please see the attached summary of the Foundation's work or visit [www.MatthewShepard.org](http://www.MatthewShepard.org). All of the time, talent, and food for a V.I.P. reception are being donated.

Tickets prices for *The Laramie Project* special reading are \$40 general admission and \$25 for students. VIP tickets are \$75 and include admission to the pre-show reception with Judy Shepard and the special reading of *The Laramie Project*.

Tickets may be purchased online at [www.nvccjtc.org/laramieproject.html](http://www.nvccjtc.org/laramieproject.html) .

Napa Valley College engages students by providing high quality programs and services that promote learning, enhance individual development, and prepare life-long learners for their roles in our diverse, dynamic and interdependent world.

## FACT SHEET

### WHO:

Playwright: Moises Kaufman and members of the Tectonic Theater Project

Producer: Napa Valley College Department of Dramatic Art and Napa Valley College Criminal Justice Training Center

Director: Jennifer King

Special Guest: Judy Shepard

Featured Performers: Dodds Delzell, Aimee Guiott, Chris McCarthy, Dan Monez, Barbara Nemko, Scott Phillips, Tim Setzer, and Benjamin Stowe.

WHAT: A special reading of the *The Laramie Project*

WHERE: Napa Valley Opera House  
1000 Main St # 150, Downtown Napa

WHEN: October 19 at 7p.m. Special VIP reception at 5:30 p.m.

HOW MUCH: \$40 General, \$25 Seniors/Students. VIP tickets are \$75 and include the pre-show reception and special reading.

TIX & INFO: Tickets may be purchased online at [www.nvccjtc.org/laramieproject.html](http://www.nvccjtc.org/laramieproject.html) or by calling 707-259-8077.