Steptoe Celebrates 2019 Pride Month

June 5, 2019

Overview

(June 5, 2019, Washington, DC) — Steptoe & Johnson LLP is once again proud to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community during Pride month. The firm’s Diversity & Inclusion Committee and Steptoe Pride affinity group have planned a number of events and activities for the entire month of June, including a keynote presentation by the parents of Matthew Shepard, the University of Wyoming student whose 1998 murder became one of the most high-profile hate-crimes against LGBTQ+ people. For a full list of the firm’s 2019 Pride season events, please visit the Steptoe Pride page.

Steptoe chair Phil West remarked: “The Stonewall riots took place 50 years ago in New York City. This seminal event in the history of LGBTQ+ rights grew out of frustration and ‘enough is enough:’ enough prejudice, enough brutality, enough being treated as second-class citizens (or worse). As we begin celebrating Pride month in the United States and elsewhere, Steptoe is proud to stand on the right side of history in our unwavering support for our own LGBTQ+ lawyers and staff and our LGBTQ+ family and friends around the world.”

Steptoe Pride offers support and a forum for discussion of issues relevant to the LGBTQ+ community at Steptoe and is part of the firm’s ongoing effort to foster a diverse and welcoming workplace. The group meets regularly to discuss issues and ideas on a variety of topics specific to the firm and its LGBTQ+ employees and allies including benefits, recruiting practices, guest speakers, external sponsorships, pro bono work and mentoring.

In celebration of Pride Month, the firm’s logo has again been changed to rainbow colors for June. The Steptoe Pride logo is displayed on digital screens and/or placards in office lobbies, and is featured on Steptoe’s LinkedIn and Twitter accounts. All lawyers and staff have the opportunity to change their email signature to include the Steptoe Pride logo. Additionally, lawyers and staff can include their pronouns within their email signature, an initiative that was launched last year.

Steptoe Pride has been busy over the past year with activities including:

- Co-founding and sponsoring the Legal Diversity & Inclusion Alliance (LDIA), which includes 44 law firms in Belgium
- and is committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Hosting a lunch with the Steptoe Women’s Forum featuring Maricopa County Superior Court Commissioner Tracey Nadzieja, the first known transgender judge in Arizona.
- Raising awareness on World AIDS Day of the ongoing HIV/AIDS crisis by making red ribbons available to all personnel.
- Supporting National Coming Out Day.
- Participating in the Lavender Law career fair.

Steptoe has also taken on the following pro bono representations and volunteer activities:
Filed an amicus brief in the DC Circuit on behalf of the Service Women's Action Network (SWAN) and other amici opposing the transgender military ban.

Conducted congressional advocacy for SAGE, America’s oldest and largest non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of LGBTQ+ older adults.

Secured asylum after a contentious proceeding for an LGBTQ+ client who had fled persecution in Ukraine on account of his sexual orientation.

Provided volunteer legal services for the Whitman-Walker Medicare Part D enrollment clinic, which helps their clients, many of whom are living with HIV/AIDS, select a prescription drug plan that covers their medications and is affordable.

Steptoe is committed to fostering a firm culture that is welcoming and supportive to members of the LGBTQ+ community. Earlier this year, the Human Rights Campaign recognized Steptoe’s commitment to equality with a perfect score on the 2019 Corporate Equality Index.

About Steptoe

In more than 100 years of practice, Steptoe has earned an international reputation for vigorous representation of clients before governmental agencies, successful advocacy in litigation and arbitration, and creative and practical advice in structuring business transactions. Steptoe has more than 500 lawyers and other professional staff across offices in Beijing, Brussels, Chicago, London, Los Angeles, New York, Phoenix, San Francisco, and Washington. For more information, visit www.steptoe.com.