



MTSU plans pride week celebration

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Middle Tennessee State University's Lambda Organization, a student organization serving the campus' GLBT community, will hold the university's first gay pride week, SpringOut, March 31-April 4.

With planned events that run the gamut from a gay-themed movie night to a debate about GLBT issues, the week's festivities will definitely be worth checking out.

Starting things off on Monday, March 31, there will be an information fair on campus featuring gay and gay-friendly groups and organizations, such as PFLAG and Out and About Nashville. Organizations or businesses wishing to take part are encouraged to contact Lambda through

the organization's Web site.

On April 1, Lambda will be screening "But I'm a Cheerleader," a comedy starring Natasha Lyonne as a young lesbian sent to a "rehabilitation" clinic run by Cathy Moriarty.

Matthew Shepard's mother, Judy Shepard will visit the campus on Wednesday, April 2 to speak and raise community awareness about the dangers of hate speech.

Reverend April Baker and Dr. Mark Caldwell of Glendale Baptist Church will speak on April 3, focusing on homosexuality and religion.

To round out the week's events, Lambda will present a drag competition of comedic proportions on Friday, April 4. Various student organizations will be invited to provide a contestant who will compete for a monetary award to be donated to

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the charity of their choice.

Lambda is excited about the upcoming events and the awareness it will raise about the organization and gay student issues.

"We want the most exposure we can get," said Lambda Vice President Andrew Cline.

This pride celebration will be a continuation of the work that the Lambda organization already does. The organization has hosted discussions about topics such as the importance of AIDS education for students.

Perhaps most notably, Lambda, with the

help of their former faculty advisor, was able to lobby and change MTSU's discrimination policy to include sexual orientation in October 2002 after a seven-year battle.

"We've kept in contact with Lambda alumni," says Cline. "They're really proud of us."

For more information about event times and locations or how you can make a tax-deductible donation to the Lambda Victory Fund, visit the organization's Web site at www.mtsu.edu/~mtlambda/. ■