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LYRIC Names Toni Newman Interim Executive Director LYRIC President Jodi Schwartz Oversees Expansion & Capital Campaign

19 October 2020 – San Francisco, CA: Heading into a momentous election with direct impact on the lives and livelihoods of LGBTQI+ youth, San Francisco’s esteemed nonprofit **LYRIC** (www.lyric.org) has named **Toni Newman** as Interim Executive Director while **Jodi L. Schwartz** continues as President to oversee the ongoing capital campaign to expand LYRIC’s landmark home in San Francisco’s Castro District, allowing for expanded program opportunities for youth.

“After an extensive interview process with the Board of Directors, LYRIC staff, and LYRIC youth, it became clear that Toni is the leader for LYRIC at this moment,” said LYRIC Board Co-Chairs **Adam Leonard** and **Phil Kim** in a statement. “The Board’s unanimous decision to welcome Toni to LYRIC speaks to our confidence in her leadership and experience. We are grateful for Jodi’s commitment to our shared mission and look forward to our partnership with staff and youth to ensure LYRIC thrives for generations to come.”

LYRIC is the San Francisco Bay Area’s leading organization offering expertise in youth workforce development, healthcare navigation, individual counseling, and group-based community building to marginalized low-income LGBTQQ+ youth. In the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, LYRIC has continued its vital work for LGBTQQ youth in our community.

"I am so grateful for the opportunity to join the dedicated and devoted LYRIC staff, board, volunteers, and donors. I accept the mission of LYRIC to build community and inspire positive social change through education enhancement, career training, health promotion, and leadership development with LGBTQQ youth, their families, and allies of all races, classes, genders, and abilities," said Newman. "I am humbled at what has been accomplished and achieved by the current Executive Director, Jodi Schwartz, and this exceptional organization. I am excited at the opportunities and possibilities of who we can become as we seek to continue our legacy of a diverse society where LGBTQQ youth are embraced for who they are and encouraged to be who they want to be. I am a living example of LYRIC's mission and vision."

Having served for 15 years as LYRIC Executive Director, half of LYRIC's 30-year history, Schwartz transitions to the role of President to oversee the nonprofits' capital campaign to expand and renovate its landmark "Purple House" facilities. The renovation will provide more functional, safe spaces to meet growing demand.

"I could not be happier to welcome Toni. Her experience and expertise make her an incredible fit for this role," said Schwartz. "After serving LYRIC as its Executive Director and President for the past 15 years, I'm excited to serve solely as the President so I can focus on setting LYRIC up for the future. Our capital campaign is all about giving us more space so we can do more work to satisfy this growing need."

Under Schwartz's leadership, LYRIC has grown its budget by 100% and doubled the size of its staff team to meet increasing demand for supports in our LGBTQQ+ youth community.

"For over three decades, and especially for the last 15 years under Jodi's leadership, LYRIC has made a formative impact in the lives of LGBTQQ+ youth in the San Francisco Bay Area." Leonard and Kim continued. "In the wake of COVID-19, which brings more isolation and economic insecurity for our youth, LYRIC's services and leadership are needed more than ever. In addition to continuing to offer our critical services virtually, LYRIC is leading the COVID-19 response for San Francisco's LGBTQQ youth."

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About Toni Newman: Toni is the former Interim Director for Employment Services at the San Francisco LGBT Center and a consultant for the Transgender Strategy Center. Toni is a graduate of Wake Forest University and current candidate for her Juris of Doctorate (JD). Toni served as the Executive Director for St. James Infirmary and the Director of Development for Maitri Compassionate Care, and previously served as the Interim Director of Development & Communications at To Help Everyone Health and Wellness Centers and as a Strategic Fundraiser, Volunteer Recruiter, and Legislative Aide for Equality California. Additionally, Toni is a best selling author, noted for her memoir *I Rise - The Transformation of Toni Newman* released in 2011, which is based on the poem *I Rise* by Wake Forest University Reynolds Professor, Dr. Maya Angelou.

About Jodi L. Schwartz: Jodi had the honor of becoming LYRIC's Executive Director in 2005. During Jodi's tenure at LYRIC, she developed San Francisco's first LGBTQ youth-specific case management program and facilitated the formation of the Community Partnership for LGBTQ Youth – a seven-agency continuum of services for LGBTQ transition age youth (ages 16-24). She led the launch of capacity building initiatives to promote LGBTQ youth inclusion in San Francisco's behavioral health and workforce development systems, in San Francisco's public schools, and in youth organizations citywide. Jodi has been an invited participant in the prestigious Gap Inc. Leadership Initiative and Bank of America's Neighborhood Builder's Leadership Program and was named a 2013 LGBT Local Hero by KQED/Union Bank.

About LYRIC: LYRIC's mission is to build community and inspire positive social change through education enhancement, career trainings, health promotion, and leadership development with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQQ) youth, their families, and allies of all races, classes, genders, and abilities. For more information and to make a donation, go to www.lyric.org