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NLGJA Enters UNITY Journalists' Alliance

Devoted to Diversity, UNITY Diversifies Its Own Mission

McLean, Va. (Sept. 19, 2011) - UNITY: Journalists of Color will now include the National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association (NLGJA), after the boards of directors of both organizations agreed to the partnership last week. NLGJA's mission to advance the interests of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender journalists is consistent with UNITY's mission of ensuring that American newsrooms, and consequently news coverage, reflects the diversity of our communities.

"We are delighted that NLGJA's board has voted to accept our invitation to join the UNITY alliance," UNITY President Joanna Hernandez said. "Our alliance will be stronger with NLGJA on board. It expands our mission to embrace diversity broadly, which is a logical progression for UNITY."

The agreement will allow NLGJA to participate in the UNITY 2012 Convention to be held in Las Vegas next August.

"NLGJA is very excited to join UNITY and is committed to supporting its goal of improving the industry's coverage of diverse communities," said NLGJA President David Steinberg. "Joining UNITY will help NLGJA further its goal of fostering fair and accurate coverage of LGBT issues in the news media and encouraging newsroom diversity."

The UNITY alliance will continue its traditional focus on ensuring that our newsrooms reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the communities we cover. During the next year, UNITY will work to broaden that focus on diversity more generally. A broader focus will strengthen UNITY's position when advocating for specific types of inclusion, be it racial, ethnic or based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Joining UNITY will allow NLGJA members to participate in a broader discussion of issues that affect gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people. All our alliance members will benefit from a dialogue with a wider, more diverse array of journalists. It will also allow alliance members to participate in additional networking and career development opportunities.

Representatives from NLGJA and UNITY will meet in the coming weeks to formally execute an agreement that will give NLGJA full membership in UNITY,

including appointing four members to the board of directors. After 12 months, both NLGJA and UNITY will have the opportunity to reassess the partnership. UNITY and NLGJA are committed to collaborating in good faith to work toward a seamless, stable and mutually advantageous alliance that can continue to advance their common mission.

“UNITY has proved, time and again, that when we operate together, our influence is greater than any of us can achieve individually. Still, these are major decisions for all of us. The boards of each one of our member organizations have a responsibility to weigh these decisions carefully. I look forward to working with each organization’s leadership and membership in articulating our new mission in the coming year,” Ms. Hernandez said.

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About UNITY: Journalists of Color

UNITY: Journalists of Color, Inc. is a strategic alliance advocating news coverage about people of color, and aggressively challenging its organizations at all levels to reflect the nation’s diversity. UNITY is comprised of three national associations: Asian American Journalists Association, National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and the Native American Journalists Association. In addition to planning the largest regular gathering of journalists in the nation, UNITY supports research and advocacy initiatives that promote its mission. For more information on UNITY, visit www.unityjournalists.org, email info@unityjournalists.org or call (703) 854-3585.

About National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association

Founded in 1990, NLGJA is an organization of journalists, media professionals, educators and students working from within the news industry to foster fair and accurate coverage of LGBT issues. NLGJA is a strong voice in the news industry, educating newsroom decision-makers about coverage of the LGBT community, promoting non-discrimination policies and the establishment of equal benefits, and creating educational opportunities to support the next generation of LGBT newsroom leaders. NLGJA opposes all forms of workplace bias and provides professional development to its members. For more information on NLGJA, visit www.nlgja.org, email info@nlgja.org or call (202) 588-9888.