

March 18th, 2020

**Grand Marshal Press Release**

EXCITING NEWS! The LGBT Asylum Project has been elected for Community Organization Grand Marshal for San Francisco Pride 2020! We are very honored for this election and for the generous community support we have received.

Grand Marshal is an incredible honor which celebrates the work an organization has done for the LGBTQ community. This especially is an incredible honor for The LGBT Asylum Project, as we work tooth and nail for the safety of LGBTQ people who have come to the U.S. for the exact reason that Pride started.

The first Pride was a riot. A revolt against the oppression and violence of LGBTQ people. This oppression, persecution, and violence continues to thrive all over the world. In 75 countries, homosexual conduct is still criminalized. And in 13 of those countries, homosexual conduct is punishable by death. Stonewall is today.

In 1969, at the Stonewall Inn, Marsha P. Johnson threw the first brick that sparked the infamous Stonewall riots; the birth of the Pride March. 51 years later, it is an honor for The LGBT Asylum Project to march as San Francisco Grand Marshal, as we bring Pride to those who need it, now more than ever.

Below please find a statement from our Executive Director, Okan Sengun:

"For us, being chosen as Grand Marshal is really all about VISIBILITY. People all over the world look to the SF Pride Parade. The city takes to the streets to celebrate with us. Being recognized as a Grand Marshall in this historic parade would give our organization visibility. Visibility to be seen by people in need all over the world. Visibility to people who need hope. Hope that there is a better world out there, a world where an LGBTQ person won't have to fear for their lives because they are LGBTQ."



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