Matthew Shepard’s mom to speak on campus

Judy Shepard, the mother of murdered gay college student Matthew Shepard, will speak at Sacramento State on Thursday, April 2. The sold-out community forum will commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate-Crimes Prevention Act.

Her appearance, at 5:30 p.m. at The WELL, is being presented by the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of California and Sacramento State’s PRIDE Center. She will be available for media interviews beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Matthew Shepard, 21, was a University of Wyoming student in October 1998 when he was robbed, tortured, tied to a fence and left to die by two men who had offered him a ride home from a bar. He died a few days later.

Judy Shepard has since dedicated herself to advocating for LGBT rights, and she and her husband, Dennis, founded the Denver-based Matthew Shepard Foundation to carry on their son’s legacy as a champion for social justice, diversity awareness and equality.

She will share the story of her son’s life and talk about her work with the foundation and the creation of the Shepard-Byrd Act. Afterward, U.S. Attorney Benjamin Wagner will emcee a question-and-answer session featuring Chiraag Bains, senior counsel to the assistant U.S. attorney general; Monica Miller, special agent in charge of the FBI’s Sacramento field office; and Judy Shepard.

Earlier in the day, Shepard will be guest speaker at a law enforcement seminar on hate crimes. – Dixie Reid