

#3 Nikki Elder

of Wyoming would be the last place in the country to adopt same sex partner benefits. And at the rate we're goin' ... we *are* gonna be the last.

BETH LOFFREDA. A lot of us who work here at the university and a lot of administrators can look out our windows and can see the place where Matthew Shepard died, where he was slaughtered, I just think if that's not enough to get you off the blocks to REALLY make some active significant changes on your campus ... I don't know what it takes.

DENNIS SHEPARD. There is a plaque here which reads, Matthew Wayne Shepard, December 1, 1976 to October 12, 1998. Beloved son, brother, and friend.

He continues to make a difference. Peace be with him and all who sit here.

Thank you very much. *(Pause.)*

MOMENT: NIKKI ELDER

NARRATOR. Company member Greg Pierotti

GREG PIEROTTI. Nikki Elder is a teacher at Laramie High. After the bench dedication we talked to Nikki about the changes she has seen in her students.

NIKKI ELDER. The change here in Laramie really happened when the next generation couldn't remember what happened directly any more. The kids who were in junior high or in later elementary school when Matt was killed still had a pretty good connection with the experience. But over time that changed.

My oldest daughter was a preschooler when it happened. She's fifteen now, and she has this wonderful friend, this sweet boy, and they were on the bus, and these boys say to him, "Oh, we should just tie you to a fence on the outskirts of town." These boys said that to this other boy. They're junior high school kids now so they were what four or five years old when Matt was killed?

My daughter reported them, and I am very proud of her for that, and the principal pulled them right in. This is something that was taken very seriously in Laramie. But ten years later, you see the cycle happening again.