

## Performance to benefit campaign inspired by Mackey

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Words of Choice, a New York nonprofit theater group, will present a special performance at Fort Hays State University as a benefit for the 1,100 Torches Campaign in remembrance of Jana Mackey, a young activist who grew up in Hays and was murdered in Lawrence earlier this year.

The performance of the play "Words of Choice" will be at 7 p.m. Oct. 10 at Memorial Union Cody Commons. Tickets will be \$10 at the door with all proceeds going to benefit 1,100 Torches, an organization inspired by Mackey's activism that aims to inspire others to advocacy and volunteerism. The event is sponsored by the Student Feminist Organization.

Playwright Cindy Cooper's "Words of Choice" pieces together excerpts from a dozen real stories and imaginative writing.

"I wanted to create a work that could show the huge panorama of reproductive rights, not just abortion," Cooper said. "I wanted it to reflect the full complexity of these issues."

Words of Choice previously worked with Mackey on a tour of Kansas in 2005, and Mackey's comments as the president of NOW Kansas were included on the Words of Choice DVD.

"She was a remarkable and insightful young woman," Cooper said. The play incorporates some of Mackey's comments.

Words of Choice comes to Hays as it heads to Colorado for 10 days in October to amplify conversations about a state ballot measure that would ban abortion, contraception and stem cell research. The group is scheduled to perform several dates at university and community centers in Denver, Pueblo and Boulder.

An ensemble of three New York actors under the direction of Francesca Mantani Arkus will perform the hour-long "Words of Choice. All performances are followed by a discussion with a special focus on the state ballot measure.

The show will feature New York actors Claudia Schneider, Crista Marie Jackson and Carl H. Jaynes. Writings in the play include works by Justice Harry Blackmun and Sally Blackmun, Angela Bonavoglia, Kathleen Tolan, Alix Olson, June Jordan, Michael David Quinn, Esosa Edosomwan, Barbara Lindsay and others.

For more information, visit the Words of Choice website at [www.wordsofchoice.org](http://www.wordsofchoice.org).