On Sunday, January 16, 2011, nearly 1,000 people filled the Great Room of the W Atlanta–Midtown hotel to have their photo taken. But this was not just a regular photo shoot. It was the first open shoot in Atlanta of the NOH8 Campaign. In 2008, celebrity photographer Adam Bouska and partner Jeff Parshley started with one single photo in response to the passage of Proposition 8 in California. Proposition 8 amended the state’s Constitution to ban same-sex marriage. The campaign quickly grew. To date there have been over 7,000 people photographed. With celebrities, from near and far, this shoot was one of the largest in the campaign’s history. The idea to bring the campaign to Atlanta was initially conceived by Josh Noblitt. Noblitt, a social justice minister at Saint Mark United Methodist Church, was assaulted and robbed at gunpoint in Piedmont Park in 2009 after being asked if he was gay. The incident made local and national headlines. Bringing the NOH8 Campaign was a part of Noblitt’s efforts to build a beloved community (www.seekingbelovedcommunity.blogspot.com) and a way to respond to a negative situation with love. Reverend Noblitt intentionally held the NOH8 event over the Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend to connect King’s legacy of civil rights with his efforts. NOH8 was a chance for people to make a nonviolent, yet silent protest regarding the rights and/or privileges of the GLBT community. Many people felt the event was the time to do what was right in memory of Dr. King and his remarkable efforts toward social justice. He stated, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

The event was sponsored by W Atlanta-Midtown hotel, Saint Mark United Methodist Church, and the Emory Center for Ethics. It was organized by Carlton Mackey, Chair of the Ethics and Arts Initiative, Josh Noblitt, and Nikki Noto with V-Day, the global movement to end violence against women and girls.

For more information about NOH8 Campaign Visit:
www.noh8campaign.com

For more information about Ethics & the Arts Initiative Visit:
www.ethics.emory.edu/Initiatives/ethics_and_arts/