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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **A CAPPELLA GROUP STAGES FLASH MOB MARRIAGE PROPOSAL AT CHEF SPIKE'S BURGER JOINT**

**Surprised Customers and Friends Capture Event on Camera Phones, Cheer As She Says "Yes!"**

WASHINGTON, DC – When Jonathan Murphy, 31, contacted local *a cappella* group the Capital Hearings to help him propose to his girlfriend, Ashley Bowen, 28, he knew he had to make it memorable. Bowen knew he had purchased an engagement ring. She knew the proposal was coming. But she wasn't expecting *this*.

On Saturday night, May 21, 2011, Murphy suggested to Bowen they try the milkshakes at Good Stuff Eatery on Capitol Hill, owned by "Top Chef" alum Spike Mendelsohn. The D.C. couple, both "Top Chef" fans, waited patiently and walked up to the counter to pick up their shakes. What ensued was a "flash mob" in classic fashion. "Customers" began to burst into song one by one, joined by (what appeared to be) Good Stuff Eatery employees behind the counter and along the stairs.

By the time they had sung the first few lines, Bowen realized the crowd was singing *their* song – "Distopian Dream Girl" by American indie rock band Built to Spill, a favorite of the couple's since attending Reed College together in Portland, Oregon. "This song was on the first mix tape I made for Ashley," Murphy said. "It captures the energy and excitement of us falling in love." He had asked the Capital Hearings to create an arrangement of the song especially for this occasion, and the group spent several weeks preparing for the performance.

"We were thrilled and honored to be part of this special event for Ashley and Jonathan. We wanted to make it truly memorable for them," said singer John Hazangeles, who coordinated the logistics for the flash mob and handed the couple their shakes from behind the counter.

As the ensemble sang, "If it came down to your life or mine/I would do the stupid thing/And let you keep on living," Murphy dropped to one knee and presented Bowen with the ring amid cheers from the gathered crowd. Replying with an enthusiastic head nod, Bowen smiled and said to Murphy, "You got me really good."

Regarding the unique proposal, Chef Spike Mendelsohn said, "I am so honored that Good Stuff Eatery could be a part of such a special occasion. As a family-owned and -operated restaurant, I place a high value on momentous occasions such as this one. We wish the happy couple all the best and hope we can become their 'go to' spot to celebrate their relationship for years to come!"

Crowd-sourced footage was edited into a final video by the Capital Hearings' tech-savvy tenor, Matthew S. Schwartz, and posted to YouTube at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pOQbtVJYNhU>.

Founded in 2010, the Capital Hearings are an *a cappella* ensemble of young professionals based in Washington, DC. The group recently staged the first-ever flash mob on Capitol Hill during National Arts Advocacy Day, and has performed everywhere from embassy events to roller derby bouts. A "flash mob" is a coordinated performance in a public place that appears to be spontaneous.

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If you'd like more information or to schedule an interview with the couple or members of the Capital Hearings, please contact Carolyn Wise at 202-630-9473 or [info@thecapitalhearings.com](mailto:info@thecapitalhearings.com). To request comment from Good Stuff Eatery or Spike Mendelsohn, please contact Micheline Mendelsohn at [202-543-8222](tel:202-543-8222) or [info@goodstuffeatery.com](mailto:info@goodstuffeatery.com).