



Valle To Be New Executive Director of Center on Halsted

Chicago, IL - Center on Halsted's Board of Directors announced today that Modesto Tico Valle will be promoted to executive director effective July 1, 2007. Valle has served as deputy executive director of Center on Halsted since June of 2004.

Valle has been a leader of nonprofit organizations and an LGBT activist in Chicago since 1986. He has served on the boards of Equality Illinois and Horizons Community Services (now Center on Halsted), and on the national board of the NAMES Project Foundation. Valle also founded NAMES Project Chicago and served as its board chairman.

"Tico has a long history of leadership in the LGBT community and is widely respected throughout the city and state," said Robert Kohl, Center on Halsted Board Chairman. "Tico's intimate familiarity with Center on Halsted's programs and his longstanding relationships with our partners and supporters will ensure our continued success and growth following the opening of the new community center in June."



Valle was appointed acting executive director of Horizons/Center on Halsted in 2002 and served in that capacity until 2004 when Center on Halsted hired Robbin Burr. Burr and Valle shared a successful partnership as director and deputy, working together to grow Center on Halsted programs, to develop collaborations with partner organizations and to complete the Center's \$20 million capital campaign and the community center building.

"Tico's expertise and experience were invaluable to me when I arrived from the corporate sector," commented Burr. "I was able to place complete faith in Tico's ability to manage staff and programs, enabling me to go out and successfully increase our fundraising and expand constituencies." Added Valle, "I have learned a lot from Robbin over the past three years. I am honored by the board's confidence in me and I am prepared to continue the vision that will lead the Center to an exciting future."

Valle's leadership in the community has been frequently recognized. He received the National NAMES Project Foundation Award in 1995 and was inducted into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame in 1998. Test Positive Aware Network gave Valle its Founder's award in 2003 and NAMES Project Chicago named Valle Individual of the Year in 2004. Valle has also received the State of Illinois Lending Your Voice Award in 2006 and the Partner in Mission Award from Sisters of the Living Word in 2007.

Today's announcement culminates a selection process that began in January after Burr's decision to leave her post following the Center's opening in June. A search committee, chaired by COH board member Denise Foy, was convened to conduct an extensive locally focused search.

"We were pleased by the number of impressive candidates from the corporate and nonprofit sectors," said Foy. "That level of interest in the position certainly spoke to the excitement that has been building for Center on Halsted and the important role that the Center will play in Chicago's LGBT community."

Construction of the community center, located at Halsted and Waveland, is nearing completion and Center on Halsted staff and resident partners will take occupancy of the new building within the next few weeks. A public dedication ceremony is planned for the first week in June, to be followed by a gala opening celebration, Out & Open, on Friday, June 8. The Center's new community and cultural programming, including performances, seminars and film screenings, will also commence during June. Its present programs for youth, families and elders, and social services including psychotherapy, the Anti-Violence Project and the statewide HIV/AIDS & STD hotline, will continue. Whole Foods, the Center's retail tenant, is presently targeting a late July opening, according to store officials.

Center on Halsted will be home to numerous LGBT community organizations, including the Association for Latino Men for Action, Amigas Latinas, 4+1 Productions, the Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, GayCo Productions, Hubris Productions, Names Project Chicago, PFLAG, Windy City Athletic Association, Windy City Performing Arts and Windy City Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf. The three-story Center on Halsted, the city's oldest and largest LGBT social service provider, is seeking its LEED Silver certification as a green building and includes meeting and office space, performance space, a multipurpose gymnasium, and a

rooftop garden.