



## **Selections Made for for 2007 Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame**

Thirteen Individuals and Three Organizations Chosen; Former Mayor Harold Washington Honored as "Friend of the Community"

Chicago, IL - The Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues has named the 2007 list of individuals and organizations for inclusion in the only known government-sponsored hall of fame that honors members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities, announced Commission Chairperson Clarence N. Wood.

Coinciding with the 20th anniversary of his death, former Mayor Harold Washington will be honored as a "Friend of the Community."

"Chicago is a city of many faces, and the LGBT community is an important part of that diversity. The community is thriving and moving forward, helping to build a strong social and economic foundation for Chicago," said Mayor Richard M. Daley.

Chosen nominees will be inducted at the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame's 17th annual ceremony, which will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 18, 2007, in Sidney R. Yates Gallery at the Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St. The reception begins at 5:30 p.m., and the program is scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

"The rich contributions made to Chicago by its various communities are important to Chicago's quality of life" said Clarence N. Wood. "It is for that reason that we are pleased to recognize lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals and their allies with these Hall of Fame awards each year."

The Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame was established in 1991 under the auspices of the Advisory Council, with continuing support from the Chicago Commission on Human Relations and Mayor Richard M. Daley. Its purpose is to recognize the achievements of LGBT Chicagoans, their contributions to the development of the city, and the help they have received from others.

Those inducted can fall into one of three categories: individual, organization, or friend of the community. Potential nominees comprise members of Chicago's entire sexual-minority community, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Chicagoans, past, present, living, and dead, as well as those who have supported or assisted the community. A committee of prior inductees makes each year's selections from nominations submitted by members of the public.

Those honored in 2007 are:

### Individuals

Dr. David Blatt, 56, and Dr. David Moore, 57, partners, groundbreaking medical practitioners and advocates in HIV/AIDS care, known for their personal attention to their patients.

Robbin Burr, 53, for her pioneering work in founding corporate marketing campaigns dedicated to gaining the loyalty of LGBT consumers and for her leadership as the Executive Director of the Center on Halsted.

Tarrina Dikes, 50, for her tireless work on behalf of LGBT organizations and events, including Howard Brown Health Center, Gay Games VII, POW WOW, the Lesbian Leadership Council, and Affinity.

Martin Gapshis, 60, president of Progress Printing, for long-standing service to the city of Chicago, including the City's green initiatives, Lakefront Supportive Housing, Chicago International Film Festival, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, the NAMES Project, and the Center on Halsted.

Jeffrey E. McCourt (1955-2007), founding publisher of Windy City Times, award-winning journalist, businessperson, and activist,

for helping to win mainstream respect and political victories for Chicago's LGBT communities, including passage of the City's 1988 Human Rights Ordinance.

Dr. Carlos T. Mock, 51, physician, author, and advocate, who has helped found Latino community organizations and has raised crucial funds for a variety of other organizations.

Chilli Pepper, one of Chicago's most celebrated entertainers, for making herself an early symbol of gender diversity and using her visibility to bring awareness of HIV/AIDS issues to the public.

Karen C. Sendziak, 50, for twenty years of documenting and preserving the history of Chicago's LGBT communities and advancing LGBT culture through her work with Gerber/Hart Library.

Patrick Sheahan, 51, for his outstanding record of civic, business, banking, education, and LGBT community leadership, including his invaluable efforts in building the Center on Halsted.

Vera Washington, 55, promoter, HIV/AIDS counselor, and youth service coordinator, for co-founding Executive Sweet Inc., which provides opportunities for lesbians of color to build a strong community network, for her HIV/AIDS awareness efforts, and for her work with LGBT youth.

#### Organizations

American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER) — Chicago Chapter, for 15 years serving as a voice for LGBT veterans in the Chicago area and providing moral, financial, and social support to LGBT veterans.

Chicago Games, Inc., for hosting Gay Games VII in Chicago, which brought LGBT athletes and cultural participants together from around the world and highlighted Chicago's support for the LGBT communities.

A Real Read, an African American LGBT performance ensemble that, from 1996 to 2002, performed original poems, prose, and plays that gave voice to the often-silenced black gay community while offering performances that reflected the universal.

#### Friends of the Community

Ambassador Carol Moseley Braun, 60, a prominent supporter of LGBT rights and marriage equality throughout her political career, she was the first U.S. Senator to appoint an LGBT liaison and, while in the Senate, firmly opposed the U.S. military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

Harold Washington (1922–1987), as mayor of Chicago, promoted and facilitated LGBT political participation and empowerment, which laid groundwork for passage of the City's 1988 Human Rights Ordinance. He appointed the first mayoral liaison to the LGBT communities; was the first Chicago mayor to headline a gay rights rally; and established the City's first official Committee on Gay and Lesbian Issues (forerunner of today's Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues) with an openly lesbian staff director.