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Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame Inducts 13 Individuals and 1 Organization

The Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues has released the names of 13 individuals and one organization to be inducted in November 2009 into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, the only known government-sponsored hall of fame that honors members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community, announced **Chairman and Commissioner Dana V. Starks**.

The chosen nominees will be inducted at the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame's 19th annual ceremony, which will take place from 5:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 12, 2009, in Sidney R. Yates Gallery at the Chicago Cultural Center, 77 E. Randolph St. The reception begins at 5:30 p.m., and the program is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

"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**.

"The rich contributions made to Chicago by its various communities are important to Chicago's quality of life," said **Commissioner Starks**. "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 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 fall into one of three categories: individual, organization, or friend of the community. Nominees represent 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 2009 are:

Individuals

Paula Basta, 53, for her long-term work in improving the lives of senior citizens, especially LGBT senior citizens, and promoting women's and LGBT rights.

Lou Conte, 67, for the legacy he has created through the Lou Conte Dance Studio and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, both of which continue to contribute to the arts-and-culture community in Chicago and beyond.

Lori A. Cooper, 42, a Chicago police sergeant, for her focus on LGBT issues, which has led to significant policy changes within the Police Department, especially the creation of the LGBT liaison position, which continues to serve a vital function for the LGBT community.

(More)



Marcia J. Lipetz, Ph.D., 62, for her long history of leadership, energy, passion, and vision for Chicago's LGBT community and the institutions affiliated with it, especially for her work with the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, the WPWR-TV Channel 50 Foundation, and Center on Halsted.

Amy Maggio, 60, for her leadership in LGBT and HIV/AIDS issues, including her experience in development, marketing, and public relations for organizations in both the non-profit and private sectors.

Joey McDonald, 54, for his strong commitment to improving the quality of life for members of Chicago's LGBT communities, particularly his work with people living with HIV/AIDS, his leadership in the recovery community, his mentorship in the leather community, and his advocacy for LGBT equality,

Frank M. Robinson, 83, journalist, novelist, and award-winning science fiction writer, for creating the gay and lesbian community tabloid newspapers that catalyzed the emergence of the gay press in Chicago, and also for his service as speech writer for gay activist and politician Harvey Milk.

Jane M. Hussein Saks, 47, social and political activist, cultural advocate, and leader, for challenging and championing issues of gender, sexuality, race, and power within the worlds of arts and culture, politics and civil rights, academia, and philanthropy.

Zaida Sanabia, 24, filmmaker and activist, for founding "Amiguitas," the first queer Latina youth group in Chicago and for documenting the struggles of starting a gay-straight alliance in her high school in her film "A Fish Almost Eaten by a Shark," which has been screened nationwide to educate and train school administrators on creating safe schools for LGBT youth.

Patrick Sinozich, 50, for enriching Chicago's LGBT communities through the gifts of song, dance, and entertainment by his involvement with and direction of the former Windy City Gay Chorus and the current Chicago Gay Men's Chorus.

Jorge Valdivia, 34, for creating safe spaces and building visibility for the Latino LGBT community through media, arts, and public service, and particularly for founding Homofrecuencia, the nation's first Spanish-language radio program focusing on LGBT issues.

Organizations

AIDS Foundation of Chicago, for 24 years of helping to lead the fight against HIV/AIDS by promoting cooperation among service providers at work across Chicago's various communities, making more than \$18 million in grants to agencies coping with AIDS in those communities, aiding the housing needs of persons with HIV/AIDS, and advocating for sound government HIV/AIDS policy.

Friends of the Community

U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley (D-Chicago), for supporting sexual-minority rights as a City Council legislative aide and Cook County Board commissioner, and now as a member of Congress, where he has joined the LGBT caucus and backs the movement to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and the Pentagon's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, as well as supporting efforts to end employment discrimination and achieve other LGBT justice goals.

Marilyn Urso, R.N., for her service from 1990 to 2007 as research registered nurse for the Howard Brown Health Center's Multi-Site AIDS Cohort Study (MACS), the world's largest epidemiological study on sexual practices and how they relate to the transmission of HIV, where she furnished warm, welcoming support to the participants and other important services on- and off-site, becoming what some clients called their "second mother."