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GAY TASK FORCE HOSTS RECOGNITION DINNER NOV. 3

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force will honor Jerry Chasen, Leonard Pitts Jr., and U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) at its 11th Annual Miami Recognition Dinner this Saturday, Nov. 3, at the InterContinental Miami. This event recognizes individuals for their outstanding contributions to the social, cultural, political and humanitarian needs of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. Tickets and information are available at www.theTaskForce.org/miami or by calling 305.571.1924.

Launched in 1997, the Recognition Dinner quickly cemented its place as the premier event for uniting the community and honoring individuals and organizations for their achievements and efforts in fostering equal rights for LGBT people. Over the past decade, it has become a vital source of funding for organizations serving the LGBT community. To date, the

Miami Recognition Dinner and its sister event, Winter Party Festival have raised well over \$1.5 million.

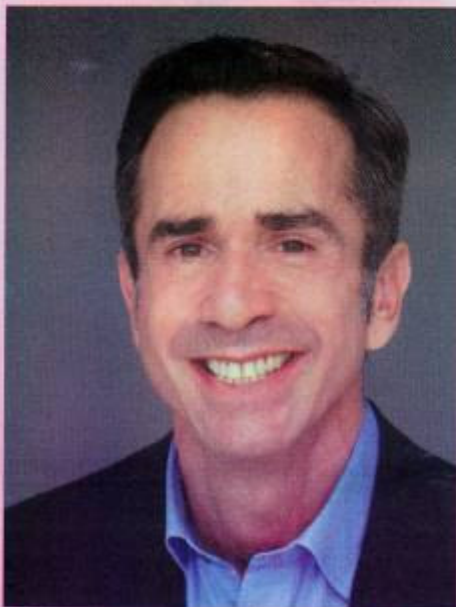
The event steering committee is expecting this year's Recognition Dinner to be the most successful to date.

"President Bill Clinton made a surprise appearance at our VIP reception last year, so we are anticipating a sharp increase in VIP ticket sales for 2007," said Cindy Brown, who co-chairs the event with Richard Peter Wharton.

The Recognition Dinner features two pre-dinner cocktail receptions (one exclusively for VIP ticket-holders), an awards ceremony during dinner and dancing following the program. A silent auction will include an original painting created for the occasion by local artist Noel, as well as numerous items in categories ranging from travel and spa treatments to meals and the performing arts.

The 11th Annual Miami Recognition Dinner will take place on Saturday, Nov. 3, beginning at 7 p.m., at the InterContinental Miami, located at 100 Chopin Plaza. Tickets are available for a donation of \$190. VIP tickets are \$300 and include entrée to the VIP cocktail reception and preferred seating at the dinner. As the Task Force is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, donations are tax deductible as permissible under law.

All proceeds from the Miami Recognition Dinner benefit organizations serving the LGBT community. The Task Force donates two-thirds of the net proceeds to the Miami-Dade LGBT community through a granting program administered by the Dade Community Foundation. The remaining one-third of the proceeds helps fund the Task Force's efforts to achieve equality for all LGBT people.



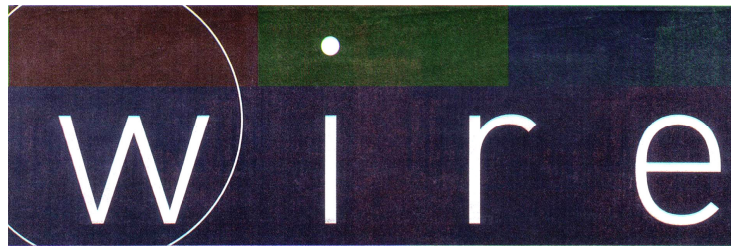
2007 EDDY MCINTYRE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD:
JERRY CHASEN



2007 HUMANITARIAN AWARD:
LEONARD PITTS JR.



2007 NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARD:
U.S. REP. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ



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An estate planning attorney and a certified life coach, Jerry Chasen has been an ardent supporter of many organizations that serve Miami-Dade's LGBT community. He has contributed time, money and professional services to groups like Project YES, Miami Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, Miami Gay Men's Chorus, the Miami-Dade Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce and SAVE Dade. He was the first member of the national board of directors of Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund from the South Florida area.

Chasen was the driving force in brokering the arrangement between the Task Force and Dade Community Foundation, allowing the Task Force to assume ownership of the Recognition Dinner and Winter Party Festival. The agreement has resulted in nearly a half-million dollars granted to local organizations in the past three years.

Chasen served on the board of the Planned Giving Council of Miami-Dade County for more than a decade and served as its president as well as on the steering committee for its Leave a Legacy Campaign. He was vice-chair of the board of trustees of the Museum of Contemporary Art and presently sits on the board of the Friends of the Bass Museum.

Through his firm, Chasen has established The Advisors Project, a national effort to encourage and empower advisors to talk with their clients about their values, interests and passions. Such discussions tend, in turn, to encourage charitable contributions. Worth magazine included him in its "Top 100 Attorneys in the United States" for 2005 and 2006.

Twice each week, millions of readers around the country read the insightful, sometimes controversial, words of Leonard Pitts Jr., who has proven to be an unwavering champion of fairness and equality. For years, he has spoken out against discrimination, with several columns devoted to anti-gay bias and bigotry. In a 2001 column about the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, Pitts stated, "If being forced to hide who you are is a humiliating thing, I think it ultimately says more about a society than about the people who move through it like shadows, seen but not really seen... How many gay preachers, police, ballplayers, admirals and generals have to come forward before we get it?"

The response to his column on the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, "We'll Go Forward From This Moment," an angry and defiant open letter to the terrorists, circulated the globe via the Internet and generated upward of 30,000 e-mails.

Among the numerous honors bestowed upon Pitts, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary in 2004 and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 1992. The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation presented him 2002 Media Award as "Outstanding Newspaper Columnist." Also in 2002, the National Society of Newspaper Columnists awarded Pitts its inaugural "Columnist of the Year" award. In 2003 and 2004, Pitts was a visiting professor teaching journalism at Hampton University in Hampton, Va. In 2005 and 2006, he was a journalism professor at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, and at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Va.

Pitts' book, *Becoming Dad: Black Men and the Journey to Fatherhood*, chronicles his own experiences as well as provides a poignant account of the meaning of black fatherhood in the U.S.

Debbie Wasserman Schultz has spent the last 14 years serving the people of South Florida, first as the youngest woman elected to the Florida Legislature, and now as a U.S. Representative from Florida's 20th Congressional District.

Wasserman Schultz has always been a vocal advocate for equality, as illustrated by her role as co-sponsor of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. A participant in Fort Lauderdale's 2007 Stonewall Street Festival, she said, "We want to make sure that people understand it doesn't matter whether you're gay or straight, we should all stand for tolerance and diversity and understanding. It doesn't matter whether it's the civil rights of the gay community, African-American community or the Hispanic community. You can never rest when it comes to promoting and standing up for civil rights."

Her first term in Congress was marked with notable success for a freshman minority member. She was one of the key leaders in the Terri Schiavo debate, challenging President Bush and arguing forcefully that Congress would set a dangerous precedent if the legislative branch attempted to circumvent previous court decisions. She passed a resolution calling on the president to declare a Jewish American Heritage Month, along with several key amendments to legislation protecting children from sexual predators and protecting women and children from legislation that would have outlawed warning labels on food containing high levels of mercury.

As part of a broader social justice movement, The Task Force works to create a nation that respects the diversity of human expression and identity and creates opportunity for all. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., The Task Force also has offices in New York City, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, and Cambridge. For additional information: www.thetaskforce.org