

Dallas attorney hired by national civil rights group

Cynde Horne to join staff of Gay and Lesbian Task Force

By John Wright - News Editor
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Longtime Dallas attorney Cynde Horne, who specializes in family law and estate planning for the LGBT community, has been named assistant director of major gifts for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Horne, a Plano resident who's been active as a volunteer with Lambda Legal, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas and the Collin County Gay and Lesbian Alliance, is moving to New York City and will begin her new job Aug. 19.

NGLTF, founded in 1972, is the nation's oldest LGBT civil rights organization.

"I will miss my friends in Dallas," Horne said. "But this is an opportunity that I've been dreaming about, and the timing is right. I can't wait to get started."

A native of Louisiana, Horne said she's been in the Dallas area for about 30 years, with the exception of attending law school at Louisiana State University. She was a schoolteacher in Plano for 10 years prior to earning her law degree and returning to Dallas to begin her career as an attorney in 1992.



Cynde Horne

Horne went to work for Dallas gay-rights attorney Rob Wiley in 2000 before leaving to launch her own LGBT-focused practice in 2006.

"I think it's tremendously exciting to see somebody who's been a part of the legal community here in Dallas move on to become part of the national movement," Wiley said. "It's exciting, as one of Cynde's friends, to see her be able to go and do something that she really loves doing."

Horne said she came to realize through her volunteer work at Lambda Legal, where she served on both local and national boards, that her passion is fundraising for a nonprofit organization she believes in.

"The more I did that the more I realized that that's where my heart was, and that's the kind of work I wanted to be doing every day," Horne said. "It [the Task Force position] marries my commitment to the LGBT community, to a nonprofit development position and a grassroots focus that's more along the political lines."

At the Task Force, Horne said she'll initially be focused on expanding the organization's presence in cities like Seattle and Denver. But she hopes that will eventually extend to Dallas, where the Task Force has been overshadowed by the Human Rights Campaign.

"The Task Force doesn't have a huge presence in Texas right now, but I'm hoping to change that," Horne said. "I think the Task Force is just really more grassroots than HRC. I like being on the ground. I like working with everyday people who are working to effectuate change."

Horne also noted that unlike HRC, the Task Force opposed a version of the federal Employment Nondiscrimination Act that didn't include gender identity.

"The Task Force is just as committed to the rise of the transgender community as it is to the LGB community," Horne said. "They're not going to leave the trans community behind."

Jesse Garcia, president of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas, said he'll be sad to see Horne go. Horne joined Stonewall's board of directors earlier this year.

"It's just amazing that all these national organizations are pulling people from Dallas to represent them," Garcia said. "It just shows you the type of people and leaders we have in the Dallas area."