

NEWS RELEASE



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CAEAR Coalition Honors Long-Time Advocates and Allies At Annual Partnership Awards

Announces \$25,000 Challenge Grant from San Francisco AIDS Foundation

(San Francisco, CA) -- CAEAR Coalition honored six champions of improving access to HIV care and treatment at its Tenth Annual Partnership Awards at a reception at San Francisco City Hall. Honorees included: Randy Allgaier, Director of the San Francisco HIV Health Services Planning Council (posthumous); Scott Boule, Senior Advisor to U.S. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi; U.S. Representative Mike Honda; Ernest Hopkins, Director of Legislative Affairs at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation; California Senator Mark Leno; and Project Inform. (Bios attached.)

"Advocates and leaders from Northern California have had tremendous impact on the ability of people living with HIV not only in California, but across the country to access the care they need," said Matthew Lesieur, CAEAR Coalition Vice Chair. "Tonight's honorees represent the powerful impact of dedicated individual advocates, organizations, and elected leaders working together to build support for the programs and resources so crucial to providing the health care and support services that people living with HIV need to stay alive and healthy."

Kaiser Permanente was the presenting sponsor for the Partnership Awards, joined by Gilead, EMD Serono, and AIDS Emergency Fund, along with 13 CAEAR Coalition member and community sponsors. "This year represents our highest sponsorship contributions for the Partnership Awards and speaks to the important work we are doing in Washington, DC and the strength of our Northern California members and their central role in San Francisco's and the nation's HIV/AIDS response," said Mike Smith, CAEAR Coalition Board Member, Chair of the Host Committee, and Executive Director of San Francisco's AIDS Emergency Fund.

San Francisco AIDS Foundation used the occasion of the Partnership Awards to announce a \$25,000 challenge grant to support the work of the CAEAR Coalition. The year-long challenge was to encourage broader support from the HIV/AIDS community for the vital work of the coalition, particularly its advocacy efforts at AIDSWatch, which occurs annually in Washington, DC.

"CAEAR Coalition is a crucial voice in Washington representing people living with HIV/AIDS and its work is essential in our efforts to radically reduce new HIV infections and ensure access to proper care," said Neil Giuliano, chief executive officer of San Francisco AIDS Foundation. "We are proud to support the coalition's work while also honoring the legacy of our friend and ally, Randy Allgaier, and hope our challenge grant will encourage others to do the same."

A portion of the grant will support the Randy Allgaier Positive Voices Fund, which will bring people living HIV/AIDS to Washington, DC, to participate in CAEAR Coalition meetings and speak to their elected representatives about the importance of the Ryan White Program. An additional \$1,500 has been raised for the fund through individual donations.

About CAEAR Coalition

The Communities Advocating Emergency AIDS Relief (CAEAR) Coalition is a national membership organization which advocates for federal policy, legislation, regulations, and appropriations to meet the care, treatment, support and prevention needs of people living with HIV/AIDS and the organizations that serve them, focusing on health care reform and the evolving role of the Ryan White Program.

CAEAR Coalition's California member agencies include the Alameda County Office on AIDS, Black Coalition on AIDS, Desert AIDS Project, L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center, San Francisco AIDS Foundation, San Francisco Department of Public Health, San Francisco HIV/AIDS Provider Network, and the San Francisco HIV Health Services Planning Council.

HONOREE BIOS

Randy Allgaier

A longtime advocate for people living with HIV and LGBT equality, Randy was a member of CAEAR Coalition for seven years and served on our Board of Directors as the Chair of the People Living with HIV/AIDS Caucus since 2008. At the time of his death in November 2010, he was Director of the San Francisco HIV Health Services Planning Council, of which he had previously served as Co-chair. Earlier in his career, he was the state advocate for the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, where he took a leading role in building a statewide coalition that successfully advocated for significant increases for California's AIDS Drug Assistance Program. He was also very active in the areas of HIV and Medicare/Medicaid and served on the Board of Directors of National Positive Working Coalition. In 2009, Mayor Gavin Newsom appointed him to the San Francisco Hepatitis C Task Force. As an animal lover, one of his proudest achievements was his service as President of the Board of Pets are Wonderful Support (PAWS) in San Francisco. He was also a founder of the state-wide LGBT advocacy organization Equality California and served on the Board of Directors of the Human Rights Campaign. To all of these endeavors he brought his signature passion, creativity, and diligence to the work at hand.

Scott Boule

Scott Boule has worked as a Policy Advisor and Senior Advisor to U.S House of Representatives Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, including service during her term as Speaker of the House, focusing on issues related to health, education, labor, and budget issues. His roles have included leading key staff in making decisions related to and building consensus on healthcare access, educational opportunity, and budget priorities. He also helped lead similar efforts to forge effective coalitions with outside advocacy groups and has been a key link for HIV/AIDS advocates. During her tenure as a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Scott served as Rep. Pelosi's Appropriations Associate on the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations Subcommittee. His responsibilities also included extensive work on issues related to HIV/AIDS, Medicaid and Medicare, environmental health, and biomedical research. Scott's experience includes work as a VISTA Volunteer developing programs at the grassroots level, a Presidential Management Intern (PMI) with the Department of Health and Human Services working to implement national health care policy, and a Legislative Fellow with the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee working to enact health-related legislation.

The Honorable Mike Honda

U.S. Congressman Michael Honda has represented the 15th Congressional District of California in the U.S. House of Representatives for a decade. In Congress, Rep. Honda is a member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, Co-chair of the Democratic Caucus' New Media Working Group, House Democratic Senior Whip and the original author of the Equity and Excellence Commission now housed in the US Department of Education. Rep. Honda's district includes Silicon Valley, the birthplace of technology innovation and now the country's leading developer of green technology. Honda has dedicated his life to public service and is lauded for his work on education, civil rights, national service, immigration, transportation, the environment, and high-tech issues.

Serving as a California State Assembly member, Santa Clara County Board Supervisor, San Jose Planning Commissioner, San Jose Unified School Board Member, Peace Corps Volunteer in El Salvador, and with over 30 years in education as a teacher, principal and school board member, Rep. Honda's commitment to serving the people of California's 15th district is unwavering and unparalleled.

Ernest Hopkins

CAEAR Coalition Chair Ernest Hopkins is the Legislative Director at San Francisco AIDS Foundation where he oversees the HIV funding, policy, and legislative activities at the federal, state, and local. Prior to joining the foundation in 1997, Ernest was Director of Health and Treatment at the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) where he sought to educate communities nationally in the early days of combination antiretroviral therapy.

A native Washingtonian, Ernest also has a long history in the city's gay and lesbian community and HIV response. He is a co-founder of the Washington, DC Black Gay and Lesbian Pride Day and served as Chairperson to the Metropolitan Washington, DC Regional HIV Health Services Planning Council.

In 1997, as a member of the African American Policy Workgroup, he worked closely with the House appropriators and the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) to establish the Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative and was awarded the CBC's Health Brain Trust Community Service Award for his efforts. Ernest is a founder and current Board Vice Chair of the National Black Gay Men's Advocacy Coalition and a member of the HHS HIV Advisory Committee to the CDC and the Health Resources and Services Administration and the CDC's Black MSM Media Workgroup. He also serves on the Board of the National AIDS Housing Coalition.

CA Senator Mark Leno

In 2008, Mark Leno was elected to the State Senate, representing California's 3rd Senate District encompassing all of Marin County, and parts of Sonoma and San Francisco Counties. Senator Leno chairs the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee.

From 2002 to 2008, Senator Leno served in the California State Assembly, representing the 13th District, which encompasses the eastern portion of San Francisco. Prior to his election to the Assembly, he served for four and a half years on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. During his tenure in the Legislature, Senator Leno has fought for better schools and access to higher education, foster youth, a cleaner and sustainable environment, single-payer universal health care, improved transportation, renewable energy, safer streets, and equal rights for all Californians.

Senator Leno is the owner of Budget Signs, Inc., a small business he founded in 1978 and operated with his life partner, Douglas Jackson. Together, the two entrepreneurs steadily grew their sign business until Jackson passed away from complications relating to HIV/AIDS in 1990. This deep loss would not deter Leno. Instead, he redoubled his efforts in community service.

Project Inform

Project Inform is a San Francisco institution and a national treasure. Project Inform was founded in 1985 to promote the ideas that people with HIV/AIDS should be thoroughly empowered and educated in order to make sound decisions about their health care, and be actively consulted in the process of developing therapies for HIV infection. Project Inform pursues a strategic set of programs crucial to improving the health of people living with HIV and ending the epidemic, focusing their efforts on issues that few other agencies address and building principled and cooperative relationships with government, industry, and academic leaders.

The organization is widely respected for having helped speed dozens of safe and effective HIV medications to market, educated hundreds of thousands of HIV-positive individuals about HIV care and treatment, and ensured adequate government funding for health care programs that serve the sickest and poorest people with HIV. Recognizing that advances in HIV treatment have little value without access, Project Inform has been a key advocate for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program nationally and for access to care through Medi-Cal. Its team of tireless advocates, well known for their hard work and dedication to getting the job done, is widely respected among its peers.