



Nora Isacson

Portland's Alternative Realtor

I have chosen to take a more human approach as a Realtor. I build my business on a referral basis and firmly believe that the satisfaction of my client is far more important than my own financial gain. I communicate clearly and openly, and I'm always honest with my clients. I'll gladly climb a nearby tree to check on a roof or get a bit dirty investigating a crawlspace or an attic. I work mainly in Portland's popular inner Southeast and Northeast neighborhoods and specialize in older homes with character. Whether you're thinking of buying or selling, *please do give me a call.*

Nora Isacson

The Prudential Rod Girtman REALTORS, Inc.
215 SE 102nd Avenue, Suite 300
Portland, OR 97216
(503) 256-1234

SPACIOUS IRVINGTON/ALAMEDA BUNGALO

Completely and impeccably restored with original flavor, this home is incredible. From french doors and crown moldings to the beautiful mahogany in-laid hardwood floors, this home has all of its original charm and character intact. You will enjoy cooking in this unusually large 15'x13' kitchen with solid oak custom cabinets and 'Jennaire' type built-in range. This home is ideal for entertaining in its light open formal dining room or around an inviting fireplace and the spacious living room. There are numerous mechanical updates and a large clean unfinished basement perfect for kids and projects.

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The Prudential
Rod Girtman Inc. Realtors
215 SE 102nd #300 Portland, OR 97216
256-1234 office, 948-5610 VM/pager



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national news

Spin doctors, ho!

*Controversy surrounds Melinda Paras,
the new executive director of NGLTF*

▼
by Bob Roehr



Melinda Paras

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has selected Melinda Paras to be its next executive director. The Dec. 6 announcement was seen as highly controversial in many corners of the lesbian and gay community.

Paras' most recent administrative position was at Shanti Project, an AIDS service organization in San Francisco, where she rose to deputy director. Both Paras and Shanti executive director Eric Rofes resigned in April 1993, under a cloud of accusations that they mismanaged government contracts.

Paras had started at Shanti working on diversity training and multicultural programs. "But once she got there, with amazing speed, suddenly she was up to her eyeballs involved with the financing," recounted Marc Ansley, chief financial officer for Shanti Project from December 1990 to February 1992. Rofes soon created the position of deputy director and moved Paras to fill it.

"Once it [a contract] was granted, Melinda deemed they were going to do other things with the money," said Ellen Hardtke. Hardtke was director of housing—Shanti's biggest program—and the one who blew the whistle on the misuse of contract money.

Ansley and Hardtke supplied many examples of how money was spent on things not specified in the contracts. Hundreds of thousands of dollars earmarked for direct housing services were redirected to other purposes. That translated into more than 40 people with AIDS out on the streets and not in the housing the contracts had paid for.

Pressure mounted in early 1993 and led to the resignations of Paras and Rofes, both ostensibly for reasons of health. Shanti returned \$1.9 million in contracts "voluntarily, before the [city's] AIDS office demanded it," according to Paul Lambros, the interim executive director, who made the comment to *The Advocate*.

Dr. Mitchell Katz told the press in 1993, "We have problems with their [Shanti's] mismanagement of a substantial amount of city money." Katz is director of the city of San Francisco's HIV/AIDS office.

Several audits ensued, including an independent one by the firm of Coopers & Lybrand. It found "excess reimbursement for disallowed expenses."

"The audit demonstrates that during 1991-92, Shanti was seriously out of compliance with city contracts," Katz later told the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Shanti is still negotiating the terms and conditions of repaying what is believed to be more than \$300,000.

Paras and her defenders say the problems at Shanti were just typical growing pains of an organization under the massive influx of funds from the Ryan White CARE Act, and that an inadequate computer system contributed to the missteps. Supporters are also quick to point out that no money was diverted to personal gain.

The defense that neither Paras nor Rofes themselves pocketed money seems a bit of a straw man. Not even their worst critics have accused them of doing so. The issue is not one of personal but of