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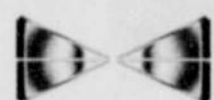
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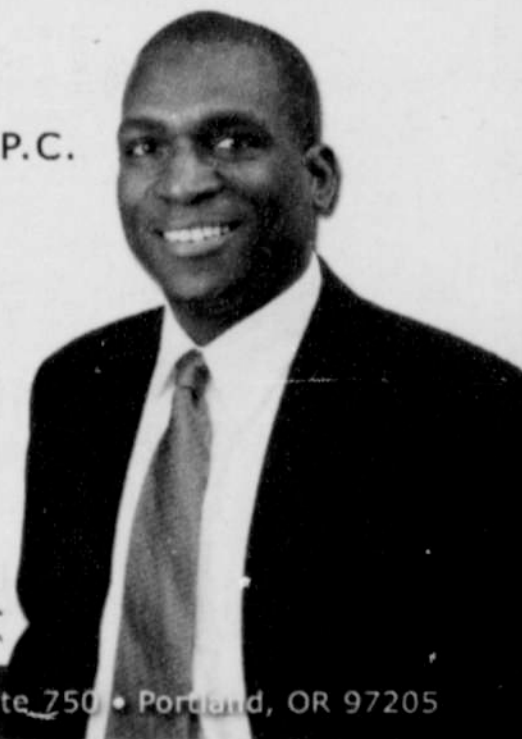
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**northwest****Poised for Action****New SHARE board and president plan for senior housing**

by Malka Geffen

In November, Senior Housing and Retirement Enterprises announced its new board of directors and positioned itself for a busy future. "I feel like we've been a little missing from the community," said Matthew Lashua, SHARE vice president. "We now have the right people in place and new energy."

The nonprofit organization was started in 2001 by a handful of community activists who were interested in the housing needs of sexual minority elders. Lashua is one of the many who see value in planning ahead as well as doing important work for seniors now. "Even though I'm 40 and retirement is way off, I believe this generation right now is pre-Stonewall and have different stories," he said. "They'll go back in the closet, ostracized by nursing home attendants and their peers, and shouldn't have to. These people deserve our attention. A very wise person said, 'Without our seniors and children, we don't have a past or future.'"

Daniel Torrence, SHARE's new president, is the regional director for an assisted living company and has worked in community-based housing and long-term care since 1995. "I read about SHARE in a *Just Out* article about Mary Beth [Brindley] and Evelyn [Hall], our founding mothers. I called Mary Beth, went to a meeting, met the gang and have been on the board since," said Torrence, who secured the group its nonprofit status in 2003.

The list of accomplishments from 2006 shows an organization on the move. SHARE acquired and equipped its first office space in Southeast Portland. The organization also sought property and considered one option in Gresham, but ultimately decided it was too remote for SHARE's objectives. "We're looking at serving an isolated population, and we didn't want to locate them way out in the suburbs where they would be more isolated," said Torrence.

SHARE increased its visibility in 2006 with booths at both Portland and Vancouver Pride festivals. Significant fund raising was achieved through its second annual "Share an Evening with SHARE" swing dance gala and direct mail appeals. SHARE also received a grant from Equity Foundation for \$1,300. Finally, the group held its second annual meeting where the board of directors met with the SHARE advisory board, which includes Portland Mayor Tom Potter, City Commissioner Sam Adams and Multnomah County Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey.

According to Torrence, 2007 will be the year SHARE gets out into the community to do effective outreach and build support through other organizations and with city officials and donors. "I need to build fund-raising capacity and board capacity and contract with an affordable housing developer and move the organization forward," he says. "There's no reason why we can't be breaking ground and making affordable senior housing for the sexual minority community in the next few years."

**Daniel Torrence is the new SHARE president.**

SHARE's work plan indicates some serious strategy implementation coming down the line. In phase one, the organization will develop a marketing plan for Brindley Hall, which will be congregating housing for seniors in an apartment complex. A waiting list of elders ready to move into this complex will be established. Next, an apartment building will be purchased that has common space and approximately 60 units in the Portland metro area. "The place would need a little rehab, and we'd like it to be in area where we could start acquiring property around it or have space to build a community in a campus-type setting that offers meals and activities and serves as a social outlet and resource," said Torrence. Phase one will end as the apartments are filled with sexual minority elders from the waiting list. Phase two involves the implementation of SHARE Commons, a continuing care retirement community.

"There's always been the passion to see a community come to life," Torrence said. "There's more of an urgency now because we're realizing that if we don't kick it in gear, people are going to lose interest and we'll be passed by." It was important to Torrence and others to work toward its goals as a nonprofit with affordability as its focus. "It's just a matter of time before for-profits start coming in," Torrence adds. "We ain't getting any younger—baby boomers are coming, and the numbers of those who need to be served is staggering."

Torrence said that the goal is to acquire a property as soon as possible and begin serving an elder population that currently lives in retirement housing who go back in the closet to feel safe. "We owe it to the GLBT Portland community to get this thing up and running." 19

For information about the SENIOR HOUSING AND RETIREMENT ENTERPRISES board meeting Jan. 20 or about volunteer opportunities, call 503-224-8881 or visit www.sharepdx.org.