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northwest

HRC Chapter Defines Itself

A year ago, Portland's chapter of the Human Rights Campaign could not distinguish its goals from Basic Rights Oregon, our statewide gay rights organization.

A change occurred around February that led to HRC's elevation to a full steering committee from an emerging community committee and distinction at a national event for its ability to work jointly with BRO.

The organization had a resurgence in February 2006, and began growing its membership with an eye for longevity.

"There's a much greater awareness of succession. We're always looking for someone to step up, replace yourself, find volunteers and put them to work in meaningful ways," said Alan Colley, who resigned as co-chairman of the steering committee last month for health reasons. He was replaced by Todd Canon.

The rapid growth combined with a strong working relationship with BRO helped give the committee a much stronger role on the national playing field.

During HRC's national lobby day in Washington, D.C., in March, the organization was officially recognized as a steering committee, meaning it has a greater say in the direction and policy of the national organization.

Portlanders Canon and Michael Dell Long were also accepted May 18 as members of the national board of governors, a populist body that advises the national organization on policy and decision making.

Despite its federal focus, members of the steering committee say they understand the importance of working on statewide actions such as passing Senate Bill 2 and House Bill 2007. The organization donated money and support staff to BRO to get that work done.

"We recognize that national legislation is built from grassroots up, so we lend a vast amount of resources to state initiatives and take direction from local organizations, too," Colley explained.

The steering committee will also support BRO's work in keeping equality-minded candidates in office for the same reason.

The organization is broken down into four committees. The political committee works closely with supportive legislators and coordinates with BRO on statewide actions. The diversity committee works to reflect the demographics of the sexual minorities community. The membership and events committee organizes fun and fund-raising events such as a March 31 bowling party, which raised \$3,000 and tripled in size from the previous year while recruiting new members. The final committee is the Federal Club, an elite leg of HRC for those who donate at least \$1,200 annually to the organization. The group has special events such as ski trips and wine tasting tours, with access to powerful politicians and other shakers.

The HRC steering committee plans to have a presence at Portland Pride both in the parade and the waterfront festival, with possible drop-ins from local and regional politicians.

For more information visit www.hrc.org and click on your community.



Kendall Clawson, Q Center's first executive director, steps up June 11.

Q Center Names First Executive Director

After a national search, Kendall Clawson, a consultant and former United Way executive from Massachusetts, will assume the executive director role at Q Center beginning June 11.

"After thoroughly evaluating a diverse pool of more than 40 local and national applicants, we believe Kendall possesses the right combination of passion for the mission, knowledge and skills to lead Q Center," said Q Center board members and co-chairs of the search committee LeAnn Locher and Bob Speltz. "She is a visionary with the entrepreneurial spirit needed to become Q Center's first executive director and lead the organization to its next level of community building."

Clawson, 42, was chief executive officer of Idea Box Consulting, a firm specializing in strategic planning and organizational, program and fund development, and prior to that was a vice president of planning and community services at United Way of Pioneer Valley in Springfield, Mass. Her professional focus includes helping community groups develop strategies for growth and sustainability.

As executive director of Q Center, Clawson will be responsible for leading fund-raising programs and services, administration and community relations efforts. With support of the board and volunteers, she will be responsible for the overall operational management of the organization and attainment of its long-range goals, ensure ongoing delivery on quality services in a cost-effective way and further its role as a multicultural community-building organization consistently committed to diversity and inclusion.

"Leading Q Center is an amazing opportunity that I will absolutely relish," said Clawson. "I don't think it is possible for me to be more excited to work with such a dynamic organization and to help build more connections between the diverse elements of our LGBTQ community."



From left, Human Rights Campaign members and supporters include Sarah Scanlon, Terry Bean, former Oregon Gov. Barbara Roberts, Gov. Ted Kulongoski, the Rev. Tara Wilkins, Sean Minogue and Michael Dell Long.