



From left, Jan Dillon, Ellie Heller, KJ Jensen, Michelle Fusco, Lorie Hansen, Carol Brownlow, Joan O'Brien and Anne Clark gather at Hambleton Project's last board meeting in May.

Clawson succeeds Tim Healea, who served as interim coordinator during a leave of absence from Q Center's board.

Clawson loves cooking, movies and travel, and she is the mother of two dogs. She and her partner of 16 years married in Massachusetts in October 2006.

Hambleton Project Closes

Sharon Hambleton underwent advanced medical treatment for her ovarian cancer at the Mautner Project for Lesbians with Cancer in Washington, D.C.

"Her vision was to have a similar project here in Portland," said Hambleton's partner, Lorie Hansen, who co-founded Hambleton Project with Carol Brownlow and Jan Dillon.

Brownlow added: "She came home wanting to start something similar for lesbians who don't have support. Sharon died before we could get it off the ground, but we still wanted to do it as a tribute."

Hambleton Project was founded in 1997 to support lesbians with cancer, their partners and their friends by providing referrals, resources, advocacy and support groups. In October 2005, its board witnessed declining numbers of members and calls from lesbians requesting the program's services. With the energy of new board members and successful fund raising, it seemed Hambleton Project would create a stable foundation with a committed volunteer base and increased board membership. Despite efforts to keep the project alive, the board, with the guidance of co-founding members, unanimously decided to close Hambleton Project effective June 1.

Co-chairwoman KJ Jensen is a breast cancer survivor. "My partner left me six weeks after I finished treatment. We had been together for 17 years," she said. "If we had been living in Portland, this wouldn't have happened."

Hambleton Project was unique because it provided support for the partner, who is truly the primary caretaker. "It's a huge toll," she added. "I had tons of support, and she had none. That, to me, is the biggest loss."

Brownlow told *Just Out*: "I'm feeling conflicted. I think the organization provided wonderful services, but it seems as if the community's needs are changing, so those services may not be as needed as they were 10 years ago."

Brownlow said Hambleton Project's closure might be, in part, because of Portland's wider acceptance of lesbians. "It's also difficult for a small nonprofit that operates strictly with volunteers to be a priority when we all lead such busy lives these days."

Jensen speculated that the organization is a casualty of the Internet age. "I think the pendulum has swung so that we turn to the anonymity of the Internet rather than have face-to-face contact. As a certified nurse midwife, I've seen the same

thing with women scheduling C-sections. It's a swing away from personal empowerment, but I think it will come back," Jensen explained.

According to Jensen, a core group of 30 to 50 people held the project together, while 550 people have been supportive through the years. They will celebrate Hambleton Project's 10 years of service to the lesbian community from 3 to 5 p.m. June 10 at the Ecotrust Building, 721 N.W. Ninth Ave. Call Jensen at 503-577-5952 if you would like to attend.

National Chamber Gets Local

As shown in the increasing significance of the Human Right's Campaign's Corporate Equality Index, corporate America wants to work with the queer business community. Until recently, there was no independent third-party certification organization like those that certify ethnic minority- or women-owned businesses. The National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce is the only national not-for-profit advocacy organization dedicated to expanding the economic opportunities of the queer business community.

The Portland Area Business Association is hosting a workshop, presented by the chamber, on securing business contracts from major corporations throughout the United States. The Diversity Certification Workshop will be held June 12 at the offices of Web MD, 2701 N.W. Vaughn St. #700. The event will begin with a wine and cheese reception at 6 p.m., followed by the formal presentation at 6:45.

A business that is at least 51 percent queer-owned qualifies to become a "Certified LGBT Business Enterprise" through the chamber. With the certification, that business becomes eligible to compete in supplier diversity contracting opportunities. The manager of the national chamber Supplier Diversity Initiative, Aditi Dussault, will discuss how and why to become certified, the process to go through and how to market a business as a queer-owned enterprise.

"This is a great inroad for a business in getting to work with larger companies like Kodak, IBM, Motorola, Wells Fargo, Intel and others," said PABA president Sean Minogue.

The workshop is open to all PABA members and those interested in becoming members. RSVP to PABA at 503-280-7222.

On June 13, Intel is hosting Prime Opportunities, a business forum created to connect Intel suppliers with diversity suppliers and small businesses. This event is open to all queer business owners seeking to do business as a second-tier supplier to Intel. It will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Lloyd Center Doubletree Hotel, 1000 N.E. Multnomah Blvd. To register call 202-419-0440 or e-mail supplierdiversity@nglcc.org.

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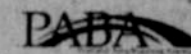
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