

Washington, D.C., with Oregon's congressional delegation, Human Rights Campaign executive director Joe Solmonese and political powerhouse U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., among others.

The passage of House Bill 2 and Senate Bill 2007 can be traced back to the resources and influence Bean implemented to help elect a pro-equality body in the Oregon Legislature.

"He is a man of influence," said Frazzini. "He's used that influence in Oregon by advocating in support of these laws everywhere he can. He had the opportunity to speak to legislators and decision makers and continually remind them how important this is."

Bean was chosen for the Fighting Spirit Award in a serendipitous year, according to Frazzini.

"I think it's incredible that we've able to honor him at a dinner in the year that we've had such great success in the Legislature," Frazzini said. "We've made really significant, proactive change in Oregon this year, and we have the opportunity to honor someone who's made sure that was a possibility." **10**

Basic Rights Oregon presents its 25th annual awards dinner and gala, **MASQUERADE**, from 5:30 to 9 p.m. Oct. 13 at the Oregon Convention Center, 777 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Tickets are \$150 from [www.brodinner.com](http://www.brodinner.com).

## Behind the Prize

Bean's contributions reach beyond Northwest

by Jaymee R. Cuti

**T**erry Bean has been on the gay civil rights scene for 30 years, just five years longer than Basic Rights Oregon has been holding its annual fund-raising galas.

His contributions to the movement include the founding or co-founding of the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, the nation's largest queer political action committee; Right to Privacy Political Action Committee, Oregon's first statewide political group; Equity Foundation, a Portland-based philanthropic granting organization serving the sexual minorities community; the National Fairness Fund; and along with local activist Jerry Weller, the Gay Rights National Lobby. The Gay Rights National Lobby and the National Fairness Fund evolved into the main parts of today's Human Rights Campaign. Bean was also on the original board of directors for the Gay Games.

Bean counts the Gores, the Clintons and former Oregon Gov. Barbara Roberts among his friends. He has influenced dignitaries and Fortune 500 CEOs, revolutionizing national fund raising through large donor projects.

Joe Solmonese, executive director of HRC, considers Bean a mentor. Solmonese said Bean, who is an HRC board member and co-chairman of the building campaign, continues to make priceless contributions to the organization.

"Not only does he have the institutional wisdom and the history, but he is also the person to be forward-thinking and creative about how we move forward," Solmonese told *Just Out*. "That combination is an incredibly unique perspective and value he brings to the organization."

Bean's involvement in the movement began for very personal reasons. Prior to coming out in 1971, after he graduated from college, he had two nervous breakdowns and attempted to take his life because of shame and fear.

"A lot of my activism comes from a deep desire to have kids not grow up that way," Bean said. "I envision one day to live in a country that truly nurtures the diversity it claims to tolerate."

Bean also lost both his first and second partners to HIV. While he remains HIV-negative, he says he lost nearly half of his friends to the disease.

Bean considers both the Reagan and first Bush administrations to be criminally neglectful of the epidemic. "I hold them personally responsible for the deaths of thousands and thousands of people," he said. **10**



**Terry Bean can't conceal his excitement over receiving the pen with which Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski signed the gay rights bills into law.**

MARTY DAVIS

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