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HRC Holds Nondiscrimination Workshop

The Human Rights Campaign invites employers and employees to a free workshop designed to help implement the Oregon Equality Act, Senate Bill 2.

It will cover the new law and the associated workplace issues related to members of the sexual minorities community. The workshop runs from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 15 at Jupiter Hotel, 800 E. Burnside St.

Speakers include an employment attorney, human resources personnel and queers addressing their workplace experiences. The goals and objectives for the workshop include informing Oregon employers of the workplace issues and laws relating to queer employees; helping both employers and employees identify and solve workplace problems; and providing information and resources to sexual-minority individuals with regard to workplace issues and changes in the law.

The workshop begins with a session called "GLBTQ 101," a discussion of terms relating to gay people and the impact of the Oregon Equality Act on employers with speaker Beth Allen. Key issues include dress code, bathroom access and transitioning on the job.

Afternoon concurrent sessions include "Résumé Writing," "How Does the Oregon Equality Act Affect Me?" and "Interviewing."

Lunch will be served. To RSVP contact Brenda Smith at 503-381-9478 or brendasmith3304@hotmail.com.

Wilgus Complex Faces BOLI Charges

When Karl Wilgus opened his new several-thousand-square-foot complex of gay bars at the corner of Northwest Couch Street and Fifth Avenue in April 2007, all the necessary accouterments were accounted for. Chasing light displays, check. Stripped-down go-go dancer boys, check. Six-dollar vodka sodas, check.

And now he can add one more item to that list. Disgruntled lawsuit-filing former employees: triple check (and counting).

Since opening the doors to his nightclub complex, Wilgus has enjoyed, by the bar owner's own accounts, increasingly large crowds at his flagship bar, Casey's, which occupies the top half of the

building. And on Feb. 15, Wilgus moved his flagship institution—the notorious and popular leather bar Eagle PDX—from its longtime Stark Street location into the basement of the Casey's complex.

"It's totally rad and busy all the time," said Cory Eastland, a bartender and part-time manager on duty at Casey's. Business, it seems, is booming.

If that's the case, then a number of Wilgus' former employees want to know why the bar owner has yet to fulfill at least \$3,000 in outstanding wages due to them, and why he's stopped responding to claims they've since filed with the state Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI). Matt Stefanik claims he is owed \$1,200 in back wages from when he worked at Casey's last fall as a bartender and bar back. "That's like three months of rent," he said, "and I'm counting on that money."

For a brief time, Jayson Marston tended bar at the Eagle. After quitting in September 2007 and trying to cash a series of payroll checks that then bounced—his BOLI claim says \$990 in unpaid wages is owed—he said he went to the Eagle to try to talk with Wilgus about the situation. But when he mentioned taking legal action, Wilgus immediately asked him to leave his office. Another former Casey's staff member, David McCormick, has also filed a claim for \$1,300 in unpaid wages, according to Margaret Pargeter, a BOLI compliance specialist assigned to Wilgus' cases.

But when asked about the BOLI claims filed against him, Wilgus said, "I don't have anything to say about that." He did not respond to later e-mails and voicemails requesting further comment.

The bar owner does seem to have a penchant for communication via text message. When Stefanik quit Casey's after several months without pay, he decided to go after Wilgus in his own way: He changed his MySpace profile name to "Karl Wilgus is a dead beat loser."

The stunt got Wilgus' attention. "You would haven [sic] been paid long ago if you did not start the shit," Wilgus wrote Stefanik in a text message from January. "Instead you waned [sic] games. That's what you got."

Unity Project Expands Mission

With a new name came a new aim for Brother to Brother. The nonprofit organization providing services for gay men of color is now Unity Project of Oregon.



STEPHEN MARC BEAUDOIN

Matt Stefanik describes business owner Karl Wilgus as "a deadbeat loser."