

Hats Off!

PABA celebrates scholars with festive brunch

BY ERIN ROOK

Since 2005, the Portland Area Business Association has been giving out scholarships to LGBT students and those with LGBT parents with little fanfare. This year, however, PABA is going for fabulous with its first "A Tip of the Hat" scholarship brunch.

"At this celebration, we will 'tip our hats' to not only our students but also to the LGBT community and our event sponsors who have so graciously stepped up to ensure that PABA's legacy of supporting LGBT [students] continues," scholarship committee chair Michael Traylor said in an initial release.

Rather than announcing the scholarship recipients during PABA's monthly luncheon, the organization will host its brunch at the Ecotrust building in NW Portland. And it's not just the venue that's getting a makeover—guests are encouraged to don their gayest apparel.

"We want people to show up in outrageous attire," Traylor tells *Just Out*. Specifically: fancy hats. Inspired by the British royal wedding tradition, the brunch will include a contest for best hat, judged by as-yet-unnamed local celebrities. Hats will be available (though not

required) for those who arrive bareheaded.

But the brunch will be more than French toast and fedoras. It will also feature special guest former Governor Barbara Roberts, a longtime ally to the LGBTQ community.

"Barbara has just been such an amazing friend and ally of the gay and lesbian community even before it was in style to be a supporter," Traylor says. "Barbara Roberts has been on our side for such a long time and has also been a strong supporter of education.... She's certainly someone to look up to."

And, perhaps a lesser-known fact, Traylor says, "She's really funny."

Still, Traylor is most looking forward to hearing from the students, who have proven to be consistently "inspirational" in past years. Each 2011 scholarship recipient will be invited to say a few words at the event.

"It's actually really, really touching. The recipients are so appreciative and their stories are so amazing," Traylor says. "Some of these people have battled so much with their families [coming out, getting kicked out]."

He points out that the scholarship recipi-

ents come from all over the state, including places that may not be "as warm and accepting as Portland is." The scholarships can make a substantial difference in students' lives.

"Every year with the program we've been lucky enough to equal or exceed [the] previous year's awards," Traylor says.

This year, PABA will award \$5,000-\$6,000 to five or six students, including scholarships named for Gov. Roberts and Terry Bean.

"They are pillars of support in our community," Traylor says. "It's a long time coming and very well deserved."

The brunch is open to the public but tickets are limited. Traylor says about one third of the 150 tickets have already sold. Plus, PABA is canceling its August luncheon to encourage more members to attend the event, so non-members should act quickly to get a seat.

Students interested in applying for the 2012 scholarship cycle can download an application at PABA's website. The scholarship is open to students seeking post-secondary education who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, or are children of LGBT parents, and reside in



Former Governor **Barbara Roberts** will speak at the PABA Scholarship Brunch.

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-MICHAEL TRAYLOR,
PABA SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR

Oregon or in Clark County, Wash.

The deadline for applications is June 30. Awards range from \$500 to \$1,500 and are announced at the annual ceremony.

The scholarship brunch is co-sponsored by Equity Foundation, Q Center and the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network. **JO**

A Tip of The Hat PABA Scholarship Brunch, Sat., Aug. 20, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.; Ecotrust, 721 NW Ninth Ave.; \$50; 503-280-7222 or paba.com.

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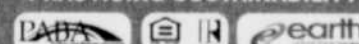
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Beth A. Allen, founding partner: winner of the Oregon Gay & Lesbian Law Association (OGALLA) Silver Jubilee Award; OGALLA Award of Merit; and the Basic Rights Oregon Superhero Award. Selected as a 2010 Oregon Super Lawyer. Founding member of the BRO Legal Group; author of *Same-Sex Marriage: a Conflicts of Law Analysis for Oregon*; frequent local, state and national speaker on marriage equality.