

# Pennsylvania Lesbian and Gay Task Force

October 2002

## In Memoriam Reverend Paul Washington

We mourn the death of Task Force advisor and friend, *Reverend Paul M. Washington*, who was an extraordinary and exemplary civil rights leader.

Over the last half-century, and during his tenure as Pastor of the Church of the Advocate, Reverend Washington led and nurtured critical struggles for social and economic justice, for race and gender equality, and for an end to war and destruction.

Twenty years ago, when no more than a handful of Christian ministers would "dare to speak our name," Reverend Washington publicly advocated, with consistency and courage, for the right of lesbian and gay people as well as bisexual and transgendered people to be free from

discrimination and violence, to be free from oppressive laws and bigotry. His support never wavered in the face of social disapproval nor religious controversy and bigotry. Unlike so many of his peers, Reverend Washington held steadfast to the principles and practice of truth and love.

As we mourn Reverend Washington's death, let each of us honor his memory in living our lives in solidarity with all oppressed peoples in an ongoing and shared struggle for peace, justice, and freedom.

We offer our *deepest condolences* to the family and encourage you to send memorial contributions to the *Church of the Advocate* Parish House at 2121 North Gratz Street, Philadelphia, PA. 19121.

①

Initiative  
Senate  
Blitz

PLGTF  
Briefs again  
PA Human  
Relations  
Commission  
Monday  
Nov. 25,  
11:00 a.m.  
until Noon  
301  
Chestnut  
Street  
Harrisburg

JOIN US

### Pennsylvania Civil Rights Initiative - Update

The right to be free from discrimination in *employment, housing, and in public accommodations*.

The right to be free from discrimination in *education* and the right to a quality K-16 education for all children. This is the Initiative's basic demand. We remain the only citizens in Pennsylvania (and nationally) who are denied these fundamental civil rights.

Though limited in scope, these basic rights provide the statutory ground on which to protest unfair policies and practices in 65 of 67 Commonwealth counties (Exceptions: Philadelphia and Erie).

*The Winding Road:* After six years of advocacy, including comprehensive research and documentation of high levels of discrimination and of violence, community organizing (gay and non-gay), grassroots petitioning, press conferences, formal briefings for key organizations, legislators, and mass media, where does the Initiative stand?

The list of organizational sponsors has grown significantly to 100-plus viable organizations. It has attracted the support of critical unions, e.g. The *AFL-CIO Pride At Work Committee* joining the Pennsylvania State Education

Association (PSEA) and Pennsylvania American Federation of Teachers (PAFT).\*

On the other hand, Pennsylvania legislators, elected and safely re-elected in a fixed electoral political system, are engaged in a pattern of malign neglect. In the year 2002, **nine** Pennsylvania Senators (originally five) together with **eleven** Representatives (no net change) have promised to support the Civil Rights Initiative when the proposed legislation is introduced, which they themselves will **not** do. Senate and House members' commitments to introduce Initiative legislation in 1998, 2001 and 2002 were bogus. The **magic numbers:** **1** official to introduce the bills with **26** Senate votes and **103** House votes to adopt the proposed legislation. (Please call for updated reports or visit our web site [www.plgtf.org](http://www.plgtf.org)).

In sum, disenfranchised communities are oppressed to the extent that we permit the "enemy" to oppress us whether that "enemy" is a public official with tangible power, or self-serving organizations that would "wait for a more convenient season...." Basic civil rights remain a fundamental element in a protracted

# Pennsylvania Lesbian and Gay Task Force

struggle for full human rights for all people.  
**Let's move forward in solidarity.**

\* Sampling of Supportive Organizations: the IGLHRC, World Congress of GLBT Jews, Dignity/USA, Equal Partners in Faith, Lambda LDEF, NGLTF, NLRC, PFLAG. In Pennsylvania, the ADL, Beth Ahavah, Congreso, Dignity, the Harrisburg Switchboard, Jewish Labor Committee, Jewish Reconstructionist Federation, NAACP, Philadelphia Bar Association, the Pittsburgh

GLCC, Project Home, William Way Center, WOAR, and many others. *Local* Human Relations Commissions in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and Pittsburgh, **unlike** the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, have signed statements of support for the Initiative. (On the web at [www.plgtf.org](http://www.plgtf.org) Pennsylvania petition signatories (now 6,000 strong) continue to grow thanks to supportive community organizations, e.g. Alliance for Tolerance and Freedom (Lancaster) and *Planet Q*, a Pittsburgh GLBT newspaper.

2

Take  
Action  
For Life  
and  
Liberty

## Blitz All Senators - Civil Rights NOW - November 1 - 24, 2002

<b>Read</b>	Please address and mail the enclosed postcard or your own personal letter to your Pennsylvania Senator now. The Senate is an A1 priority, House A2. Introduce/Adopt the Initiative bills now. No more delays or bogus rationales.
<b>Write</b>	Write Op-Eds or letters to the editor of your local paper routinely.
<b>Speak</b>	Call your Senator (if you wish, your House Rep, too). See " <i>Contacts</i> ." Appear on TV/Cable/Radio. Call your local broadcaster/cablecaster and insist on the right to speak about relevant issues on a routine basis. The public airwaves purportedly belong to the public. Claim them as such.
<b>Organize</b>	Organize local briefings, postcard and petition campaigns. As determined by local communities, consider various forms of protest and resistance.
<b>Regularly</b>	Let us know how it goes and how we can be helpful to you locally.

3

Call the  
U.S.  
Congress

and  
George  
W. Bush

## Task Force Says NO to WAR

**Whereas** war is an unconscionable waste of human life and an extraordinary waste of financial resources, the Pennsylvania Lesbian and Gay Task Force unequivocally condemns the Bush Administration and the U.S. Congress' proposed war against Iraq.

We call upon the U.S. Congress to resist the President's thirst for absolute power and the blood of innocents; to exercise political will in implementing tangible efforts to promote world peace and disarmament; to respect and comply with international rules of law and human rights treaties and conventions; and to redirect planned war expenditures to meet the

growing social and economic needs of the people of the United States and throughout the world.

*We call upon all people of conscience* to prevail upon the United States government to cease and desist preparations for this unwarranted war and to reallocate critically needed resources to world peace and human development.

*October 2002:* Democrats *Brady, Fattah, Coyne,* and *Doyle* were the only four (4) of 21 members of the Pennsylvania Delegation to the U.S. House to vote *against* a unilateral war. (See "*Contacts*")

# Pennsylvania Lesbian and Gay Task Force

---

4

Fairness  
in  
Education  
and Media

## **New Federal Legislation: Support the Student Bill of Rights.**

In September 2002, U.S. Representative *Chaka Fattah* (D-Philadelphia) introduced legislation to effect a *Student Bill of Rights*. Under the aegis of Philadelphians United to Support Public Schools, the Task Force joined a Washington D.C. contingent to support the introduction of H.R. 5346 and its Senate companion

S. 2912. The legislation would provide for equal education opportunities for students in public schools and would require states to eliminate disparities in educationally unequal schools. Critically, the legislation provides what appear to be strong civil action enforcement provisions.

## **Federal Communications Policy: Maintain Broadcast and Cable EEO Policies and Reports**

As part of an ongoing multi-tiered media strategy, the Task Force is a joint petitioner in proceedings before the FCC to maintain

previously established EEO rules and policies. Georgetown University Law Center Institute for Public Representation is lead counsel.

5

Call City  
Council and  
the Mayor

## **Philadelphia Domestic Partnership: Now you see it. Now you don't.**

The Task Force was pleased to participate in a *William Way Center*-sponsored forum on responsive strategies to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's decision to overturn Philadelphia's local ordinance, which, as adopted, extended workplace benefits to a handful of city employees.

In sum, we continue to recommend to the Mayor and City Council that domestic partnership legislation (originally proposed by Angel Ortiz) should reflect the reach of the city's Fair Practices Act, *i.e.*, public and private employment with contract compliance, and

should be applicable to gay and non-gay families. At the highly attended forum, we suggested that if marriage and the economic benefits and protections linked to marriage were the primary goal, one might consider a focus on legislative and litigation strategies to overturn Pennsylvania's DOMA and to establish the right to marry for gay men and for lesbian women who wish to marry. Alternative though less popular strategies would include: severing economic benefits from the institution of marriage or de-institutionalizing state-sanctioned marriage. (Testimony at [www.plgtf.org](http://www.plgtf.org))

6

Welcome

## **PLGTF Welcomes New Advisory Board Members: 2001-2**

Deborah A. Austin, CTCP  
Martin Baum Duberman, Ph.D.  
Ernest E. Jones, Esq.  
Cletus P. Lyman, Esq.  
Louis Massiah  
Richard R. Smith IV  
Rosalind Spigel  
Corrine D. Sylvia, CFRE.

Trust Compliance Officer  
Distinguished Professor of History at City University of NY  
President and CEO, Philadelphia Workforce Development  
Chair, GALLOP and Founder, Lyman and Ash  
Executive Director, Scribe Video Center  
Teacher  
Area Director, Jewish Labor Committee  
President, Corrine D. Sylvia and Associates

# Pennsylvania Lesbian and Gay Task Force

---

7

Public Airways

Demand Responsive Programs and Managers

## Infinity Broadcast Cancels "Opie and Anthony" - An Opportunity

In late summer 2002, Infinity Broadcast cancelled its syndicated radio program, *Opie and Anthony*, which aired on an estimated 18 of 180 plus Infinity stations nationwide. Infinity has also suspended *Ken Stevens*, too-long WYSP manager, who has been overtly hostile and **consistently** unresponsive to our community. The cancellation was provoked for reasons unrelated to the hosts' reported AIDSphobic remarks. Nevertheless, this is an *opportune time* to prevail upon Infinity Broadcast to produce and syndicate public interest programming that reflects the viewpoints and concerns of our diverse

minority communities, and to advocate for a new local WYSP manager who will be responsive and sensitive to our concerns. (*Reminder*: Paramount/Viacom is the same media conglomerate that sponsored "Dr. Laura" Schlessinger. The television talk show program was cancelled after nation-wide protests.)

*Please call now John Sykes and Andy Schoun at Infinity Broadcast to demand progressive programming, and a responsive WYSP - GM. (See "Contacts.")*

8

Call Senator Rhoades

## Update On Marcus Wayman, Minersville, Schuylkill County, PA

In 1997, at age 18, Marcus Wayman committed suicide after a local chief of police and his son, a second police officer, threatened to disclose Marcus' presumed homosexuality to family members. On request, PLGTF joined Lambda LDEF in a friend-of-the court brief on behalf of Madonna Sterling, Marcus' mother. According to *David Rudovsky*, Esq., private lead attorney, the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals' decision in 2000 has established the principle

that public officials may be held accountable for acts that constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. The local police, however, admit no wrongdoing. As the case weaves through the legal system, Kyle N. Quandel, a publicist and Sterling family friend, has created a *personal* web site at [www.marcuswayman.org](http://www.marcuswayman.org). **Call** area legislator Senator Rhoades [R] who has been *unresponsive* to the Initiative, inclusive of K-12 education amendments. Representative *Lucyk* [D] will soon retire.

9

Keeping On...and Keeping On...

## PLGTF Call for Rights & Resources (Capital, Talent, & Technology)

Everyone Can	Give generously and as often as you can to build a strong movement
Community Organizers	Organize for civil and human rights and develop <b>new</b> resources to support collaborative work among friends, colleagues, and ally groups
Emissaries	Host private fundraising parties at home and with social groups
Communications	Read, write, speak to organizations, businesses, public officials, media
Governance	Help identify progressive and skilled board-candidates statewide
Technology	Laptops, web gurus (off-site), and data entry (in Philadelphia, PA)
Space	Help identify free or reasonable office spaces in various key cities

# Pennsylvania Lesbian and Gay Task Force

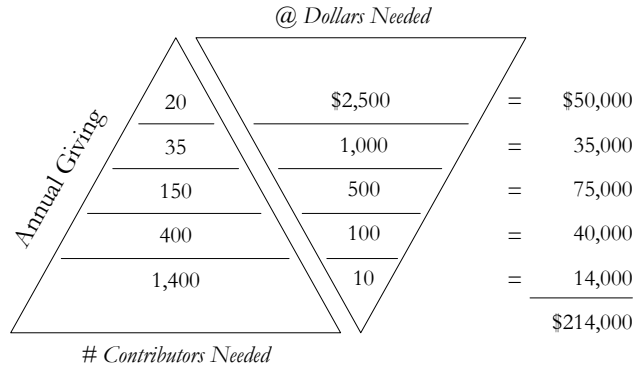
**10**

**Urgent  
Call**

**Please  
Give  
Today**

## Urgent Request for Your Financial Support

The Task Force needs **your** support and the support of people like **you** who care about justice. Foundations, with rare exception, will **not** fund effective community-based public policy advocacy and organizing efforts that challenge the status quo. The Task Force, now near its 25<sup>th</sup> year, is in **urgent need** of your moral and financial support. Please give generously, and share this news note with a friend.



Please give by check, credit card, pledges, stocks or bequests before year end.

### Selected Media Contacts

Infinity Broadcast, 1515 Broadway, New York, New York 10036  
(The Feeding Chain: National Amusements/Paramount/Viacom/CBS/Infinity)

**Mel Karmazin**  
President and COO  
Viacom Inc.  
212-846-5500 or 5501  
Attn: Lydia Ortega Assistant  
lortega@cbs.com

**John Sykes, Chair and CEO**  
Infinity Broadcasting Corp  
212-258-7880  
212-846-6721 (fax)

**Andy Schuon, President**  
Infinity Broadcasting Corp  
212-846-6097  
aschuon@cbs.com

### Selected Government Contacts

**George W. Bush** The White House at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Washington. DC 20500.  
Comment line 202-456-1111 or 202-456-1414 (Fax: 2471)

**U.S. Legislators** U.S. Capitol Switchboard for general information: 202-224-3121  
Mail: U.S. Senate (20515) and U.S. House (20510). Washington, DC

**Governor** 225 Main Capitol Building. Harrisburg. PA 17120. 717-787-2500

**Legislators** Main Capitol Building, Harrisburg. PA 17120  
Legislator Information: Senate 717-787-5920 and House 717-787-2372

**Web Sites** [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org) and [www.fairvote.org](http://www.fairvote.org) and [www.plgtf.org](http://www.plgtf.org)  
[www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) and [www.webactive.com](http://www.webactive.com)  
[www.pasen.gov](http://www.pasen.gov) and [Governor@state.pa.us](mailto:Governor@state.pa.us)

Rita Addessa, Director, with Board Chairs Sandy Henise, M.Ed., Linda Martin, and Paul Thomas, Ed.D.

PLGTF at the Friends Center. 1501 Cherry Street. Philadelphia, PA 19102-1479.

Discrimination and Violence Hotline 215.772.2000 and toll free 877. PRIDE. 2000.

Email: [plgtf@plgtf.org](mailto:plgtf@plgtf.org) Web site: [www.plgtf.org](http://www.plgtf.org)