

Temple Law Alumni Association Diversity Leadership Award 2013

Nomination of LAWRENCE FELZER, ESQ.

I am pleased to nominate Larry Felzer for the 2013 TLA Diversity Leadership Award honoring a Temple Law graduate who has demonstrated a strong commitment, and made a substantial contribution, to diversity and to promoting full and equal participation and inclusion in the legal profession. I am joined by this nomination by 17 colleagues who have submitted 9 individual or joint letters of support, which I have attached.

Larry Felzer's entire career has been focused on empowering diverse and disenfranchised communities, fighting discrimination and inequality, and promoting diversity and inclusion. Larry is an outspoken, passionate, public and proud member and leader of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community and the legal community. As a lawyer, mentor, Bar leader, and advocate, Larry has promoted the rights of and raised awareness and visibility of the LGBT and other minority communities over the past 20 years. With great passion, eloquence, leadership, energy and his trademark wit, Larry has advocated for and promoted inclusion, equality, and vibrant participation of minorities in the legal profession and in the community at large in extraordinary and far-reaching ways. The powerful impact of his life is reflective of the ideals of the prestigious Temple Law Alumni Association Diversity Leadership Award.

Larry has served as an outspoken leader and advocate for LGBT lawyers and for recognition and inclusion of all minorities in the legal profession for decades. He served as chair of the board of Gay and Lesbian Lawyers of Philadelphia (GALLOP), the premiere organization of LGBT legal professionals serving the Philadelphia metropolitan area. GALLOP's purpose is to advocate for and promote the civil and human rights of the LGBT community; to improve access to LGBT attorneys; and to improve and enhance business opportunities, advancement and employment of LGBT attorneys. Larry has been a long-standing and vibrant leader of and volunteer with GALLOP, and received GALLOP's Michael Greenberg Community Service Award in November 2012, given to honor an LGBT attorney for outstanding leadership, activism and advocacy.

Larry has served as a leader and is active on numerous Philadelphia Bar Association committees, sections and groups, focusing his efforts in the Bar on promoting justice, fighting inequality, and seeking inclusion. He has served as Chair of the Public Interest Section during its 20th Anniversary, bringing together wide-ranging groups to celebrate the accomplishments of this private/public collaborative Section, which has diversity as one of its primary goals. As long-serving Co-Chair of the LGBT Rights Committee, as a course planner for Continuing Legal Education programs presented at Pennsylvania Bar Institute, and as a former member of the Board of Governors, Larry has always made his presence known in promoting recognition and awareness of minority attorneys and groups. Larry has served on the Bar Association's first diversity steering committee and was a panelist on a program on diversity for legal service and public interest lawyers and leaders, under the auspices of the Delivery of Legal Services

Committee, addressing diversity challenges facing nonprofit Boards of Directors, staffs, and client communities.

Larry also serves in statewide leadership positions, bringing diversity issues to the forefront as an appointed member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association House of Delegates and member of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency Victim Service Advisory Committee Funding subcommittee.

Larry's LGBT legal leadership has extended to the national level. He has served as an organizer and leader in Lavender Law, the national LGBT legal conference presented by the National LGBT Bar Association. In 2002, he helped lead and host this national conference in Philadelphia, showcasing his hometown to national leaders and attorneys from all over the country, selecting plenary speakers, CLE programs and panelists, and coordinating social programs for attendees. Larry served as a panelist at Lavender Law in August 2012 in Washington, D.C., speaking about how new Voter ID laws impact LGBT elders and seniors in general, and spoke on a national conference call in Fall 2012 organized by the National LGBT Bar Association on these issues of voter disenfranchisement.

Larry has created and fostered partnerships to promote diversity between the legal community and major league sports, an accomplishment which has gained national attention. He was the lead attorney and one of the co-organizers of the first Gay Community Evening with the Phillies in August 2003 – another major diversity milestone -- partnering a major league sports franchise with the LGBT Community. Larry threw the opening pitch in 2003 and at the event's 10th anniversary in 2012, recognizing his leadership in raising awareness, visibility and pride of the LGBT community, with special emphasis on the LGBT legal community. This game attracts between 600 and 1200 LGBT individuals and their friends and families every year. His written tips on organizing an LGBT event with a pro baseball team or other professional sports team are published in the book, "Outsports Revolution: Truth & Myth in the World of Gay Sports."

The annual Gay Community Evening event now benefits the Sean Halpin Memorial Scholarship Fund, established by Larry in 2004 at the Philadelphia Foundation in memory of his deceased friend and colleague, who was an openly gay member of the Bar and a partner at the law firm Reed Smith LLP. The endowed award, in the amount of no less than \$1,000, is for openly LGBT students attending a law school in the Philadelphia region. Of his creating the Halpin Fund, Larry notes: "I am very glad to honor Sean Halpin's memory by establishing this scholarship and helping an LGBT law student pay for law school. I hope this student will honor Sean's memory by doing public interest or pro bono work after graduating."

Larry has also organized gay night events at the 76ers, Flyers and Camden Riversharks, with the legal and other professional communities. He also organized and coordinated a national meeting in Philadelphia for Outsports.com, a national website for LGBT sports fans and LGBT athletes, raising awareness of the legal community in these gatherings.

Larry is a very proud and dynamic graduate of Temple Law and is committed to pursuing diversity in the law school and its community. Larry graduated in 1994 from the evening division of Temple University School of Law, attending law school while working full-time, and

obtained his undergraduate Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Temple University.

Larry proudly extends his leadership and promotion of diversity in his role on the executive board of the Temple Law Alumni Association, where he currently serves as Vice President. Larry helped organize the first AIDS Walk team at Temple Law in the early 1990's. He served as a leader on the first Temple Law Alumni Association Executive Board Diversity Committee, which developed criteria and chose the first recipient of its Diversity Award. He wrote and was awarded several small grants for Temple Law Alumni Association to hold events for LGBT, racial minority and female alumni. In the early 1990s, he brought attorney Michael Greenberg to speak at Temple Law to talk to law students about his life experience as a Philadelphia lawyer living with AIDS. This year Larry helped plan and moderated a panel discussion, "Bullying Later in Life," at Temple Law's full-day 2013 symposium on bullying.

A strong believer in mentoring, Larry has served as career counselor, relationship builder and mentor to many law students and young LGBT attorneys, developing the next generation of advocates. He is a strong advocate for pro bono service, training attorneys to serve LGBT seniors and others in need, providing direct services to low-income members of the LGBT community, and passionately encouraging others to serve.

Larry's professional life in the law for the past two decades years has been exclusively focused on nonprofit service and access to justice, sacrificing much in the way of personal financial gain to serve disenfranchised communities. He currently serves as Director of Development and Finance at SeniorLAW Center, a nonprofit organization which protects the rights of older Pennsylvanians through legal representation, education and advocacy. Larry joined SeniorLAW Center in November 2003, and has been instrumental in highlighting the needs and challenges of LGBT and minority seniors, and helping to create and strengthen services to meet their legal needs. Larry previously served as Associate Director at the AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania for eight years, where he managed agency finances and operations, as well as assisting clients and conducting trainings on legal issues for social service and health care providers.

Larry lives his passion -- of service and commitment to diverse communities. His career and life are focused not on personal financial gain, but on changing the world, righting wrongs and promoting the very ideals of the TLAA Diversity Leadership Award.

Throughout the entirety of Larry's life, he has demonstrated extraordinary commitment to diversity and embraces it and lives it fully in all aspects of his life, well beyond his professional career.

Larry recognizes the importance of age in our discussion of diversity and that ageism had a harsh impact on seniors in many minority and low-income communities. He serves as a leader and board member of the DMH Fund, established in 2004 to fund a variety of programs that fight prejudice and discrimination, foster education about HIV/AIDS, and deliver services to youth, seniors, and diverse constituencies within the LGBT community in the Philadelphia region. Larry helped the DMH Fund develop and obtain funding for *the country's first* affordable

housing facility for LGBT seniors, an extraordinary accomplishment for Philadelphia and the nation.

Larry was a founding member of Philadelphia's LGBT Elder Initiative (LGBTEI), a grass-roots organization committed to ensuring that LGBT older adults have rights and opportunities to live vibrant, creative and mutually supportive lives and a national model. The mission of the LGBTEI is to foster and advocate for services and resources that are competent, culturally sensitive, inclusive and responsive to the needs of LGBT elders in the Delaware Valley and beyond. Members of the Elder Initiative are consumers, aging services providers, LGBT services providers and community groups and organizations of all types. He also serves on Philadelphia Health Management Corporation's LGBT Older Adult advisory board.

Even though his daily work life is focused on service to others, Larry also volunteers with many other nonprofit organizations. He has been a key volunteer for the AIDS Fund at their monthly Gay Bingo fundraiser for over ten years and was recognized with the Volunteer of the Year award at Black Tie Gay Bingo in 2007. He helps train others to perform pro bono service, has participated in legal clinics at William Way Community Center, and helped staff the volunteer Gay Switchboard telephone referral and counseling service.

Without ego and with great passion, Larry Felzer's activism, leadership, partnership, creativity and vision have made a sustained and powerful contribution to diversity, equality, inclusion and justice. He makes us proud to be Philadelphia lawyers and we believe would make this committee and Temple Law and its excellent alumni and faculty proud as the recipient of this excellent honor.

Please find attached 9 letters of support for this nomination:

1. **Leaders of the Philadelphia Public Interest Law Community:** Joseph A. Sullivan, Esq., Special Counsel and Director of Pro Bono Programs, Pepper Hamilton, LLP; Judith Bernstein-Baker, Esq., Executive Director, HIAS Pennsylvania; Catherine C. Carr, Esq., Executive Director, Community Legal Services; Frank Cervone, Esq., Executive Director, Support Center for Child Advocates; Amara Chaudhry, Civil Rights Director, Council on American Islamic Relations PA; Jennifer Clarke, Esq., Executive Director, Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia; Lynn Marks, Esq., Executive Director, Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts; Louis Rulli, Esq., Practice Professor of Law and Director of Clinical Programs, University of Pennsylvania Law School; Anita Santos Singh, Esq., Executive Director, Philadelphia Legal Assistance
2. **Teresa Cavenagh, Esq.,** Duane Morris LLP
3. **Shari Odenheimer, Esq.,** Blank Rome LLP
4. **Ronald Shaffer, Esq.,** Fox Rothschild LLP
5. **Wendy Bookler, Esq.,** SeniorLAW Center

6. **Diane Menio, MS**, Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly
7. **Mark Segal**, DMH Fund, Philadelphia Gay News
8. **Paul Steinke**, Reading Terminal Market
9. **Robb Reichard**, AIDS Fund
10. **Honorable Dan Anders**, Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas (sent separately)

I would be pleased to provide any additional information desired by the Award Committee. Thank you for your leadership and your consideration of this nomination.

Very truly yours,



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