

# NGLTF honors three GLBT allies; VP Gore attends

by Mark F. Johnson  
Special to Q-Notes

WASHINGTON, DC—Vice President Al Gore addressed a crowd of about 300 people at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's eighth annual "Honoring Our Allies" reception September 15 in Washington, DC. The annual event honors those who make an extraordinary contribution to the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) community.

In his remarks, the Vice President reaffirmed his commitment to fight against discrimination faced by members of the GLBT community. He also told the crowd that in addition to having a seat at the table, "everybody's got to realize that as full members of the American family, it's your table too."

The Vice President came to pay tribute to Coretta Scott King, the founder and former chairman, president and chief executive officer of The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-violent Social Change in Atlanta; John Sweeney, president of the AFL-CIO; and the Mautner Project, a health services organization for lesbians with cancer. All three were recipients of the 1997 Honoring Our Allies award.

Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) introduced Mrs. King and renewed his commitment to pushing for passage of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA).

In her acceptance remarks, Mrs. King said, "I accept this award as a reaffirmation of my commitment to carry forward the unfinished work of my husband, Martin Luther King, Jr. My husband understood that all forms of discrimination and persecution were unjust and unacceptable for a great democracy. He believed that none of us could be free until all of us were free, that a person of conscience had no alternative but to defend the human rights of all people." She continued, "I want to reaffirm my determination to secure the fullest protection of the law for all working people, regardless of their sexual orientation...it is right, just and good for America."

Mrs. King also acknowledged the contributions gay men and lesbians have historically made to the civil rights movement. "Many of these courageous men and women were fighting for my freedom at a time when they could find few voices for their own, and I will always remember and honor their contributions," she said. "It has been encouraging to see the growing participation of people of color in the leadership ranks of the lesbian and gay freedom struggle and I urge you to continue making this movement a model of diversity."

Remarking on the criticism she receives for speaking out against discrimination based on sexual orientation, Mrs. King said, "I still hear from people who claim to be followers of Martin Luther King, Jr., but who think I should be silent about the human rights concerns of gays and lesbians. All I can do is tell these folks that the civil rights movement that I believe in thrives on unity and inclusion, not division and exclusion. All of us who oppose discrimination and support equal rights should stand together to resist every attempt to restrict civil rights in this country."

NGLTF Executive Director Kerry Lobel supported Mrs. King's comments, saying, "The Right continues its attempts to pit people of color against the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. As we witnessed tonight, efforts to drive a wedge between us do not work. We stand united in our efforts to move forward a progressive agenda based on our shared values of justice, fairness and inclusion."

Echoing similar sentiments, Vice President Gore remarked that gays and lesbians "certainly have my commitment to work as hard as I can" to stop anti-gay hate crimes, find a cure for AIDS and end workplace discrimination. The Vice President, who was well-received by the crowd, also vowed to ensure gay and lesbian issues continue to have a place on the agenda of this administration. Gore reiterated the administration's commitment to combat hate crimes against members of minority groups, including the GLBT community. He spoke about the upcoming White House conference scheduled for November 10 which is intended to focus attention on these acts of violence and ways to prevent them.

"Some of the greatest challenges we face are not challenges of law but challenges of the heart," said the Vice President. "Please be assured, you certainly have my commitment to work as hard as I can until the day we do reach those goals."

Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice president of the AFL-CIO accepted the award for Mr. Sweeney. Chavez-Thompson, the highest ranking woman of color in the labor movement said, "your destiny and our destiny are linked." Recalling an old Woody Guthrie song, she said "this land wasn't made for the bigots who claim that their families and their marriages are threatened by your families and your marriages. This land was made for you and me to live with dignity and security and equality and hope." ▼

## the *Cove* Lounge & Club

Spartanburg's Newest & Upstate South Carolina's Finest Dance Bar!

Open 7 nights a week at 8:00 pm

Open Sundays at 3:00 pm with Happy Hour from 4:00-8:00pm

Shows every  
Saturday Night!



9112 Greenville Hwy.  
(Behind Lowe's Body Shop  
2 miles south of Westgate Mall)  
A Private Club  
Guests call ahead for Arrangements  
(864) 576-COVE  
(864) 576-2683



### Sir Speedy Printing

Fast, Friendly and Courteous Service

- Printing • Typesetting • High Speed Copying • Binding • Notary Public • Invitations • Laminating • Resumes • Business Cards • Full Color Copies • Rubber Stamps • Union Announcements • Much Much More!

1400 East Morehead Street  
Charlotte, NC 28204  
(704) 375-8349 / FAX (704) 342-1066  
Mon-Fri 8:30-5:30 Sat 10:00-2:00

"DAMMIT, JANET!  
IT'S A HALLOWEEN PARTY!"

Sponsored By The Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Charlotte

Friday October 31, 1997  
Holiday Inn City Center  
230 N. College Street  
Tickets \$15 per person  
\$25 per Couple  
9:00 PM until 1:30 AM  
Costume Contest & 50/50 Raffle

## Drugs - Depression - Anxiety

They Were the Best of Friends  
It Was the Worst of Times

Pride and Solutions is the nation's leading provider of mental health and addictions treatment to the lesbian, gay and bisexual communities. We're also HIV/AIDS-related stress, depression and grief specialists.

From coast to coast, our centers offer a safe, personalized, professional and tranquil atmosphere to address the issues that effect your life.

Whether it's the company you keep, the behaviors you've struggled with or the overwhelming sense of helplessness - we have the solutions.

Better times could be just a phone call away.

Call Us Today  
1-800-54-PRIDE  
Medicare and Most Insurance Accepted

PRIDE INSTITUTE AT SOLUTIONS

Los Angeles (three facilities)  
New York Area  
Washington, D.C.

Photo: Martin Ryter

### Pride Institute at Solutions