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Senator Ricardo Lara  
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Assemblymember Tom Ammiano  
Assemblymember Susan Talamantes Eggman



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## CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER (LGBT) CAUCUS

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **LGBT Caucus Celebrates June 2014 as LGBT Pride Month And Honors Outstanding LGBT Californians**

**SACRAMENTO, CA** – The California Legislative Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Caucus celebrates June 2014 as LGBT Pride Month with the adoption of House Resolution 43 in the Assembly and Senate Resolution 49.

“Today we recognize 10 individuals that are continuing to make a difference in California and around the country,” said Assemblymember Richard S. Gordon (Menlo Park), chair of the LGBT Caucus. “This year’s theme ‘*Standing On The Shoulders...*,’ honors the leaders past and present who pave the way for the leaders in the future of the LGBT community.”

45 years ago this month, patrons at the Stonewall Inn in New York City protested against the constant police raids of their gay bar, sparking three days of riots.

Exactly one year after the Stonewall Riots, the LGBT community began to celebrate the anniversary of this momentous event which brought widespread attention to the LGBT struggle for equality against discriminatory laws and policies. This month marks not only 45 years since the Stonewall protests, but also the one year anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision to strike down Proposition 8 and the Defense of Marriage Act. This month, millions of people in cities here in California and all over the world celebrate the 45th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots that gave birth to the modern LGBT civil rights movement.

“Our community today stands on the shoulders of leaders past and present, like Harvey Milk, Sylvia Rivera, Laverne Cox, Janet Mock, Jazzie Collins, Masen Davis, and all others who take a stand against prejudice and discrimination and stand for equality and justice.”

This year’s honorees include:

- Donna Brown & Colleen Foster – Stockton LGBT Community Leaders
- Azature – Fashion and Jewelry Designer
- Todd Gloria – San Diego City Council President
- Kate Kendell – Executive Director, National Center for Lesbian Rights
- George Takei – Actor, Writer, and Civil Rights Advocate
- Jewels – Long Beach LGBT Community Leader
- Bernard Mayes – Founder, San Francisco Suicide Prevention Hotline, LGBT Advocate
- Tracie Jada O’Brien – Transgender and HIV Activist
- Rick Welts – President and COO, Golden State Warriors

The individual biographies of today’s honorees are found below:

## **DONNA BROWN & COLLEEN FOSTER**

### **Excellence in Community Service**

Donna Brown and Colleen Foster have long been active in community and political life of Stockton. A decade apart, each served as President of the local League of Women Voters. Donna served on the Stockton Arts Commission while Colleen was an inaugural member of Stockton's Public Art Committee. Donna co-founded the Good Government Group which seeks out well qualified candidates for local public office and provides them with training and information on a wide range of local issues. After retiring – Donna as Deputy City Manager for the City of Stockton and Colleen as Director of the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library – formed a campaign consulting partnership to help get good candidates elected to local nonpartisan office. Both Donna and Colleen were early members of the Stockton Stonewall Democratic Club, an LGBT political organization and both are on the Advisory Board of the San Joaquin Pride Center. Partners for 32 years, Donna and Colleen were married in October 2013.

## **AZATURE**

### **Excellence in Fashion & Jewelry Design**

Azature has distinguished himself as a fashion force after his completion at Parsons School of Design, working with design world legends including Richard Tyler, stylist Andrea Lieberman, Alexander McQueen and Dior. The New York Daily News named Azature one of "fashion's soon-to-be-stars". As the premier black-diamond-focused designer, Azature is dedicated to providing his clients with high-quality, conflict-free gems. With clientele ranging from royalty to Hollywood stars and musicians including Madonna, Kelly Osbourne, Jennifer Lopez, Rihanna, Fergie, Britney Spears, Miley Cyrus, Scarlett Johansson and Beyonce wearing his exclusive one of a kind designs and nail polish, it is no wonder why AZATURE remains the Black Diamond King.

## **TODD GLORIA**

### **Excellence in Public Service**

Todd Gloria is an openly gay native San Diegan, third generation resident of District Three, and a dedicated public servant. Todd is the President of the San Diego City Council and represents the Third Council District. Todd also served as the Interim Mayor of the City of San Diego from August 30, 2013 until March 3, 2014. Since being elected Councilmember in 2008, Todd has championed increased infrastructure investment, resulting in miles of smoother roads, subsequently coining the term "sexy streets." He also led the way for San Diego's first permanent year-round homeless service center and is a leading advocate for transportation options including a stronger public transit system and pedestrian and bicycle projects, and authored Proposition C, which updated the City's veterans hiring policy. In 2013, Todd was one of 24 individuals chosen for the Aspen Institute's Rodel Fellowship Program for Public Leadership, recognizing him as one of the nation's most promising young leaders in American government.

## **KATE KENDELL**

### **Excellence in Community and Public Service**

Kate grew up Mormon in Utah and received her J.D. degree from the University Of Utah College Of Law in 1988. After a few years as a corporate attorney she was named the first staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union of Utah. In this capacity, she oversaw the legal department of ACLU of Utah and directly litigated many high-profile cases focusing on all aspects of civil liberties, including reproductive rights, prisoners' rights, church/state conflicts, free speech, and the rights of LGBT people. In 1994 she accepted the position as Legal Director with the National Center for Lesbian Rights and made the move to San Francisco. In 1996 Kate

was named NCLR's Executive Director and has served as the primary spokesperson for the organization ever since.

### **GEORGE TAKEI**

#### **Excellence in Arts, Media, Entertainment, Community and Public Service**

George Takei is a Japanese American who was interned in two U.S. internment camps during World War II. He is an actor, author, activist, social media power and champion of human right issues and social justice. The openly gay Takei has served as the spokesperson for the Human Rights Campaign "Coming Out Project," and was cultural affairs chairman of the Japanese American Citizens League. He was appointed to the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission by former President Clinton and the government of Japan awarded Takei the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, for his contribution to U.S. - Japanese relations. In 2007, Asteroid 7307 Takei, located between Mars and Jupiter, was named in the performer's honor in appreciation for his social work. Takei currently lives in Los Angeles with his husband Brad Takei. They were married at the Japanese American National Museum in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, on Sept. 14, 2008.

### **JEWELS**

#### **Excellence in Entertainment and Community Service**

For over a decade, wildly popular entertainer and personality JEWELS has been proud to call Long Beach her home. Jewels produces and hosts dozens of events, shows, and fundraisers throughout all of Southern California, but her heart belongs to Long Beach. And with 14 years in drag under her belt (and her many, many wigs), it's safe to say that Jewels is Long Beach's one and only true queen. In 2012, Jewels had the distinct honor of being named one of LB Post's "40 Under 40." Just recently, Jewels was nominated as one of the top "Movers and Shakers" of Long Beach's LGBT community, all of whom are featured in GetOutLB's "Out Faces LB" project as well as the 2013 Community Grand Marshal for the Long Beach Pride Parade.

### **BERNARD MAYES**

#### **Excellence in Education and Community Service**

Bernard Mayes founded San Francisco Suicide Prevention in 1962 and is a tireless advocate for LGBT equality. A former BBC correspondent, radio dramatist and founding chairman of National Public Radio, Bernard chaired the Communications Department at the University of Virginia from 1989-1999. Bernard's Lambda Literary Award-winning autobiography recalls the 1960-70's in San Francisco and is entitled "Escaping God's Closet: The Revelations of a Queer Priest."

### **TRACIE JADA O'BRIEN**

#### **Excellence in Community and Public Service**

Tracie Jada O'Brien's leadership in the transgender community spans several decades of activism in groups such as Transaction, San Diego's first political and social transgender group, which succeeded in repealing the county's cross-dressing laws and created Southern California's first Transgender Women of Color HIV Prevention Campaign, for which Tracie was the cover model in the 1990's.

Tracie went on to become coordinator of San Diego's first Transgender Education, Access and Support Program and to serve as co-chair of its Transgender Day of Empowerment.

Throughout this work, Tracie has focused on the enormous disparities in resources available to the transgender community.

Tracie is a certified counselor and is currently affiliated with the San Diego service providers Mental Health Systems, Stepping Stone, and Family Health Centers.

### **RICK WELTS**

#### **Excellence in Sports**

One of the most respected business executives in the NBA, with almost 40 years of experience in the league, Rick Welts is currently in his third season as president and chief operating officer of the Golden State Warriors. Welts, 61, owns an impressive and all-encompassing résumé that includes a myriad of different capacities spanning virtually every level of an NBA operation. In May of 2011, in a front page story in the New York Times, Welts became the highest ranking executive in men's professional team sports to publicly acknowledge he is gay. He was presented with a United States Tennis Association 2011 ICON Award at the US Open in New York City, an award that recognizes and celebrates those who have had a positive impact on diversity and inclusion in the sports industry and society. In October 2011, he was honored with GLSEN's (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network) Respect Award, which honors those who have made a difference in the areas of diversity and inclusion.

Originally formed in 2002, the LGBT Caucus serves as a forum for the California Legislature to discuss issues that affect LGBT Californians and to further the goal of equality and justice for all residents in the State. Comprised of both Senate and Assembly members, the LGBT Caucus members include: Speaker Toni G. Atkins, Assemblymembers Richard S. Gordon (Chair), Tom Ammiano, Susan Talamantes Eggman, Speaker Emeritus John A. Pérez; Senators Cathleen Galgiani, Ricardo Lara, and Mark Leno. The Caucus' formation made California the first state in the country to recognize an official caucus of openly-LGBT state legislators.

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