



**October 9, 2009**

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates is proud to announce the winners of its prestigious workplace awards, presented Thursday night, Oct. 8, 2009, at the annual awards dinner celebration.

The Out & Equal Workplace Awards — known as “the Outies” — are among the most sought-after honors, recognizing both individuals and organizations that are leaders in advancing equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in America’s workplaces.

"We have accomplished so much in our move toward fully equitable workplaces, and this year is even more significant and special," said Out & Equal Executive Director Selisse Berry. "Not only did we recognize and honor the stewards of workplace equality, but we also celebrated the 10th anniversary of these very special awards. So much progress has been made in corporations across the country since we began presenting the Outies, and we will continue progress as we enter our second decade."

Through the Outies, Out & Equal provides the business and LGBT communities with examples of innovative approaches and proven successes to help create safe and equitable workplaces for the world's LGBT workforce. The award winners were selected from a pool of highly qualified finalists.

The awards — given in five categories — were presented at the Out & Equal Workplace Summit, the world's premier conference on LGBT workplace equality. The 2009 Workplace Summit began on Oct. 6 at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort and concludes today.

#### **The Trailblazer Award**

The Trailblazer Award recognizes an LGBT person who has made a significant contribution to advancing workplace equality by helping improve their own workplace or contributing to equality nationally.

#### **Winner is:**

- **Richard Clark**, managing director-investor relations at Accenture

#### **The Champion Award**

The Champion Award recognizes a non-LGBT person who has played a pivotal role in championing equal treatment of LGBT employees on the job. This individual will have demonstrated a significant commitment to LGBT workplace rights.

**Winner is:**

- **Randy Kammer**, vice president, regulatory affairs and public policy at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida

**The LGBT ERG of the Year Award**

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Employee Resource Group of the Year Award recognizes a particular ERG, sometimes referred to as a business group or network, with a proven track record of success in advocating for LGBT equal rights in its own workplace.

**Winners are (tie):**

- GM PLUS (General Motors' People Like Us)
- GLIFAA (U.S. Department of State and USAID)

**Significant Achievement Award**

The Significant Achievement Award recognizes an employer that has made significant strides in advancing a fair and equitable workplace for its LGBT employees.

**Winner is:**

- Salt Lake City Corporation

**The Workplace Excellence Award**

The Workplace Excellence Award recognizes an employer that has a historic and ongoing commitment to pursuing and executing workplace equality for LGBT employees, continually raising the bar of workplace equality for others to follow.

**Winner is:**

- Sun Microsystems

Howard Solomon, software regional alliances manager at Sun Microsystems, accepted the Workplace Excellence Award for the corporation, likening it to a lifetime achievement award that honors the numerous LGBT policies that have been set in place over the last 27 years.

"I wish to thank Out & Equal for encouraging us to make the world a better place for GLBT employees, Sun Microsystems for being the progressive workplace it is and being an incubator for good ideas both technologically and socially, the Awards Committee and Judges," said Solomon, chair of Gays, Lesbians and Friends at Sun. "But mostly, I want to acknowledge the brave and dedicated men and women of Sun Microsystems who have worked to make GLBT equality at Sun a priority. I stand on some of their shoulders and some of them stand on mine. That is how progress is made: collectively and relentlessly over time."

During the awards ceremony, Richard Clark, managing director of investor relations at Accenture and winner of the Trailblazer Award, said he would not have won if it weren't for Accenture, "a company truly committed to the broadest definition of inclusion and diversity."

"My career began, developed and continues at Accenture and, in 1987, I came out as the first and only out LGBT employee in the company's 1,000 person Boston office," Clark said. "Little did I know then, but that was the start of my 20+ year journey to work for LGBT diversity and equality in the workplace. Along the way, I've worked with gifted, thoughtful, and dedicated people."

"To those of us here, it's obvious that any business built on people must value workplace equality and diversity to maximize its performance. Although that understanding is not universally embraced, however, I'm proud to say that Accenture continues to be recognized for having inclusion and diversity intrinsic to what it is as a company. And I am one of many who will confirm that Accenture is committed to its employees and their families regardless of how anyone chooses to define family."

Randy Kammer, vice president of regulatory affairs and public policy at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, said during her Champion Award acceptance speech that she strives every day to make others realize the need for equality.

"Thank for this exceptional honor," Kammer said. "All of the finalists deserve this recognition, so I am humbled by this award. The real honor, in my mind, is to have the privilege to stand arm in arm with members of the LGBT community in their struggle for their civil rights. The courage and resilience that I have seen demonstrated is truly inspiring."

People often ask why I am such a passionate ally. My passion comes from my spiritual belief that we are put on earth to do good things and what can be more important than to help people get the fundamental rights and respect that they deserve? My goal is to help create an environment where people are free to be who they are without fear."

**Press Contacts:** Erik Olvera | 415-694-6512 | [eolvera@outandequal.org](mailto:eolvera@outandequal.org)