



## **EMBARGO UNTIL JUNE 5, 2009**

**PRESS CONTACT:** John S. Shore  
**BOARD VOLUNTEER**  
Shore Public Relations  
214-352-5111 or 214-738-1516  
jshore@shorepr.com

### **STEVE ATKINSON ANNOUNCED AS 2009 BLACK TIE DINNER KUCHLING HUMANITARIAN AWARD RECIPIENT**

DALLAS (June 5, 2009) —The Black Tie Dinner Board of Directors announced that activist and community volunteer Steve Atkinson will be this year's recipient of the prestigious Kuchling Humanitarian Award.

Each year since 1983, the Black Tie Dinner Board of Directors has awarded the Kuchling Humanitarian Award to local individuals who have made extraordinary gifts of their time and talents on behalf of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. Last year's recipients were Rebecca Covell and Philip Johnson.

The award will be presented on October 3, 2009 at the Sheraton Dallas Hotel. The theme for this year's dinner is "Courage. Hope. Inspiration." - a theme that resonates with Steve.

"Steve is unselfish in his commitment to work for full equality for GLBT individuals," said Black Tie Dinner Co-Chair Laurie Foley. "Without a doubt, Steve's life reflects the ideals of the Kuchling Humanitarian Award."

"Acting entirely in a volunteer capacity, Steve has devoted his life to the betterment of the GLBT community and has achieved superior results," Foley said.

Atkinson has served as a shining example of leadership for more than 16 years. From walking the streets of Dallas for political campaigns or holding a placard to protest injustice, he has worked tirelessly to move the GLBT community toward full equality at the local, state and national levels.

Locally, Atkinson has led the Lesbian/Gay Political Coalition of Dallas; Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance and Leadership Lambda. Additionally, Atkinson has helped raise funds for the community as a past board member of Black Tie Dinner, a committee chair for AIDS Lifewalk, and the chair for the 2009 AIDS Interfaith Bloomin' Ball. Since 2002, he has served in numerous positions on the Human Rights Campaign's local steering committee.

"Steve has made an enormous difference over the years to our LGBT community - in Dallas, in Texas and on a national level. He is one of those rare individuals who has the passion to drive change and the organizational skills to ensure his leadership actions are effective. Steve's

**BLACK TIE DINNER, INC.**

3878 OAK LAWN SUITE 100-B #321 DALLAS, TEXAS 75219 972-733-9200 WWW.BLACKTIE.ORG



dedication to our community continues to motivate and inspire us.” said Louise Young a long-time friend of Steve Atkinson.

On a statewide level, Atkinson served as co-chair for Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas (now Equality Texas) and has worked on numerous legislative issues affecting the GLBT community.

"Steve has been a stellar volunteer for the Human Rights Campaign both locally and nationally. He is politically astute and understands what are the important issues facing our community and how we move from point "A" to point "B" to reach our desired goals." said Anne Fay, National Co-Chair of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. "Because Steve has been so intimately involved with other local and state GLBT organizations, HRC has benefited and ultimately has delivered more targeted results. We are all thrilled that Steve is being recognized as the consummate advocate by Black Tie Dinner."

Nationally, Atkinson is co-chair of HRC's Board of Governors. Before serving as co-chair, he was Lobby Day Task Force co-chair and served on the nominations committee, public policy committee, Board of Governors executive committee and performance management committee. Atkinson is a realtor at Keller Williams Realty in Dallas. He and his partner of 20 years, Ted Kincaid, a local artist, were married in California in July 2008.

"I am honored and humbled to have my volunteer work recognized with the Kuchling Award." said 2009 Kuchling Humanitarian Award Recipient Steve Atkinson. "Our GLBT Community means so much to me, and I am so proud of it, while always mindful of the many heroes who blazed the trails for us. I am greatly appreciative of those I have worked with over the years in various organizations. Black Tie Dinner is a gem in our community, and I am grateful to be a part of it in this incredible way this year."

"We are so pleased to present Steve with the 2009 Kuchling Humanitarian Award," said Black Tie Dinner Co-Chair Ron Guillard. "Steve's work has truly improved life for GLBT individuals in Dallas. His efforts led to the adoption of nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policies at Dallas Area Rapid Transit, and the City of Dallas which benefit all Dallas residents, as well as specific protections for students and faculty of the Dallas Independent School District."

"Steve was one of the leading organizers to establish nondiscrimination ordinances to provide protections for the GLBT community employed by these public entities," Guillard said. "Though this process took years to accomplish, Steve never gave up hope, and succeeded at what many were certain was a lost cause."

### **About Black Tie Dinner**

Black Tie Dinner, Inc. is a non-profit organization that raises funds for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender supportive organizations through a premier event of empowerment, education and entertainment in partnership with the community. The event has headlined local and national celebrities and leaders such as Maya Angelou, Alan Cumming, Geena Davis, Goldie Hawn, Governor Ann Richards, Sharon Stone, Lily Tomlin, Martin Sheen

BLACK TIE DINNER, INC.

3878 OAK LAWN SUITE 100-B #321 DALLAS, TEXAS 75219 972-733-9200 WWW.BLACKTIE.ORG



and most recently, Kenneth Cole. Black Tie Dinner began in Dallas in 1982 to help support the Human Rights Campaign with 140 guests in attendance at the first dinner, which raised \$6,000.

In 2008, Black Tie Dinner distributed \$1.19 million to 18 local beneficiaries and the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. In its 27-year history, Black Tie Dinner has distributed nearly \$13 million.

The 2009 Black Tie Dinner will be held at the Sheraton Dallas Hotel October 3, 2009. This year's car raffle is the All-New Mercedes-Benz 2010 GLK350 SUV graciously underwritten by Silver Sponsor Park Place Motorcars Bedford and Park Place Motorcars Dallas. Raffle tickets, priced at \$100 each, may be purchased from any of the 19 local beneficiaries, DFW Federal Club members, HRC Governing and Steering committee members, or the Black Tie Dinner Board of Directors and Advisory members. For more information about Black Tie Dinner, the car raffle or this year's event, call 972-733-9200, ext. 1 or visit [www.blacktie.org](http://www.blacktie.org).

###

BLACK TIE DINNER, INC.

3878 OAK LAWN SUITE 100-B #321 DALLAS, TEXAS 75219 972-733-9200 WWW.BLACKTIE.ORG