

GLBT Pride/Twin Cities



Pride Release Press

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Date: 31 March 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grand Marshal's Ball Saturday April 16 honors 2005 Grand Marshal Richard LaFortune

MINNEAPOLIS, MN - GLBT Pride/Twin Cities is pleased to announce that the 2005 Grand Marshal's Ball will take place on Saturday, April 16 at Solera in Downtown Minneapolis. The event will honor 2005 Grand Marshal Richard LaFortune. Mr. LaFortune has been a pioneering activist for GLBT Native American people, particularly in regard to the Yupiit Nation (Yupik Eskimo).

The Ball will feature a full dinner, entertainment, a silent auction and a brief awards program. Tickets are now on sale for \$35, which includes dinner, at Rainbow Road and Euphoria Nightclub, both in Minneapolis, and online at Pride's website (www.tcpride.org).

Daniel Mendez, one of the organizers of the event, said, "as warm weather is upon us, it is a reminder that Pride is just two months away. The Grand Marshal's Ball is a great way to partake in good food and dancing with friends and also gives us a chance share upcoming events and plans for Pride 2005."

LaFortune began organizing within the Native American GLBT community in Minnesota in the mid-1980s and helped launch the International Two Spirit Gatherings in 1988. In addition, he was a founding council member of American Indian Gays and Lesbian in Minneapolis, now known as Minnesota Two Spirits. He served as Director of Training with the National Native American AIDS Prevention Center, served on the Governor's Task for Gay and Lesbian Minnesotans, and in the early 1990s he served on the founding Board of Directors of the OUT Fund for Gay and Lesbian Liberation of the Funding Exchange in New York.

Pride President Jim Kelley said, "We are really pleased to be able to honor someone who has been so active in our community over such a long period of time. Richard's contributions to the two spirit community have been exceptional."

Celebrating its 33rd year in 2005, GLBT Pride/Twin Cities, the organizer of the Twin Cities Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual-Transgender (GLBT) Pride Celebration, began in 1972 with a small group of activists meeting for a picnic in Minneapolis' Loring Park and a short march down Nicollet Mall. Over the intervening years, the Twin Cities Pride Celebration has grown to be the largest GLBT Pride in the region and 3rd largest in the United States,

with an estimated combined attendance of nearly 400,000 people at six events. GLBT Pride/Twin Cities is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization.

It is the mission of GLBT Pride/Twin Cities to commemorate and celebrate our diverse heritage, to inspire the achievement of equality and challenge discrimination.

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