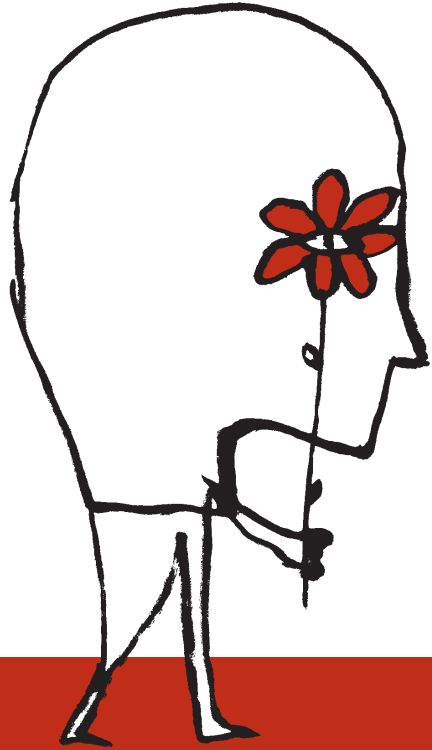


2006 Awards for Action ON HIV/AIDS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

September 28, 2006 Gatineau, Quebec



Canadian
HIV/AIDS
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Réseau
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THE AWARDS FOR ACTION ON HIV/AIDS AND HUMAN RIGHTS WERE ESTABLISHED IN 2002 BY THE CANADIAN HIV/AIDS LEGAL NETWORK AND HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH. THE AWARDS HIGHLIGHT OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS THAT DECREASE VULNERABILITY TO HIV/AIDS AND PROTECT THE RIGHTS AND DIGNITY OF THOSE INFECTED AND AFFECTED. Recognizing excellence and long-term commitment to work having a direct impact on HIV/AIDS and human rights issues – in particular work that is of direct relevance to marginalized individuals and communities – an award is presented annually to one Canadian and one international recipient.

2006 Canadian Recipient: Stella

Stella is a community-based organization established and run by and for sex workers in Montréal. Since 1995, Stella has worked to improve the quality of life and working conditions of sex workers, while promoting their health and respecting their human rights.

Stella serves women, transvestites and transsexuals, and maintains an ongoing presence in sex work venues, including streets, escort agencies, massage parlours and strip bars. Stella also runs a phone line, medical and legal clinics and visits to sex workers in prison.

With the participation of sex workers, Stella develops and distributes information and prevention tools, such as a list of bad clients and assaulters, the *XXX Guide* and the *Dope Guide*. Over the years, Stella has developed a significant practise of defending rights and advocating against the criminalization of sex workers' lives and livelihood.

In 2005, Stella hosted Forum XXX, an international gathering of 250 sex workers. In August 2006, Stella played an important role in organizing sex work activities at the XVI International AIDS Conference in Toronto.

2006 International Recipient: Gareth Williams

Squarely facing off with one of the most hostile and violent societies towards lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, activist Gareth Williams is a leading voice for the rights of sexual minorities in Jamaica and the English-speaking Caribbean.

As the lead activist and main fundraiser for the Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays (J-FLAG), Mr. Williams spearheads an emergency support program that provides material care and support for victims of homophobic violence, including assistance with taking their cases through the justice system. The program brought about a strategy for young gay and bisexual men that received funding from the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria through the Jamaican Ministry of Health's National HIV/AIDS Control Programme.

Mr. Williams also played a key role in encouraging community members to share their stories with researchers from Human Rights Watch for the 2004 report, *Hated to Death: Homophobia, Violence, and Jamaica's HIV/AIDS Epidemic*.

Against seemingly impossible odds and at frequent risk to his own physical safety, Mr. Williams remains a tireless advocate for the human rights struggles of those affected by HIV in Jamaica. His commitment to rights as lived realities has ensured that the spectre of discrimination does not go unchallenged.

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