

OUR MOVEMENT HERO



KEVIN M. CATHCART

EVERY YEAR FOR TWO DECADES, the National LGBT Bar Association has bestowed its highest honor, the Dan Bradley Award, on a member of the LGBT legal community who has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of LGBT rights and those of people living with HIV.

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO DESCRIBE HOW MUCH OUR MOVEMENT OWES JON DAVIDSON.

This year, Lambda Legal was extremely proud to learn that Jon Davidson, our Legal Director, was chosen to receive the award.

When Jon arrived at Lambda Legal in 1995, he was already a seasoned and distinguished advocate. Educated at Stanford and Yale Law School, Jon had headed the Lesbian and Gay Rights Project of the ACLU of Southern California. Before then, he was a partner at Irell & Manella, one of Los Angeles' leading law firms, where he specialized in media and entertainment litigation.

At Lambda Legal, Jon has helped to make history. He represented Derek Henkle, who suffered severe harassment and abuse from fellow students at his high school in Reno, Nevada. The successful outcome of that case established the

precedent that students have the constitutional right to be open at school about their sexual orientation. It also led to the largest pretrial award ever in such a case, as well as sweeping changes in the school district's policies.

Jon was also lead counsel in lawsuits that successfully forced school boards in Salt Lake City, Utah, and Orange, California, to allow LGBT students and supporters to meet and express themselves on the same terms afforded other students.

Jon's contributions have ranged from helping to secure asylum for LGBT people persecuted in their home countries to stopping HIV-related discrimination and helping win marriage equality in several states. He helped reform antigay practices within the Los Angeles Police Department. He co-drafted AB 205, California's comprehensive Domestic Partner Rights and Responsibilities Act. He authored a friend-of-the-court brief in *Rene v. MGM Grand Hotel* that was instrumental in allowing gay and transgender employees to pursue claims for sexual harassment under federal employment discrimination law.

Jon has also imparted his invaluable, hard-won wisdom to younger legal minds, teaching courses on sexual orientation and HIV-related issues at the University of Southern California Law Center, Loyola Law School, Whittier Law School and UCLA School of Law.

It's impossible to describe how much our movement owes him. He invigorates and enriches the work we do at Lambda Legal with his passion, humility and vibrant wit. It's an honor to call him both colleague and friend.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kevin M. Cathcart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "K" and "C".