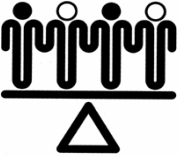


SONOMA COUNTY
COMMISSION
ON HUMAN RIGHTS



Volunteer Center
OF SONOMA COUNTY



• LISTENING FOR A CHANGE •

Present

2008 Reverend James E. Coffee Human Rights Awards
Saturday, January 17, 2009
1:00 – 5:00 PM

Redwood Credit Union Sonoma Community Room

3033 Cleveland Ave., Suite 100
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

The Commission on Human Rights, in partnership with the Volunteer Center of Sonoma County and Listening for a Change, invite you to join us at the annual **Human Rights Awards Celebration** to recognize, honor and celebrate the outstanding contributions made on behalf of human rights in our community. The Human Rights Awards, established in 2004, are named in honor of the Reverend James E. Coffee, Pastor for Community Baptist Church, who has been an admirable role model and has made outstanding contributions on behalf of human rights for our community.

The Awards Celebration will highlight the contributions of: **Dr. Lorna Catford**, Professor at Sonoma State University, for her extraordinary efforts on behalf of autistic families; **Ms. Margo Warnecke Merck**, President of the Board for Community Housing Sonoma County, for her tireless efforts to provide housing for extremely low income individuals with disabilities; the **Gong Family** of G&G Market, who provide work with meaning for those who have developmental disabilities and those who do not speak English; and, the **Committee on the Shelterless**, who provide a therapeutic environment where people have the chance to recover from past trauma and the plight of homelessness. Please see additional information on our awardees on back of this invitation.

Please join us on Saturday, January 17, 2009, at the Redwood Credit Union Sonoma Community Room from 1:00 to 5:00 PM to recognize these outstanding individuals and organizations. There is no charge to attend and light refreshment will be provided, along with entertainment and the awards program.

Thank you to our Sponsors, for their support of the 2008 Human Rights Awards



For more information, contact the Commission on Human Rights at (707) 565-2693 or by e-mail at chr@sonoma-county.org. Please visit our website at www.sonomacountyhumanrightscommission.org

Recognizing Accomplishments in Human Rights

This year, the accomplishments of individuals, organizations and business in the area of Human Rights are recognized in the following categories:

Professional: **Dr. Lorna Catford**, Professor of Psychology, Sonoma State University. Dr. Catford created the Collaborative Autism Training and Support (CATS) Program, providing family support, training, community awareness, education and autism seminars. A growing network of autism experts, agencies and, SSU students participate in this ongoing program, providing much needed support, education and awareness of this often misunderstood disability.

Volunteer: **Margo Warnecke Merck**, President of the Board of Community Housing Sonoma County, is a tireless and visionary volunteer in our community. Ms. Merck has served as Board President for over 10 years and devotes the majority of her time to working for the housing needs of extremely low income people living with disabilities. Ms. Merck continues to position Community Housing Sonoma County in collaborative roles with experienced consultants and non-profit housing developers to plan and develop Permanent Supportive Housing projects for some of our most vulnerable citizens.

Business: For over eight years, the **Gong Family**, owners of G&G Market, has employed those with disabilities and those who do not speak English. The Gong Family has worked to promote an appreciation of diversity in our community by demonstrating that those who are developmentally challenged and those who do not speak English can contribute to the productivity of the workplace and the richness of our community. G&G Market management and staff exemplify going that one step further to ensure that the disabled and non-English speakers are given every opportunity to contribute to the workplace and to our community.

Non-Profit (Non-Profit Organization or Community Group): Founded in 1988, the **Committee on the Shelterless (COTS)** is one of the primary providers of emergency shelter, shared housing, and related services in Sonoma County. At the core of the work done by COTS is respect for the unique value and dignity of each person. COTS provides a complete continuum of support for homeless individuals and families from emergency shelter through proven stability in independent housing. Services provided by COTS include addressing the root causes of homelessness that not only include food and shelter, but education, employment and counseling. COTS strives to end the cycle of homelessness by helping families and adults get homes of their own.

Previous Honorees

2007

John McCue
Marie Sparks
The Pasta King
Social Action Committee of Shomrei Torah
City of Healdsburg Day Labor Center
Migrant Education Region 2
Mehari Haile

2005

Laure Reichel
Shirlee Zane
Becoming Independent
State Farm Insurance Companies
Cloverdale High School FHA/Diversity Club's
Hate Free Campus Project

2006

Karen Erickson
James P. Foster
Joanna Martinez
Rialto Cinemas Lakeside
Community Action Partnership
of Sonoma County
Sarah's Group Homes

2004

Shirley Gordon
Kendra Hasenick
Jesse Love
Listening for a Change
Agilent Technologies