

Winter Party Festival goes 'beyond borders'

February 5, 2007

The 14th Annual Winter Party FestivalSM — one of the world's most renowned annual celebrations for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community — will kick off in Miami on Feb. 28 with new programming for young people, people of faith and transgender people added to its already vibrant mix of events. The theme of this year's festival, which runs to March 5, is "Beyond Borders," and includes world-class dance events with top DJs from six countries.

"'Beyond Borders' reflects not only the international reach of the Winter Party FestivalSM but our rejection of the politics of division and scapegoating that permeates our own country's debate around immigration," said Matt Foreman, executive director of the **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**, which produces the festival. "'Beyond Borders' expresses the fact that, at the end of the day, we are all one people."

The Task Force donates two-thirds of the festival's proceeds to the Dade Community Foundation which, in turn, administers a program that re-grants the money to organizations serving the Miami-Dade LGBT community. Since its inception, the Winter Party has generated more than \$1.5 million for community organizations.

Since assuming responsibility for producing Winter Party FestivalSM in 2005, the Task Force has expanded the festival beyond its dance-oriented roots by adding cultural and entertainment events and expanding the number of events for women. This year's festival adds events for young people, transgender people and people of faith, a tennis tournament and a comedy night.

A BBQ and dance for LGBTQ youth, One Tribe, One Vibe, will debut March 3, at Parrot Jungle Island. The first Winter Party FestivalSM event specifically for the transgender community, Glamour Unleashed, will also take place on March 3 and will feature cocktails, performers and a screening of the new film *Life is a Drag*. Two back-to-back programs for people of faith take place at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral on March 1: Spiritual pioneer John J. McNeill will speak on *Seeking God's Purpose in Our Sexual Lives* at 6 p.m., which will be followed at 8 p.m. by *An Inclusive Spiritual Celebration: Let Justice Roll Down*.

The Festival Committee also hopes to attract more than just the LGBT members of the South Florida community to Winter Party FestivalSM, and one new 2007 event, *Comedy SpotlightSM*, is designed specifically to meet this goal. "We want the festival to be a celebration that unites everyone in the community," says JC Curry, a festival co-chair. "Laughter transcends all barriers, so what better way to bring everyone together than with a comedy event." Emmy winner Leslie Jordan headlines *Comedy SpotlightSM*, which will be presented on March 2 at the Jackie Gleason Theater.

The 2007 Winter Party FestivalSM also includes the launch of a sporting events line-up, with a golf tournament and swim meet on March 3 and the 1st Annual Winter Party Festival Tennis Tournament, running from Feb. 27 to March 3.

Winter Party began in 1994 as a dance party on the beach, and dance events remain a central part of the festival. In keeping with the "Beyond Borders" theme, the Task Force has lined up a roster of DJs from more than six countries, including Australia, Brazil, Italy, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the U.S. Evening events will take place in some of Miami's most popular nightclubs. The festival climax, as always, will be The Beach Party on the sands of South Beach on Sunday, March 4. In 2006, a record-breaking 5,400 guests attended that event.

To view the complete schedule of events, visit: <http://www.winterparty.com/schedule/index.html>.

Two-thirds of the net proceeds from Winter Party Festival SM will be distributed to the Miami-Dade LGBT community through a program administered by the Dade Community Foundation. The remaining one-third of the proceeds will benefit the **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**.