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IGLTA Announces Annual Travel Honors 30th Annual Global Convention celebrates LGBT tourism professionals

Fort Lauderdale, FL (21 February, 2013)—The 30th anniversary Annual Global Convention of the International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association in Chicago (2-4 May) is not only the LGBT tourism industry's premier networking and educational event, but also an opportunity to honor individuals and companies that have improved the landscape of gay and lesbian travel.

The annual awards are selected by the IGLTA board of directors from the association's membership of tourism businesses in more than 80 countries. "These distinguished professionals have raised the bar in our industry in so many ways, from travel marketing and media to supporting Chicago's gay community to placing LGBT visibility at the forefront of Montreal's tourism outreach," said IGLTA Chair Tanya Churchmuch. "As we celebrate a milestone anniversary as an association, it's especially fitting to recognize these individuals, who each have dedicated more than 20 years to making the world more welcoming for LGBT people."

- The Hanns Ebensten Hall of Fame Award: **Charles Lapointe**, President/CEO of Tourisme Montreal, a longstanding advocate for gay tourism in Canada's second-largest city. He has led the tourism bureau since 1989.
- The Chair Award: **Thomas Roth**, President/Founder of Community Marketing, Inc., for helping businesses better understand the LGBT market since 1992.
- Community (based in the IGLTA convention host city/country): **Center on Halsted**, which provides public programs and social services to more than 1,000 LGBTQ people a day. It was founded in 1973 as Gay Horizons, a volunteer-run telephone helpline and meeting place for gays and lesbians.
- Pioneer: **Dee Farrell**, co-director of Rainbow Tourism International, publisher of multiple gay travel sites in Sydney, Australia. She was one of the 25 delegates to attend the 1983 inaugural meeting of IGLTA (then IGTA) in Hollywood, Fla.
- Travel Writer: **Manuela Kay**, CEO of Special Media SDL, Germany's biggest LGBT publishing house, and chief editor of its lesbian title, L-MAG. She has covered LGBT issues since 1986.

For high-res photos, full bios of the honorees, or interview requests, please contact loann.halden@iglta.org. For more information on the Annual Global Convention, please visit www.igltaconvention.org.

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ABOUT US: *IGLTA is the leading member-based global organization dedicated to LGBT tourism. The association represents LGBT and LGBT-friendly accommodations, destinations, service providers, travel agents, tour operators, and events, as well as the LGBT travel consumers they wish to serve. For more information, visit www.iglta.org and follow us at www.facebook.com/IGLTA.*