



## **Backgrounder - The Casey Awards 2010**

### **About the Casey Awards**

In celebration of the life and memory of June Callwood, a founder of Casey House, The Casey Awards annually recognize up to five individuals or organizations who have demonstrated Callwood's lifelong values of pioneering leadership and compassionate commitment on behalf of others. Recipients share Callwood's commitment to volunteerism, collaborative decision-making and her steadfast belief in the dignity and worth of every human being. The Casey Awards are presented annually at SnowBall, Casey House's signature winter fundraising gala.

### **Who is eligible?**

Individuals or organizations whose actions within the fields of HIV/AIDS and or social justice are consistent with the values of June Callwood and Casey House, including pioneering leadership, compassion, respect for the individual, a strong belief in volunteerism, an ability to work collaboratively, and a commitment to social justice.

This year, two recipients are being honoured: **Tony Di Pede** and the **AIDS Committee of Toronto**.

### **2010 Recipient: Tony Di Pede**

For over 20 years, Tony Di Pede has been an outstanding advocate for people and communities who are marginalized because of HIV/AIDS, age, disability or poverty. Diagnosed with HIV in 1989, Tony helped to build the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation (PWA). He has served in key board roles with the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO), the Canadian AIDS Society, Canadian Treatment Action Council, Ontario AIDS Network, Ontario HIV Treatment Network, Fife House and AIDS Action Now!. He was a strong champion of the voices of people living with HIV when helping to organize the Toronto-hosted 2006 International AIDS Conference.

At the former Wellesley Hospital, Di Pede chaired the HIV Community Advisory Panel. Later joining the fight to save the hospital, he was instrumental in creating the Wellesley Institute. With a strong interest in housing and social justice, Di Pede has served as a commissioner of the Ontario Advocacy Commission, and in key board roles with the Drs. Paul and John Reka Centre, the Out of the Cold Resource Centre, and The Wellesley Central Residence Inc., Toronto's first affordable housing designed for seniors and people living with HIV/AIDS. Recognizing Di Pede's instrumental guidance in creating this innovative housing solution, the building was in 2009 named the "Tony Di Pede Affordable Housing Complex."

*It is for Di Pede's remarkable leadership, volunteerism, advocacy, passion and pioneering vision that he is being celebrated with The Casey Award 2010.*

*(more)*



## **2010 Recipient: The AIDS Committee of Toronto**

The AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT) has been a respected leader in the fight against HIV/AIDS for over 25 years. The brainchild of a small group of community activists, ACT was formed on July 18, 1983, in response to the hysteria and misinformation surrounding the emergence of AIDS. Little was known about the disease at the time, but a terrible stigma was attached to those who had it, and almost nothing was being done to help them.

Ever since its humble beginnings above a Kentucky Fried Chicken storefront, ACT has been instrumental in boldly leading the fight against HIV/AIDS in Canada. Responding to the changing demographics and needs of people living with, affected by, and at risk for HIV/AIDS, ACT has also been an important catalyst for the growth of numerous other HIV/AIDS service organizations, including BlackCAP, Voices of Positive Women and Casey House.

Today, ACT continues to spread the message of HIV prevention through education, outreach and community action. ACT also provides free, confidential help to men, women and youth living with HIV/AIDS.

*Casey House is pleased to present the AIDS Committee of Toronto with The Casey Award 2010 for its pioneering activism, advocacy and leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS.*

### **Sponsors, The Casey Awards 2010:**

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### **About Casey House:**

*Founded in 1988, Casey House is an HIV/AIDS specialty hospital with community programming. Our mission: to provide exemplary treatment, support and palliative care for people living with HIV/AIDS, in collaboration with our communities.*

[www.caseyhouse.com](http://www.caseyhouse.com)

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### **For more information or to arrange for an interview:**

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