Obits

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RUSSELL BRADY, 49, died of AIDS November 14. His partner, Rene Hernandez, recalled a trip to Italy the couple took a few months before Brady died. “Russ was in his element,” Hernandez said, referring to Brady’s passion for history. “The scholar in him was shining.” Starting in 1993, Brady worked for the U.S. Health and Human Services’ HIV/AIDS Bureau, evaluating AIDS service delivery models nationwide. Brady was remembered by his HHS colleagues as having a unique blend of “intellect, humor, passion and compassion.”

PEGGY FERRO, 49, a medical worker at San Francisco’s Kaiser Hospital who was infected with HIV by a needle stick in 1989, died of AIDS November 4. Also known as Jane Roe—the pseudonym used in her landmark court case against Kaiser—Ferro’s struggle for better HIV prevention for health workers paid off in 1998 with the passage of California legislation requiring new safety guidelines for hospitals, including one-use-only needles. “Her reputation was far-reaching,” said Assemblyperson Carole Migden. Ferro appeared in two films, *The Real Jane Roe* and a video for the Service Employees International Union training nurses how to fight for safe medical devices. “If you needed someone in your corner, Peggy was the one,” said Ferro’s partner, Cindy Chang.

STEPHEN SMITH, 34, founder of ACT UP/DC and cofounder of the DC-based gay action group Queer Nation, died of AIDS November 16. Nicknamed Little Stevie Sunshine, Smith is remembered for his “unflagging optimism,” said Michael Petrelis, who helped him organize ACT UP/DC in 1989. “Many of us are jaded and cynical, but Stephen never got to that point.” In 1992 Smith helped start the nation’s first cannabis buyers club as well as DC’s pioneer needle-exchange program. “Losing Stephen means an activist era is snuffed out,” Petrelis said.

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