Courage Awards for LGBT Bloggers

November 10, 2009 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

The New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP) held its 13th annual Courage Awards on Monday, November 9.

AVP's mission is "eliminating hate violence, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and HIV-affected communities through counseling, advocacy, organizing, and public education."

Honorees included LGBT bloggers Bil Browning (The Bilerico Project), Joe Jervis (Joe.My.God), Pam Spaulding (Pam's House Blend) and Andy Towle (Towleroad). Also honored were playwright Tony Kushner and law firm Clifford Chance for their efforts.

Michelangelo Signorile presented the award to the LGBT bloggers. Pam Spaulding accepted the award on behalf of the group and read an acceptance speech written by the group. (Click here to watch video, see pics and read more from Pam's blog.)

Here's an excerpt from Signorile's speech about these bloggers:

> It's just extraordinary the tremendous work they do at bringing to light, reflecting to our people, all across the country, millions, who they are, what they're about, and that they're not alone, that there are people with them. They not only reflect and inform and inspire, but they really push the media to get off their asses and cover so many of these stories, particularly the violence, that we see, and activate our people to get out there and protest and focus on it.

Here’s an excerpt from the group’s acceptance speech:

> Because crimes against LGBT people are seldom reported on a national basis, and covered mostly in local papers, if at all, we have a valuable opportunity to raise awareness about how severe and widespread these crimes are, and the frequency at which they occur. As one of the few forums, and perhaps the most effective, that exist right now to communicate these crimes to other gay people and our heterosexual allies, we can inspire them to take action.

I congratulate all four bloggers for a well-deserved honor. We’re fortunate to have them fulfilling their roles as citizen journalists. It’s unfortunate, however, that such roles have become increasingly necessary.

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