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## USF Fundraising Event Honors Work of LGBT Rights Advocates

**Nov. 14, 2008** -- On Nov. 7, the Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF) Fifth Annual Gala Auction and Award Ceremony raised money for students to intern in the public sector, while honoring the work of Shannon Minter, legal director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and Therese Stewart, San Francisco's chief deputy city attorney. Minter and Stewart successfully argued before the California Supreme Court this year that same-sex couples have the right to marry.



**Therese Stewart (left) and Shannon Minter were honored at the PILF Gala Auction and Award Ceremony Nov. 7.**

The event, held in the Kendrick Hall rotunda, raised just over \$50,000 through auction items, registration, a raffle, and sponsorships. This is the largest amount raised in the history of the event. Hundreds of items were donated to the auction, including dinners in many of San Francisco's top restaurants, legal training

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### Other News

**03.30.09** Longshore A Explored by Maritime Event

**03.24.09** Estate Plan Reception Explores C Choices

**03.17.09** Call for Cite Fight Global Warming

### Upcoming Events

**04.3.09** Maritime Law - Long Shore Seminar

The evening's highlight was the award ceremony for Minter and Stewart, who Dean Jeffrey Brand and PILF Co-Chairs Jeff Kaloustian 3L and Freeman exalted as people that make a difference.

"Shannon Minter and Therese Stewart's tenacity and willingness to accept responsibility is an absolutely shining example and I am personally inspired," Kaloustian said.

Despite the Nov. 4 passage of Proposition 8, which amended the California constitution to define marriage as a union of one man and one woman and potentially strips the marriage rights of same-sex couples across the state, Minter is confident that there will be a point where equality exists for all families. Equality will be in part due to the people who founded the University of San Francisco and those who continue dedicating themselves to this school's commitment to justice, Minter said.

Since Proposition 8 passed, Minter and Stewart have both filed petitions "to raise the issue of whether the equal protection clause in California has any meaning" Stewart said.

This issue is "broader than gay rights and same-sex marriage," Stewart said. "Because if court rulings can be undone, protections may not hold for ethnic or other disenfranchised groups."

The event was also celebrated by the city of San Francisco and Mayor Gavin Newsom, who officially proclaimed Nov. 7 "USF School of Law Public Interest Law Foundation Day."

See event photos [here](#). Photos courtesy of Stephen Hew.

