



B.C. Human Rights Coalition

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Media Advisory

November 28, 2005

International Human Rights Day Event

(VANCOUVER, Canada) – The B.C. Human Rights Coalition invites the media and the public to attend our 17th annual celebration of International Human Rights Day, Thursday, December 8th, 2005, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The day provides a rare opportunity for all of those working in the human rights arena to come together and celebrate accomplishments. In addition, each year the Renate Shearer Memorial Award is presented to someone who has made an outstanding contribution in the field of human rights. This Award is a memorial to the life and work of Renate Shearer who was a champion of equality and dignity for all.

This year, the Coalition has nominated *Kenneth W. Smith* as the Award recipient for the outstanding contribution he has made in advancing the equality rights of Canadian gays and lesbians. As a seasoned lawyer, *Kenneth W. Smith* has provided legal services, on both a fee and pro-bono basis, to the gay and lesbian community as a partner in the law firm Smith & Hughes since 1984. He has acted for numerous organizations including the Persons With AIDS Society of B.C., AIDS Vancouver, the Vancouver Meals Society, Pacific Legal Education Society, YouthQuest Lesbian and Gay Youth Society and YouthCO AIDS Society. He has also acted as counsel on many of the leading cases, including those at Supreme Court of Canada, that have successfully expanded the equality rights of gays and lesbians in Canada. He is recognized by colleagues for his exceptional skill, integrity and commitment. Mr. Smith also exhibits a tireless record of leadership and activism beyond the courtroom. He has advised groups and individuals on numerous legislative provisions that have helped to expand equality rights, and he has been instrumental in the creation of programs and services, such as the Vancouver Gay and Lesbian Centre Legal Clinic and the Human Rights Legal Clinic Program that specialize in fostering human and equality rights for everyone.

Please join us in honouring *Kenneth W. Smith* and in celebrating the birthday of the Universal Declaration of Rights and Freedoms.

Thursday, December 8, 2005

JJ's Dining room, Vancouver Community College

3rd Floor – 250 Pender Street, Vancouver, BC

6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

For further information please contact:

Terri Kennedy, Communications Coordinator

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The B.C. Human Rights Coalition is a non-profit community based organization. We strive to promote and strengthen the human rights of British Columbians through advocacy, education and law reform.

See www.bchrcoalition.org for more information.