



PRESS RELEASE

Founded in 1991, Equality Illinois is the state's oldest, largest and most effective organization advocating for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Illinoisans.

EQUALITY ILLINOIS HONORS UNITED AIRLINES WITH BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AWARD

CHICAGO (February 4, 2013) – Equality Illinois, the state's oldest and largest organization advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Illinoisans, announced today that its annual Business Leadership Award will be presented to United Airlines for its long history of commitment to the LGBT community.

"From its Illinois headquarters, United Airlines sets a high standard for the entire industry of embracing fairness and diversity. The company consistently leads the corporate world in LGBT workplace equality, and we are proud to honor their work with this year's Equality Illinois Business Leadership Award," said Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois.

"United was one of the earliest U.S. corporations to prohibit discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation and, later, gender identity. It was the first major airline to announce domestic partner benefits for its employees and for its retirees," Cherkasov said. "United was the first U.S. airline to advertise in lesbian and gay media and the first to tailor a national advertising campaign to the lesbian and gay market. Since the merger of United and Continental to become the world's leading airline, the company further amended its employment practices to reach a perfect score on the Corporate Equality Index."

The Business Leadership Award is given annually to firms that demonstrate remarkable vision, courage, and leadership in the effort to achieve full equality for LGBT individuals in Illinois. The 2013 Business Leadership Award will be presented at Equality Illinois' Justice for All Gala, which is scheduled to take place on Saturday, February 9, at the Hilton Chicago. Past Business Leadership Award recipients include AT&T, Kraft, Walgreens, Motorola, and McDermott Will & Emery.

"United is a global company, and the richness of our different backgrounds, cultures, experiences and ideas brings enormous value to us," said Jeff Smisek, chairman, president and CEO of United. "At United, we value inclusion and diversity in our business

and in our lives and it's important that we take time to celebrate this. On behalf of my more than 85,000 co-workers, we accept this award proudly.”

With more than 85,000 employees, United offers policies, programs, benefits, privileges and recognition designed to reward and support the success of its diverse workforce. The airline is also committed to multicultural community sponsorships as well as supplier diversity initiatives.

For more information about Equality Illinois' Justice for All Gala, please visit www.eqil.org.

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