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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC, honors
Immigration Equality, John Berry, Director, US Office of Personnel Management and Jeff Buhrman,
GMCW Artistic Director at the 2010 Harmony Awards

March 25, 2010 — On Saturday evening, **May 15, 2010**, at its annual Spring Affair gala, titled *A Night in Venice*, the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC, will present its annual **Harmony Award** to **John Berry, Director, US Office of Personnel Management**; the organization **Immigration Equality** and **Jeff Buhrman, GMCW Artistic Director**; all of whom have made significant contributions to the GLBT community and/or GMCW. GMCW's 2010 Spring Affair will include a special commendation to Deacon Maccubbin and Jim Bennett, owners of Lambda Rising Bookstores.

About the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington 2010 Spring Affair

GMCW's 2010 Spring Affair *will be held on Saturday, May 15, 2010 at The Grand Hyatt Washington, 1000 H Street, NW, Washington, DC. Creative black tie optional. This year's event, titled A Night in Venice, features live and silent auctions, dinner, live entertainment from members of the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, a presentation to 2010 Harmony Award Honorees, and is followed by an after-party Carnevale and dessert, reflecting this year's Venetian theme. A Night in Venice begins with an exclusive sponsor reception at 5:30 pm. A sponsor table of ten costs \$3,000 and a sponsor ticket costs \$300. An individual table of ten costs \$1,500 and an individual ticket costs \$150. Tickets may be obtained by calling the GMCW office at 202.293.1548 or by visiting GMCW's website at www.gmcw.org.*

About the GMCW Harmony Awards

The GMCW **Harmony Award** recognizes individuals and organizations that exemplify the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington's mission to "**affirm the place of gay people in society.**" Previous recipients have included Hon. Adrian M. Fenty, Mayor, District of Columbia; The Right Reverend V. Gene Robinson, the Washington, DC, Metropolitan Police Department's Gay and Lesbian Liaison Unit, GLBT community activists Peter D. Rosenstein and Frank Kameny; the Washington, DC, Chapter of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG); The Mautner Project, the National Lesbian Health Organization; Food & Friends; Councilmember David Catania; and the international law firm of Holland & Knight.

About John Berry

Harmony Award: Individual from the Community

John Berry, Director, US Office of Personnel Management, is the highest ranking gay official in the Obama Administration and a tireless advocate for GLBT rights. Prior to serving as director of OPM, he was Assistant

Secretary of the Interior during President Bill Clinton's administration. He worked for Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and as director of the National Fish and Wildlife Association and most recently as Director of the Smithsonian's National Zoo. He is the Obama administration's lead person on a whole host of gay rights issues and led the way on extending benefits to gay federal employees and their partners as OPM Director.

About Immigration Equality

Harmony Award: Organization

Immigration Equality is a national organization that works to end discrimination in U.S. immigration law, to reduce the negative impact of that law on the lives of GLBT and HIV-positive people, and to help obtain asylum for those persecuted in their home country based on their sexual orientation, transgender identity or HIV-status. Immigration Equality came into existence in 1993 when a group of attorneys and activists called a meeting for GLBT immigrants at New York City's LGBT Community Center. Immigration Equality incorporated in December 1994 and soon had chapters around the country. Immigration Equality has grown from an all-volunteer task force to be the country's only national organization to focus on issues faced by GLBT and HIV-positive immigrants. Since its inception, Immigration Equality has been instrumental in educating the public about the plight of same-sex bi-national couples.

About Jeff Buhrman

Harmony Award: Chorus Family

Jeff Buhrman is in his tenth season as Artistic Director of the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC. During his tenure the Chorus has performed in Carnegie Hall in New York, Symphony Hall in Boston and at the Kennedy Center in Washington. Under Jeff's leadership, in January 2009, GMCW had the distinct honor of performing as part of the concert *We Are One: The Obama Inaugural Celebration* at the Lincoln Memorial, for the 56th Presidential Inaugural. In December 2002 GMCW was featured at the Kennedy Center Honors, appearing in the CBS television special in which the Chorus sang a tribute to Elizabeth Taylor. Jeff began his association with GMCW directing the select ensemble Potomac Fever beginning in 1987, a job he held for the next ten seasons. In 2004 Jeff returned to directing the group. Under Jeff's direction Potomac Fever has attained a wide following with its distinctive style. In December 2009, Potomac Fever had the privilege of performing at a holiday reception hosted by Vice President Joe Biden and Dr. Jill Biden, at the vice president's home at the Naval Observatory. In 1989 Jeff began an eight year run as Assistant Director of GMCW, working with Music Director Jim Holloway. He also had the honor of directing GMCW at an inauguration concert for President Clinton in 1997.

About Deacon Maccubbin and Jim Bennett, Owners of Lambda Rising Bookstores

Special Commendation

Among the first bookstores nationwide to sell gay and lesbian literature, Lambda Rising served as a de facto community center and a must-visit site for GLBT tourists and people just coming out. Started as a shelf of books at Earthworks, a smoke shop, Lambda Rising grew into a chain during the next 35 years. Owners Deacon Maccubbin and Jim Bennett closed the stores' doors in 2010 having accomplished what they set out to do: convince authors and publishers and other bookstores that there was a market for gay and lesbian literature so they would write the books, publish the books and, most importantly, put the books on the shelves all around the country.

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The Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC is one of the area's most highly respected arts and community service organizations. **Its mission is to "entertain through excellent musical performance, to affirm the place of gay people in society and to educate about the gay experience."** It has more than 270 singing members, nearly 100

support volunteers, more than 500 subscribers, nearly 500 donors, and an annual audience of nearly 10,000. *The Washington Post* has called GMCW "one of the world's best male choruses." (March 2001)