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URI Gay & Lesbian Symposium a Big Success

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Rhode Island's
Lesbian & Gay
Newsmagazine

Vol. 11, No. 1, Fall 1997



Crowning Glory

Miss Gay RI Crowns
Ms. Lesbian RI

(SEE BACK PAGE)

URI Gay & Lesbian Symposium a Big Success

Karen Marshall, Director of the San Diego Lesbian/Gay Men's Community Center, was the keynote speaker at URI's 3rd Annual Symposium on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues. Ms. Marshall, who took a \$50,000 three-person staff and built it into a \$1.9 million, 40-



Karen Marshall

member staff center with 600 active volunteers, shared her thoughts and experiences on building communities and bridging the gap among those in the GLBT community. Areas that she felt were of particular importance were being able to simply have fun with all of our diversity: to celebrate the many differences among us from the drag queens to the bull dykes to the lipstick lesbians; the fact that we have "de-gayed" the AIDS illness

when this is still a major problem among gay men; education is still of the utmost importance as is encouraging gay men to consistently practice safer sex. There was a heated question and answer period focused around gay men and public sex with a lot of participation from the audience with some feeling that such action was a right and many others believing it inappropriate. Finally, a question was posed regarding the size of RI's GLBT community, and why it is predominantly closeted. Ms. Marshall discussed the importance of not "pushing people out" rather, providing the space, opportunity and understanding for us to come out at our own pace for the right reasons.

Raffle Winners

The OPTIONS collective sends congratulations to OPTIONS' own Sally Ann Hay and Dee Bird, the charmed couple who won the URI Gay & Lesbian Symposium's raffle prize—American Airlines tickets anywhere in the US. (Make sure you get round trip tickets, and don't forget to send a postcard!) ▼



URI Gay & Lesbian Symposium Planning Committee: from left Melissa Lovering, Nancy Pironne, Lois Cuddy, Holly Nichols (chair) and Amy Black. Photos by Nancy Pironne.



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