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*Ensuring the health of  
LGBT individuals and  
communities through the  
support of scholarship  
and research.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **LGBT HEART Announces 2007 HEART Scholars**

**PHILADELPHIA, PA, December 6, 2007** – The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Health, Education and Research Trust (LGBT HEART) today announced the 2007 recipients of the *LGBT HEART Scholarship Fund for the Health Sciences*. The 2007 LGBT HEART Scholars are Jorja Jamison, a candidate for her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Jeremy Kidd, a medical student at Virginia Commonwealth University – Medical College of Virginia; and José Pares-Avila, a doctoral candidate in Nursing Practice at the University of Washington. Each HEART Scholar received a \$2,000 scholarship for the current academic year.

The 2007 HEART Scholars represent a diverse and talented group of scholarship recipients. “Each one of our 2007 HEART Scholars have already made contributions to LGBT health that are immeasurable in terms of their lasting impact and effects on reducing discrimination,” said Manuel Hernandez, MD, MBA, President of LGBT HEART.

Jorja Jamison’s Master’s thesis examined lesbian and gay men’s disclosure of sexual orientation to healthcare providers -- the first research of its kind in counseling psychology. Ms. Jamison’s thesis also crafted a model of disclosure in healthcare interactions and identified five outcomes that flow from the interaction to help providers better understand the intricacies of patients disclosing their sexual orientation to healthcare providers.

Jeremy Kidd was lead researcher on a study evaluating spirituality and religion and the transgender community’s perceptions of hate crimes and violence. The research abstract was presented at the 2006 annual meeting of the Gerontological Society of America. Mr. Kidd has also published a transgender health brochure for Virginia Commonwealth University’s Office of Health Promotions, providing a first of its kind resource to the VCU community.

Jose Pares-Avila, already a Masters-prepared psychologist, has made nursing his second career. Mr. Pares-Avila’s Master’s scholarly project in nursing focused on LGBT health and nursing education. The completed manuscript provides critical direction on LGBT health issues in general and how nursing education should respond to meet those needs. Working in both the English and Spanish-speaking communities, Mr. Pares-Avila has tackled such divergent and complex social problems as substance abuse, domestic partner violence, and sexual violence with HIV+ youth.

“In 2007 we continued to witness ongoing discrimination toward LGBT patients in healthcare settings,” said Hernandez. “While we work to end discrimination, homophobia and transphobia in healthcare, our HEART Scholars are ensuring that the health and well-being of the LGBT community will be protected for years to come.”

Now in its fourth year of operation, the *LGBT HEART Scholarship Fund for the Health Sciences*, provides a combination of need- and merit-based scholarships to LGBT students pursuing graduate-level training in the health professions. It provides supplemental funding for students who have a demonstrated ability in and commitment to affecting change in the LGBT communities through their dedication to working and being educated in the health professions. Funds for the Scholarship Fund are provided through the generosity of LGBT HEART supporters.

The 2007 scholarship program award cycle was open to all LGBT-identified students enrolled in a graduate degree seeking program in the health professions at an accredited college or university in the United States. Students must have been US citizens, demonstrated satisfactory academic progress and financial need, exhibited leadership traits and performed community service in the LGBT community.

For more information about LGBT HEART and the *LGBT HEART Scholarship Fund for the Health Sciences*, please visit [www.lgbtheart.org](http://www.lgbtheart.org) or contact LGBT HEART at [info@lgbtheart.org](mailto:info@lgbtheart.org).

#### **About LGBT HEART**

Incorporated in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 2004, LGBT HEART is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation. The mission of LGBT HEART is to support the health and well-being of the LGBT community through the support of scholarship and research. LGBT HEART targets its programming to meet the health care needs of the diverse LGBT community in the United States, which currently numbers between 16 and 28 million people and is represented in urban, suburban and rural settings and crosses all socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

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