Dr. Jillian Weiss to be Keynote Speaker at FE 2010

Tiffany Club of New England's 30th annual "First Event" 2010 Transgender Conference, one of the largest transgender conferences in the United States has chosen Dr. Jillian Weiss as this year's First Event 2010 Keynote Speaker.

Waltham, MA (OPENPRESS) November 13, 2009 -- Paula Howard, Chairperson of the Tiffany Club Board of Directors, announced that Dr. Jillian Weiss, noted expert on transgender workplace issues, will be the keynote speaker at Tiffany Club's FE January 13 – 17, 2010.

"I am delighted to have Jillian Weiss speak at First Event...With pending legislation relating to transgender persons in the workplace, I can't think of a more timely speaker. Jillian is no stranger to First Event, as she has attended the conference before," said Paula.

Jillian's study of transgender workplace issues was prompted by her own job loss as a result of transitioning in 1998. "I knew many others who had the same experience. As a lawyer, I was interested in why the law allowed this, and how law might begin to address the issues faced by trans people in employment," said Jillian.

Since 2000, she has been one of a handful of researchers focusing on the issue from a legal perspective. She has conducted research involving hundreds of companies and public agencies that have adopted "gender identity" policies. She publishes a popular blog on the subject of Transgender Workplace Diversity, and has numerous research publications on the subject of gender identity. Her work has been featured in news stories by the New York Times, Associated Press, Fortune Small Business Magazine, the Society for Human Resource Management, Workforce Management Magazine, and HR Executive Magazine. In addition, she is the author of Transgender Workplace Diversity: Policy Tools, Training Issues and Communication Strategies for HR and Legal Professionals, one of the few books currently available on the subject. She has a J.D. and a Ph.D. in Law, Policy & Society and is an Associate Professor of Law and Society at Ramapo College of New Jersey.

However, she is not only a researcher, but also an advocate for transgender rights in the workplace. Says Jillian, "Transgender people are often unable to obtain work, are harassed or are fired because of their gender identity and gender expression. Others feel limited in their ability to express their gender freely for fear of such problems. The efforts of employers who express a desire to be helpful often fall short because they are so uneducated about trans issues. To address this, I have created clear and robust policies and training for employers of all sizes, including major organizations such as Boeing, Harvard University and New York City."

Her message to First Event attendees will be that we must come together and rise up as a community to demand respect, especially in regard to respect from the law. The ability to get and keep a good job without fear of discrimination is essential for success in life. The federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which would stop job discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression, requires our full participation in order to pass into law in 2010. That Act, however, and others like it in many states and cities around the country are only the first step in an educational process. These laws are tools that can be used to educate employers, managers and co-workers to welcome gender diversity. We must educate America to understand that transgender people are full and valued members of society.

For more information about Jillian and her work visit her website.

For the past 29 years, Tiffany Club's First Event has been one of the premier transgender conferences in the United States. FE 2010 will be held at the Boston Peabody Marriot in Peabody, MA from January 13-17.

First Event 2010 is anticipating over 600 attendees this year and will feature daytime workshops of interest to the entire transgender, spouse, partner and allies community. Evening entertainment will include a number of special activities. Tiffany Club's Saturday night community recognition awards banquet and keynote will cap off the exciting event.

Registration forms and information for Tiffany Club's First Event 2010 Transgender Conference are located at the club's web site at www.tcne.org or by calling the club's First Event program office at 802-356-4582 or via email at firstevent@tcne.org.
Tiffany Club of New England, the sponsor of First Event 2010, is a 5013C non-profit corporation and an open resource and support organization for all parts of the transgender community from cross dressers to transsexuals, both Male-to-Female and Female-to-Male, allies and intersexed persons.

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