

# THE CENTER

**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\***

## **NYC's LGBT Community Center Raises over \$2.2 Million to Support its Programs and Services for the LGBTQ Community**

*Honoring Lena Waithe with Trailblazer Award, Don Lemon with Community Impact Award, Lloyd Blankfein with Ally Award & Google with Corporate Impact Award*

**April 18, 2019, New York City**—This evening, New York City's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center (The Center) raised over \$2.2 million to support its programs and services, with a particular emphasis on youth programming, for the LGBTQ community at its annual Center Dinner at Cipriani Wall Street. Over 1,000 supporters gathered as The Center honored screenwriter, producer and actor Lena Waithe; journalist and CNN news anchor Don Lemon; senior chairman of Goldman Sachs Lloyd Blankfein and multinational tech company Google for their tireless work to advance LGBTQ rights and promote LGBTQ representation.

The dinner program featured remarks from Glenda Testone, The Center's Executive Director, who stated, "Over the years, some of our needs have stayed the same, and some have changed. But one thing that will never change is that LGBTQ people will always have a place to go when they need support, community and connection. People can always come to The Center."

Lloyd Blankfein, senior chairman of Goldman Sachs and recipient of the Ally Award stated, "It was my responsibility, as head of the company, to be a real champion of the people that work for us. Not only did I feel it was okay to speak out on behalf of their well-being, I felt an obligation to do so. It was my duty to use my voice and platform to make sure everyone was able to bring their whole selves to work—to realize their full potential without distraction whether they be lesbian, gay, bi, trans, HIV positive, a person of color, an immigrant...I owed it to the people I recruited to join my company."

The evening concluded with Lena Waithe being presented with the Trailblazer Award. In her acceptance speech she said, "To everyone that calls The Center home, as you see me standing here before you, I see each and every one of you. I see your struggle, I see your pain, I see your trials but I also see the light and beauty that is you. I see that being yourself is an option. It is okay for you to be you no matter who thinks otherwise."

A silent art auction was also held during the event, in conjunction with Paddle8. Artists including Donald Baechler, Anthony Goicolea, Deborah Kass, Marilyn Minter, Laurie Simmons and Rob Wynne donated pieces to the auction. Auction [bidding](#) will remain open until Monday, April 22 at 5 p.m. ET.

### **NOTABLE ATTENDEES:**

Alexis Bittar  
Crissle West  
Don Lemon  
Eric Rutherford  
Geena Rocero  
Glenda Testone

**THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL &  
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Congressman Jerry Nadler  
Kid Fury  
Lena Waithe  
Lloyd Blankfein  
Selah Marley

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A selection of images from the event can be found [HERE](#).

Additional images can be found [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

**About The Center**

Established in 1983, New York City's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center empowers people to lead healthy, successful lives. The Center celebrates diversity and advocates for justice and opportunity. Each year, The Center welcomes more than 300,000 visits to our building in the West Village neighborhood of Manhattan from people who engage in our life-changing and life-saving activities. To learn more about our work, please visit [gaycenter.org](http://gaycenter.org).

**Social Media Handles:**

#CenterDinner

Instagram, Twitter and Facebook: @LGBTCenterNYC

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