

Lauren N. Nile

Advocate of the Year

November 6, 2019

On September 24th of this year, 2019, the fiftieth-year anniversary of the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion which formally began the movement for the full civil rights, equality and dignity of members of the LGBTQ community, the Board of Directors of Greater Palm Springs Pride bestowed upon me the tremendous honor of unanimously voting to name me Advocate of the Year. **As** Advocate of the Year, I was acknowledged in the Palm Springs Pride parade last Sunday. While I thanked the board at the awards ceremony, now that all of this year's Pride activities are over, I wish to more widely, and more publicly thank the members of the Board of Greater Palm Springs Pride for acknowledging my work, about which I feel so passionately. Being named Advocate of the Year was particularly meaningful to me because more than anything else, I consider myself to **be** an advocate.

Dr. King, in his stirring 1968 sermon, "Drum Major Instinct", said the following, "If you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice. Say that I was a drum major for peace. I was a drum major for righteousness." In that same spirit of Dr. King's, I have tried **my** very best over the course of my life, first as a young activist, then as an attorney, then as a workshop facilitator for many years, and now as a writer and public speaker, to be an advocate. So when I am gone, I want it said that I was an advocate for truth. Say that I was an advocate for understanding. I want them to say that in my life, I tried to be an advocate for the unity of the human family. It is for that reason that on this, the 50th year anniversary of the Stonewall uprising, I am humbled and honored to have been named Advocate of the Year by Greater Palm Springs Pride. Thank you sincerely to the members of the Board of Directors.

Dr. King in his own words: (The first five-to-ten seconds are a bit scratchy, then the remainder of the 3 ½ minutes are fine.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSyt4Egz4DY>

My acceptance speech at the awards ceremony follows.

Palm Springs Pride Award - 2019 Advocate of the Year September 24, 2019

Good Evening Friends,

This honor, Advocate of the Year, is **especially** meaningful to me, so I **very** sincerely thank the Board of Directors of Palm Springs Pride for **unanimously** voting to bestow it upon me. It is a **truly** an honor.

This award **is** so meaningful, it **is** such an honor for me, because since I was a young high school student in New Orleans in the 1960's, I have felt passionately **about**, spoken up **against**, and worked to **purge**, cultural ignorance, bias, and hatred from the human spirit. My keynote addresses and seminars on "The Oneness of Humanity" are delivered **from my heart**. I love humanity, and I **despise** bigotry. I despise the pain and the suffering **caused** by bigotry in **whatever** form it may rear it's ugly head.....anti-Semitism, racism, colorism, sexism, misogyny, heterosexism, homophobia, Islamophobia, ageism, classism, prejudice against people with disabilities.....if it is disrespectful of **any** member of our human family, I abhor it. I abhor **all** forms of it, and I have dedicated my life to do **whatever** it is that as **one** individual, I **can** do to help to relegate **all** of them to the ashbin of history where they belong. There is certainly no other time in our history than now, in which doing so is more **critically** important.

It is for **that** reason that being recognized for the work that I do in this regard is so very moving for me.

I wish to thank my loving wife Barbara for being **so** understanding through all of the many long hours on which I compose keynote addresses, write and post essays and articles, deliver keynote addresses, record You Tube videos and podcasts, and now, work on my latest book. I **so** appreciate your allowing me to have a girlfriend, honey.....her name is Brainiac, my computer!

I also thank all of my friends who have come out to support me at my book readings and workshops, and who read and provide feedback to me on my essays and articles published on my website, LaurenNile.com.

And finally, of course, I wish to once again **sincerely** thank the Board of Directors of Palm Springs Pride for this tremendous honor.

Thank you.