

Shawn O'Hearn – A Politician with Heart: District Elections Raise Hope for Independent

By Nicholas von Wettberg

Guardian Staff Writer

Shawn O'Hearn, management assistant in the HIV/STD Education Office at City College, was elected last March, to a seat on San Francisco's Democratic County Central Committee (DCCC).

O'Hearn ran as an Independent in the DCCC election with no endorsements, but still received 11,000 votes to become an equally elected member.

The influential 31 members of the committee account for the direction and party involvement of over 270,000 registered San Francisco Democrats.

The committee's primary functions are to endorse local candidates and sponsor ballot measures in the county. "The Central Committee, in terms of power, packs a wallop," O'Hearn said. Committee members include Senator Dianne Feinstein and Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi.

O'Hearn was born and raised in Orange County and has a B.A. in Political Science from the University of San Diego, where he was president of the Associated Students Organization.

After watching the film "The Life and Times of Harvey Milk," O'Hearn was deeply moved and decided to move to San Francisco to start a political career. Milk, who was the first openly gay person to be elected to the city's Board of Supervisors, who along with then Mayor George Moscone, were



Photo courtesy of Shawn

City College's Shawn O'Hearn will be running for S.F. Board of Supervisors from District 8 on November 7.

assassinated by disgruntled supervisor Dan White.

"Keeping your eye on the ball, and sticking with your true self are crucial for success in San Francisco politics," O'Hearn said.

O'Hearn also spent two years on San Francisco's HIV Planning and Prevention Council

(HPPC); a group that oversees a \$15 million budget and determines which agencies receive funding. "Its goal is to prioritize prevention and to assure that certain communities are getting their needs met," O'Hearn said. "We are hoping to prevent people from falling through the cracks without the cure they deserve."

O'Hearn is a candidate for the Board of Supervisors from District 8, which includes the Castro and Noe Valley neighborhoods. In 1996, he ran for the Board of Supervisors and received 8,600 votes without spending any money on the campaign. He also ran for the Board unsuccessfully in 1998, when he spent only \$1000 in campaign funds, but received a respectable 18,000 votes.

His commitment to HIV/STD prevention has been passionate and unyielding. He has over 10 years of experience working in the field, beginning with his work for the San Diego AIDS Foundation. "At the time, I wanted to be aware and conscientious in my immediate community," he explained.

O'Hearn is a graduate of the City College HIV/STD Prevention Educator Certificate Program, what he calls "the only one of its kind in the country."

He can be reached at the HIV/STD Education Office in Cloud Hall, Room C-404 or by phone at (415) 452-5202. For more information on O'Hearn and his political agenda, go to his website, www.ohearn4supervisor.com.

Ask Nurse Esther Ether



QUESTION: I am hearing rumors about flu vaccine shortages. When will I be able to get my flu vaccine?

A: It is not a rumor. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has indicated that there will be delays in flu vaccine availability and also a decrease in supply.

There are two reasons for the delay and availability of flu vaccine. One reason is that some of the flu vaccine manufacturers have reported that they had difficulty growing one of the influenza virus components used to make this year's vaccine. The difficulty in the lab has prevented them from making as much vaccine as anticipated.

The second reason is that the CDC has also taken regulatory action against two U.S. flu vaccine manufacturers. It is likely that the two manufacturers will make the corrections needed, but it takes time to implement the changes.

Due to the above reasons the flu vaccine will not be available for you until late October or the middle of November. When the vaccine does arrive, the CDC is strongly recommending that we vaccinate the elderly, the patients with chronic illness and the appropriate professionals who work with high-risk patients first. If the supply is still available, then we are then allowed to distribute it to the general population.

These shortages and delays also mean a cost increase. We are on top of this issue and we will diligently strive to have the vaccine available for sale as soon as it is possible. We will do our best to keep our cost the same as last year: \$5 for credit students and \$10 for faculty, staff, administrators and non-credit students.

Please call (239-3110) or come to B201 and check with us in late October. We will keep everyone posted.

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