FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Atlanta Freedom Bands Present “Heroes & Heroines” Concert, Honor Local Heroes with Music

Heroic people and heroic music are on the program for Atlanta Freedom Bands’ “Heroes & Heroines” concert on Saturday, March 21. The band will use its talents and music to honor local people and organizations doing heroic work to make our community a better place. The pieces on the program represent a wide range of endeavor, from teachers to scientists to explorers to rescuers. The heroic music combined with the inspiring stories of the honorees will provide a powerful experience for the audience. In addition to the heroic honorees, the band will welcome WSB Radio’s Afternoon News Anchor Chris Chandler to host the concert.

“Our community has so many people and groups who work tirelessly, heroically, to advance equality and inclusion”, said AFB Development Director Cliff Norris. “Our members have selected a number of individuals and organizations to honor with their performance during the concert. It is a way of saying thanks and letting the honorees know that their passion and dedication is appreciated. Instead of singing their praises, our Concert Band will play them grand, heroic, stirring music to celebrate their work.”

The concert program features heroic music by John Williams from Superman and Star Wars along with a collection of 21st century wind band compositions by Julie Giroux, Brant Karrick, Robert Sheldon, Dana Wilson, Nolan Schmidt, and more. The concert will take place in a new venue for AFB that will offer more room on stage for the band, more seating for its growing audience, and a great acoustic perfect for the soaring music on the concert program.

The concert takes place Saturday, March 21, 8 PM, at the brand new Performing Arts Auditorium at North Atlanta High School, 4111 Northside Parkway, Atlanta, 30327. Tickets for the concert are $15 for general admission, $10 for students, and $5 for seniors and are available from tickets.atlantafreedombands.com. AFB will also have background information on the heroic honorees and more on its Facebook page in the days leading to the concert: http://www.facebook.com/AtlantaFreedomBands.

AFB’s Heroic Concert Honorees - Organizations

The Hope Clinic of the Emory Vaccine Research Center – The heroic scientists and researchers at the Hope Clinic work every day to develop vaccines to prevent HIV and other diseases.
The Georgia Safe Schools Coalition – The GSSC’s network of heroic educators and activists work to make our schools a safer place for LGBTQ students across our state.

Angels Among Us Pet Rescue – These heroic angels raise awareness of the condition of animals in shelters and work to rescue pets and see them through to their forever homes.

Lost-N-Found Youth – Lost-N-Found provides shelter, counseling, and support for homeless LGBT youth, helping them transition from the streets to more permanent, stable housing.

AFB’s Heroic Concert Honorees - Individuals

Sybstantian Welch, Trans Health Coordinator at the Feminist Women’s Health Center provides life-changing medical care and support while also educating the community on transgender inclusivity.

Melissa Carter, radio personality and writer, has a decades-long history inspiring the community through her openness and example and through founding a fund to assist organ transplant patients.

The political quartet of Simone Bell, Dr. Karla Drenner, Larry Pelligrini, and Jeff Graham have a long record of heroic work on our state’s political scene advancing the cause of LGBT equality. Representative Drenner is our state’s first openly LGBT member of the legislature. Representative Bell is our state’s first African-American LGBT member. Larry Pelligrini has worked for decades with several organizations to influence legislation and policy. Jeff Graham, in his position as director of Georgia Equality, often serves as the LGBT community’s political voice while the organization works to pass legislation, organize voters, and educate the public.

Posthumous heroes from whose heroic acts AFB traces its origins: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Harvey Milk, Jon Reed Sims, Walter F. “Buz” Carr. The LGBT rights movement’s origins can be traced to the political protests of the civil rights movement. Dr. King referred to himself in a 1968 speech as a “drum major for justice”. Amid the growing openness of the LGBT community in the 1970’s, Harvey Milk was elected to office in San Francisco. His oft-repeated “You Have to Give Them Hope” speech encouraged others to take part in the community without shame. Jon Reed Sims took that message to heart, founding the San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus and the San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Pride Band in 1978, the year Milk was assassinated. With bands sprouting up across the country, Buz Carr founded Atlanta Freedom Bands in 1993 initially to march in the Atlanta Pride Parade. Now, AFB is in its 22nd year of representing the LGBT community in music.

About Atlanta Freedom Bands

Atlanta Freedom Bands (AFB) represents Atlanta’s gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community through music. Atlanta Freedom Bands started in 1993 with a marching band, which has appeared in every Atlanta Pride parade since as well as numerous neighborhood festivals, community events, and pride events in other cities. The band has appeared at Atlanta area events such as the Inman Park Festival and the Dogwood Festival and the Salute to America Parade. AFB was also the first LGBT-identified group to perform in Atlanta’s “Salute to America” Independence Day Parade, as well as the first to perform during an Olympic event.

AFB has expanded its mission over the years to include several different groups. The MetroGnomes jazz ensemble appears at fundraising events and other gatherings. The Atlanta Freedom Concert Band, now in its ninth year, has professional direction from Dr. Kathleen Nicole
Fallin, Ph.D. Music Education from the University of Georgia. AFB’s newest group, the Color Guard, adds a dash of panache to the band’s outdoor performances, parades and even concerts.

AFB members have traveled the country and the world to perform in events with other gay and lesbian musicians through the Lesbian and Gay Band Association (LGBA). AFB has sent musicians to Gay Games events in Amsterdam, Sydney, Chicago and Cologne; the inauguration of Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama; the 2000 March for Equality on Washington; the Greenwich Village Halloween Parade; the Southern Decadence Parade and yearly LGBA conferences and gatherings. AFB hosted the 2013 LGBA annual conference, featuring the commissioning of a new work, a 200-piece massed-band concert with members of 32 different bands on stage, and the largest-ever marching unit to appear in the Atlanta Pride parade.

AFB is a 501 c(3) non-profit arts organization.

### [Images Follow]

Atlanta Freedom Bands Concert Band (photo credit: Dan Lax)

Atlanta Freedom Bands Concert Band - Pre-concert warm up, December 20, 2014, at North Decatur Presbyterian Church. (photo credit: Cliff Norris)
AFB Music Director Dr. Kathleen Nicole Fallin conducting the Concert Band during the “Our American Journey” concert on June 20, 2013 at Saint Mark United Methodist Church. (photo credit: Dan Lax)

AFB Associate Director Kurt Wackerly conducting the Concert Band during the “Our American Journey” concert on June 20, 2013 at Saint Mark United Methodist Church. (photo credit: Dan Lax)

AFB Horn Section in concert (photo credit: Robb Blackwell)