

# OBITUARIES

## OSCAR E. GARCIA-VERA

Longtime AIDS activist and gay rights advocate Oscar Garcia-Vera, 41, died on Thursday, March 9 of complications from AIDS.

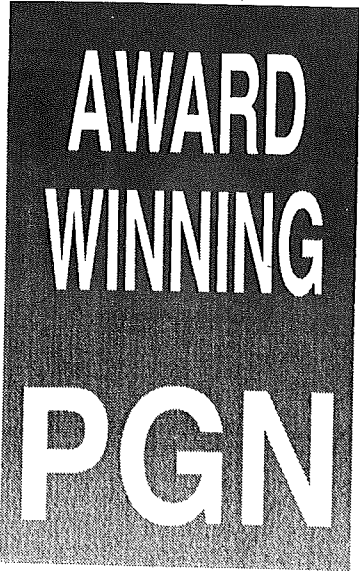
Garcia-Vera worked with a number of local organizations, most notably as a board member of Penguin Place, CHOICE, and as a member and co-chair of the Mayor's Commission for Sexual Minorities. He was also instrumental in organizing the country's first national conference on AIDS and mental health issues, hosted by Philadelphia in 1992.

Employed by the Philadelphia Adult Probation Department, Garcia-Vera was as well-known for his work with the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging, where his special understanding of the needs of people with AIDS was invaluable in establishing programs to meet those needs.

Born in Puerto Rico, Garcia-Vera was educated in Washington, D.C, receiving a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University and a master's degree in journalism from American University before moving to Philadelphia in 1983.

His interest in the arts was a continuing love, and, in addition to his community work, he also enjoyed singing, and was a founding member of the Spruce Street Singers. Additionally, Garcia-Vera's interest in theatre extended to designing sets and costumes for several local theatre companies, including the Laetus Theater Group, Avalanche and the Daylight Zone, where he designed costumes for *The Fairy Garden*.

Funeral services were planned in his native Puerto Rico; however, a memorial service is to be held at Penguin Place, 201 S. Camac Street, on April 2 at 2 p.m. Donations in Garcia-Vera's memory may be made to Penguin Place. ▼



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