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5 honored for gay rights work in area

Winners include editor, service veteran and clergy.

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Five area community leaders were recognized Sunday for fostering better understanding between Kansas City and the gay and lesbian community. The leadership awards were sponsored by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation and presented at the Central Exchange.

Each recipient was chosen for work in specific areas affecting the gay and lesbian community and other human rights issues in Kansas City. Those areas included business, civic affairs, religion, politics, and gay and lesbian affairs.

In receiving his award Jon Barnett, an associate editor of the *Lesbian and Gay News-Telegraph*, advised gays, lesbians and others involved in the struggle for human rights that, despite gains, much more needs to be done.

Barnett ran for the Kansas City Council in 1991 as the city's first openly gay candidate for elected office.

The other recipients:

Former Kansas City Councilwoman Joanne Collins, who encouraged other council members to include "sexual orientation" as a protected category in the city's housing and employment nondiscrimination laws.

Karl Cropsey, a retired Army colonel who lives in Kansas City, testified before the House Armed Services Committee in May 1993 in support of lifting the ban on gay men and lesbians in the armed forces. Cropsey, who is gay, became the highest-ranking retired or active military officer to advocate the policy change.

The Rev. Robert Meneilly, pastor of Village Presbyterian Church in Prairie Village, and David Goldstein, executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Bureau American Jewish Committee, who were recognized as members of the religious community who have fought for tolerance and acceptance of gay and lesbian rights.