



CONTACT: Bob Witeck  
Witeck-Combs Communications  
Washington, D.C.  
202-997-4055 ext. 19  
[info@witeckcombs.com](mailto:info@witeckcombs.com)

FOR RELEASE: Tuesday, June 22, 2010

**AA.com/Rainbow Salutes Rainbow Team Founder Rick Cirillo**  
***“Harvey Milk and Me” – Cirillo Shares His Early Role as Gay Activist***  
**For more details, go to: <http://bit.ly/RickCirillo>**

FORT WORTH, Texas – This June in celebration of LGBT history and pride, American Airlines’ Rainbow Team today released an exclusive first-person interview with former American Airlines sales manager and Rainbow Team founder Rick Cirillo. For the first time in public, Cirillo tells of his chance 1973 encounter with the late gay civil rights pioneer Harvey Milk – a once-in-a-lifetime friendship that simply began when Milk asked Cirillo, *“Do you want to help?”*

The Cirillo interview about his own times with Harvey Milk recites memories of the early days of gay civil rights organizing and their intersection with other early figures and leaders including the late journalist Randy Shilts and then San Francisco politician Diane Feinstein.

In 1994, Cirillo founded American Airlines’ innovative LGBT marketing strategy and launched the Rainbow Team, almost 20 years after first working alongside Harvey Milk in his Castro Street camera shop and serving as a dedicated campaign organizer for the next several years in San Francisco. Rick Cirillo at the age of 62 and following his retirement from American Airlines, works now in Spokane, Washington for People to People Ambassador Programs. He is also an openly gay father and grandfather with his husband of the past 12 years, Curtis Southworth.

“Rick Cirillo has always been a trailblazer,” said George Carrancho, present day manager of the Rainbow Team, and former colleague of Cirillo. “While serving here at American, he dedicated his professional career to building bridges and to taking our first steps as an inclusive and respectful partner for the LGBT community. To the best of our knowledge, just by starting the Rainbow Team, he began the very first dedicated LGBT marketing group at a major American corporation. We all stand on his shoulders today.”

In addition to the Team’s dedicated community website, [www.aa.com/rainbow](http://www.aa.com/rainbow) -- Carrancho connects with thousands of LGBT customers, friends and allies through a monthly

## **AA.com/Rainbow Salutes Rick Cirillo and Harvey Milk**

June 22, 2010

Page 2

Rainbow Newsletter to share special events, promotions and travel tips. For this month's issue of Rainbow News, Rick Cirillo agreed, for the first time, to tell his entire story and to recount his friendship with Harvey Milk that began nearly 40 years ago. Subscribers to the Rainbow News will receive this slice of civil rights history later this week; and all interested in this story may also go directly to <http://bit.ly/RickCirillo>

### **About American Airlines**

American Airlines, American Eagle and AmericanConnection<sup>®</sup> serve 250 cities in 40 countries with, on average, more than 3,400 daily flights. The combined network fleet numbers more than 900 aircraft. American's award-winning Web site, AA.com<sup>®</sup>, provides users with easy access to check and book fares, plus personalized news, information and travel offers. American Airlines is a founding member of the **oneworld**<sup>®</sup> Alliance, which brings together some of the best and biggest names in the airline business, enabling them to offer their customers more services and benefits than any airline can provide on its own. Together, its members serve nearly 700 destinations in more than 130 countries and territories. American Airlines, Inc. and American Eagle Airlines, Inc. are subsidiaries of AMR Corporation. AmericanAirlines, AA.com, We know why you fly and AAdvantage are registered trademarks of American Airlines, Inc. (NYSE: AMR)

###

*Current AMR Corp. releases can be accessed on the Internet.  
The address is <http://www.aa.com>*