



GAY TASK FORCE SUES RECORD COMPANY OVER TRADEMARK RIGHTS

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OIA Newswire

WASHINGTON - The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has filed a lawsuit in Federal District Court against Centaur Entertainment, Inc. Centaur has produced dance music CDs, including CDs showcasing DJs appearing at popular LGBT events such as the annual Winter Party Festival in Miami's South Beach.

The suit cites trademark infringement, unfair competition, false representation, fraud and violation of related federal and state laws, among other claims.

Over the last 13 years, the Winter Party has generated nearly \$1.5 million in grants to Miami-Dade organizations serving the LGBT community. The Task Force claims since it assumed responsibility for the event and the Miami Recognition Dinner, more than \$300,000 has been donated to the Dade Community Foundation to re-grant to local LGBT organizations.

The Task Force claims Centaur, which is based in Brooklyn, N.Y., produced an authorized Winter Party CD for several years for the Dade Human Rights Foundation, which founded and organized the Winter Party before the Task Force became responsible for it. Under that authorization, Centaur was allowed to produce the CD, according to the Task Force

"When it became apparent that little, if any, significant monetary benefit on sales of the CDs was actually being returned to the LGBT community, we decided to find another licensee," said Matt Foreman, the Task Force's executive director.

According to the lawsuit, in 2006 Centaur obtained a trademark registration for "Winter Party" for its own benefit by making false representations to the United States Trademark Office. Since then, the Task Force says Centaur has refused to yield the Winter Party trademark and has threatened the Task Force and its more recently licensed producer of the annual CD.

Trademark Office records show that Centaur applied to register for itself the "White Party" mark in November 2004, while the widely popular White Party has been produced by Miami's leading HIV/AIDS organization, Care Resource, since 1986. Government records also show that Centaur filed for the "Gay Days" trademark in November 2004 even though the official gaydays.com Web site identifies Orlando-based Gay Days, Inc. as the owner of that mark.

The suit seeks a court order canceling Centaur's trademark registration and restraining

Centaur from using the Winter Party mark and from doing anything that implies a relationship with the Task Force, plus monetary damages and other relief.