



\$65M for Gay Rights, HIV/AIDS Groups

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SEATTLE (AP) — The estate of Ric Weiland, a high school classmate of Microsoft Corp. founders Bill Gates and Paul Allen and one of the first five people to work at the software giant, has left \$65 million to gay rights and HIV/AIDS organizations.

The bequests were announced Sunday by the Pride Foundation of Seattle, where Weiland was a board member for several years. The foundation called it the largest single bequest ever given to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender causes.

Gates and Allen hired Weiland in 1975, the year they founded Microsoft. He worked as a project leader for the Microsoft Works word processing and spreadsheet software, and was a lead programmer and developer for the company's BASIC and COBOL systems, two of the first personal computing interfaces. He left Microsoft in 1988.

Weiland donated tens of millions to various organizations — from gay rights groups to environmental and education organizations — before he died in 2006. He committed suicide at age 53 after a long battle with depression, and survivors include his partner, Mike Schaefer.

The \$65 million is among bequests totaling about \$160 million — the bulk of Weiland's estate_ to various charities and Stanford University, his undergraduate alma mater, according to an estimate provided by the Pride Foundation.

In the latest bequest, the Pride Foundation said Weiland's estate had established a fund at the foundation that would give \$46 million over the next eight years to 10 national gay rights and HIV/AIDS groups, including Lambda Legal; **the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**; Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays; the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation; and amfAR, the Foundation for AIDS Research.

His estate also bequeathed \$19 million directly to the Pride Foundation for scholarships and grants supporting the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community in the Pacific Northwest.