

## **RICK CIRILLO - BIOGRAPHY**

**Rick was raised on a diet of James Mitchner adventure books and along with his Dad's fascination with aviation its no wonder Rick fond himself in the travel industry as a career. He was also introduced to sales & marketing at the very early age of 11 in the 5th grade as he sold boxes of Christmas cards for St. John's school. For 3 years running he won 1st prize in the school for top salesman. The prize.....tickets to the Pinky Lee Show !**

**After doing a tour in Vietnam while in the Air Force as base R & R (rest & recuperation) Specialist and while finishing his degree at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, FL, Rick joined Northeast Airlines as a ticket agent. Rick has remained in the travel industry for the last 35 years working for other airlines and travel companies such as National Airlines, Pan Am, World Airways, and China Educational Tours. Hired in a variety of positions from ticket agent, Director of Reservations, flight attendant to V. P. of Marketing & Sales. Although all were exciting none were quite as challenging or rewarding as his last position as Global Sales & Marketing Manager-Gay and Lesbian Community for American Airlines. A position he has held for nearly 10 years.**

**While working as a Sales Representative for American Airlines and covering a territory in San Francisco Rick began sales and marketing efforts within the gay & lesbian market for Gay Games & Stonewall 25. The efforts were so very successful he then put together a proposal for a position as sales representative to serve the gay & lesbian community and submitted it to American. The company was intrigued and put the position into effect almost immediately. Since that time the position has grown substantially and the marketing and sales efforts have made American Airlines the most "gay friendly" airline in world and the 1<sup>st</sup> choice of airlines within the GLBT community.**

**In 1995 three additional national sales managers where hired into the GLBT department under Rick's direction to form the informous Rainbow TeAAM, making American Airlines the first fortune 100 company to have an entire staff dedicated to the gay and lesbian market. Rick's insite litereally changed the way corporate America looked at the gay & Lesbian market. Today hundreds of major corporations court the GLBT business with advertising and specialized marketing incentives. American is still the official airline for organizations like HRC, GLAAD, PFLAG, NLGJA, GALA and the Turtle Creek Chorale as well as sponsoring many gay & lesbian events throughout the country, Canada and internationally.**

**Additionally Rick has served as Vice President on the board of directors for IGLTA (International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association) and as a member of HRC's Business Council. He also was on the advisory board of the Turtle Creek Chorale, and was active member of the Dallas Black Tie Dinner Committee.**

**The nation's leading gay traveler newsletter, Out & About, recognized Rick by inducting him into it's travel Hall of Fame. According to the newsletter "As the**

**driving force behind American Airlines' gay marketing and sales effort, Rick has changed the way American and the airline industry look at the gay market.**

**In July of last year Rick was promoted to Manager, Military & Government Sales, responsible for sales and marketing of this very lucrative and important department.**