



Glen Lawrence & Stephen Thomas Mentor Award



Glen Lawrence and **Stephen Thomas** started their partnership together on the dance floor of the Catch One Disco. That 33 year romance culminated in their marriage in August 2014.

Their partnership also extended into the community where they spent countless hours participating in efforts to combat HIV/AIDS in the late 80's. Steph and Glen felt the urgency to stand up and get involved to fight against the stigma and shame the gay community was facing. They participated in the first Los Angeles AIDS Walk and various fundraisers to help find a cure.

They also found time to organize events that brought other Black gay couples together to talk about the challenges they faced. Because so many of the couples had dealt with issues of shame and guilt because of religious beliefs, lack of family

support or public harassment, they saw it as their mission to show others that they could love honestly and out loud without fear and shame.

As the couple continued on their personal journey, they also encountered young Black gay men and women in need of someone to listen to, confide in and understand their daily struggles. They befriended a group of recent college grads from various backgrounds that had one thing in common; they represented the future of the Black community. Glen and Steph became known to the group of young people as their "Dads." Through their mentorship, they watched these young people grow, and thrive with an increased sense of confidence, love and the ability to live honestly.

To Glen and Steph, mentoring is more than just being a leader, it is being a friend. It is the ability to listen without judgment; to counsel openly and frankly; to be patient, forthright, and above all caring. Their commitment and dedication to young people have made a positive impact on our community and they stand as examples to us all.

Better Brothers Los Angeles and The DIVA Foundation are proud to present **Glen Lawrence** and **Stephen Thomas** with the inaugural "**Mentor**" **Truth Award**.