

What Are Table Captains & Why Am I A Good Fit?

Table Captains are the heart of the HRC Chicago annual dinner and auction, they serve a critical role in its success. Each Table Captain works to fill at least one table of 10, creating their own guest list helping to ensure that our Dinner is well attended and profitable.

Strong table captains are "Community Connectors" who believe in the mission of the Human Rights Campaign and want to get their friends and families involved in an important cause.

At a Glance

WHERE & WHEN | Fairmont Chicago, Millennium Park
Saturday, November 4, 2023
5:30 PM – 12:00 AM

TABLE GOAL | 10 Guests

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS | \$300 per person
\$2,750 (purchased as a group)

EVENT CONTACT | HRCDinner@HRCChicago.org



Step-by-Step Checklist for Table Captains

STEP ONE | MAKE CONTACT

If you have been a table captain before, list your past years' guests first, and then others you want to invite (we suggest about 25–35 prospects.)

Decide how to contact your guests: for example, will you make a phone call, followed promptly by a letter; or send an email and follow up with a phone call?

If you're new to this, start by brain-storming 25–35 people who fit at least two of these categories:

1. They are interested in the mission of the Human Rights Campaign.
2. Are a "Community Connector" themselves, meaning they are well-connected, influential, popular, and/or leaders in their community, and are able—and willing—to donate to HRC (but err on the side of assuming they can!)

STEP TWO | CREATE SOME COMPETITION

Challenge your best friend or a previous table guest (or two!) to step up to the Captain level and fill their own table.

STEP THREE | FILL THE TABLE OF TEN

Tables accommodate 10 people. To avoid having empty seats at your table, we suggest that you recruit more than 10 guests – including yourself! We will seat any overflow guests at an adjacent table. Keep in mind that for every 3 people you reach out to you normally get 1 "yes." And remember, people tend to come in pairs!

STEP FOUR | FINALIZATION OF GUESTS

Make sure your guests purchase ticket(s) through tickets.HRC.org or by downloading the HRC Events App at HRC.im/attend.

Remind them to choose *you* as their table captain during check out. While there may be changes during the week before the event, aim to have your table filled, and your guests registered by Monday, October 30, 2023. The table captain team sends out bi-weekly messages which include up-to-date table rosters.

STEP FIVE | DAY OF THE DINNER

Be sure to welcome your guests before the program gets going and direct them to your table.

STEP SIX | POST-DINNER FOLLOW-UP

Attendees and guests will receive an email from HRC thanking them for attending the event (or offering them a chance to donate if they were not able to attend).

However, the best thank you of all comes from *you!* Email or call your table guests the following week to personally thank them for supporting HRC.

Human Rights Campaign Mission

The Human Rights Campaign and the Human Rights Campaign Foundation together serve as America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve LGBTQ equality. By inspiring and engaging individuals and communities, HRC strives to end discrimination against LGBTQ people and realize a world that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all.

The Human Rights Campaign envisions a world where lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people are ensured equality and embraced as full members of society at home, at work and in every community.

Table Captain Tips

Encourage your guests to invite their friends

Ask your friends and connections, "Do you have a friend that we can invite?"

We will help take care of your guests

Many table captains host more than one table. If you discover you have more guests than your table will accommodate, we can seat your overflow guests at a table nearby.

Guests should not be surprised by the request for a donation

When you invite your friends, be sure to tell them that the purpose of this event is to raise both awareness of HRC's mission and programs and the funds to further those programs.

Designated table host

It's a great idea to have someone prepared to assist you – to be talking with a new or nervous guest and welcoming table guests if you have to attend to some last-minute needs.

Make guests feel welcome

Some table captains place cards or thank you notes at their guests' place settings.

Habits of Highly Effective Table Captains

Be clear about expectations.

The dinner is a fundraiser. All guests will be asked to contribute to support the work of HRC.

Ask guests to invite other friends.

Ask guests to purchase their tickets online ASAP and to select your name as their host.

The sooner your guests register, the sooner we will send them a confirmation with the event details and parking information

Early Bird prices expire on Friday, September 8, 2023.

Keep reminding your guests.

Even up until the morning of the event!
We are counting on their participation!

Thank your guests.

Set your table with personal thank you notes, or other personal touches, and make thank you calls after the event.

Guests didn't show up?

Express your apologies that they could not attend the event. Let them know what a success it was, share the stories you heard, and ask them to make a donation to HRC.

Sample Communications

INVITATION LETTER OR EMAIL

Dear «insert name»,

You Are Invited!

Please join me for the Human Rights Campaign Chicago Gala and Auction (HRC-CHI) The 2023 HRC Chicago Annual Dinner and Auction on Saturday, November 4 at the Fairmont Chicago Millennium Park.

5:30 pm Donor Reception & Silent Auction

7:00 pm Program Begins

8:45 pm Dinner & Awards

11:00 pm After Party

As a member of the greater Chicago community I invite you to support The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and our more than 3 million members and supporters, brought together by our passion to realize a truly equal society. HRC is the country's largest organization working for equal rights and equal dignity for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Americans. HRC has proudly spent the last 40 years creating the most powerful movement for equality our country has ever seen. And while we celebrate our many victories, like marriage equality across the nation, we know that extremist politicians and their allies have unleashed an unprecedented wave of hostility and discrimination against our community. This weaponization of public policy takes aim at the most marginalized segment of our community, our trans, people of color, and HIV+ siblings. HRC and our allies are on the forefront of the movement to protect equality and the Annual Dinner is the largest single fundraising event in Chicago to support this work.

Please join me at my table and get your tickets quickly!

Early Bird tickets are \$275 for general admission; and \$375 for premium, which includes all-evening, open bar access.

After September 8, prices will increase to \$300 and \$400, respectively.

RSVP online: tickets.HRC.org or by downloading the HRC Events App at HRC.im/attend — remember to choose *me* as your table captain during check out!

Thanks in advance for your support of HRC

Sincerely,
«Your Name»

P.S. Let me know if you would like to *captain your own table* of 10 guests!

EMAIL OR TEXT

Thank you so much for being part of my table at the HRC Chicago Annual Dinner and Auction.

Here are some details:

The 2023 Annual Dinner and Auction will be held on Saturday, November 4 at the Fairmont Chicago Millennium Park.

If things come up and you are unable to make the Dinner, please give me a call as soon as possible — and do let me know if you know of someone who would like to come in your place.

Thanks in advance for your support of HRC!

Sincerely,
«Your Name»

P.S. Let me know if you would like to captain your own table of 10 guests!

REMINDER EMAIL TEXT FOR CONFIRMED GUESTS 1 WEEK OUT

I am looking forward to seeing you next Saturday (November 4) at the 2023 HRC Chicago Annual Dinner and Auction at the Fairmont Chicago Millennium Park. Check-in begins at 6:00 pm. See you there!