

# LOU CHIBBARO JR.

b. September 3, 1949

## JOURNALIST

**He has reported  
on the LGBT civil  
rights movement  
for more than  
four decades.**

*“You do it story by story ... and try to get to the bottom of what’s really happening.”*

Lou Chibbaro Jr. is an award-winning senior news writer for the Washington Blade, the oldest LGBT newspaper in the United States. He has been reporting on issues affecting the LGBT community for more than 40 years and is the first openly gay journalist to be inducted into the Society of Professional Journalists Washington Hall of Fame.

Chibbaro grew up in Long Island, New York. He studied political science and biology at the State University of New York and earned his graduate degree in journalism from American University. He came out to his parents in 1975. Though they were initially alarmed, they gradually accepted his sexual orientation. A year later, he wrote his first article as a volunteer for the Washington Blade (then the Gay Blade).

Due to widespread homophobia, Chibbaro wrote for his first two years under a pseudonym. During that period, he worked at a publishing company and then for the electric utility trade group, the American Public Power Association.

In 1978 Chibbaro took a position as the publisher of a public utility newsletter. He continued his volunteer reporting for the Washington Blade until 1984, when he became a paid staff writer. He supplemented his small journalist’s salary by driving a taxi.

In his more than four decades at the publication, Chibbaro has chronicled the spectrum of LGBT civil rights issues and angles—from politics and major protests to the AIDS epidemic and hate crimes. He has reported on federal efforts to fire gay people from their government jobs and uncovered scandals involving politicians and male prostitutes. He has reported on issues like “change therapy,” favored a decade ago by some psychiatrists for transgender teens.

Between 1975 and 1991, Chibbaro corresponded with Frank Kameny, the father of the LGBT civil rights movement. The Frank Kameny Papers, housed at the U.S. Library of Congress, include the pair’s historically significant communications. When Kameny died in 2011, Chibbaro penned the Washington Blade’s article memorializing him.

Chibbaro has received numerous honors, including the Rainbow History Project’s Community Pioneers Award, the Gay and Lesbian Activist’s Alliance’s Distinguished Service Award and, for his coverage of gay bashings in D.C., the U.S. Attorney’s Office’s Victims of Crime Award.

In 2011 Chibbaro made history as the first openly gay journalist inducted into the Society of Professional Journalists Washington Pro Chapter Hall of Fame. His extensive reporter’s notes from 1980 to 2001, detailing LGBT life, are stored in the Special Collections Research Center at George Washington University.

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