

GAPSN's Pacific Bridge Award



El Rey Theater, GAPSN's 2001 Pacific Bridge Awards

The Pacific Bridge Awards (PBA) are bestowed upon individuals who were instrumental in advancing political and social issues of significance to Asian Pacific Islander or lesbian gay, bisexual, and transgender community. Co-sponsored by AsianAvenue.com, the Awards were a resounding success, with well over 300 in attendance on January 13, 2001 at the

renowned El Rey Theater.

Other awardees include Gloria Romero, California Assemblymember for the 49th District and Joo-Hyun Kang, Executive Director of the Audre Lorde Project out of Brooklyn. The festivities were hosted by Alison De la Cruz and included performances by Erin O'Brien and InDisguise.

GAPSN debuted their new coming out literature geared specifically for the Asian / Pacific Islander (API) community and soon to be available in 7 API languages. They also debuted their LGBT Media Tolerance Campaign to run in API language specific newspapers. Both projects are groundbreaking in their scope and are funded through grants from Liberty Hill and the API Wellness Project.

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GAPSN 2001

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GAPSN

Mission Statement

The Gay Asian Pacific Support Network is dedicated to providing supportive environments for gay and bisexual Asian/Pacific Islander men to meet, network, voice concerns, foster self-empowerment, and advocate on issues of significance to the gay API community.

Gay Asian Pacific Services Network

GAPSN has played a major part in the API LGBT movement by educating and building a safe space for API Gay and Bisexual men to come together to meet, network, voice concerns, foster self-empowerment, and advocate on issues of significance to the Gay API community.

Since 1984, GAPSN has worked to address the needs of the community by having raps, community gatherings, political advocacy, social events, and educational forums.

In this new millennium, GAPSN is now adapting to meet the new needs of the community. As the Los Angeles demographic changes, the needs for an API lgbt organization have changed. With an increasing number of immigrants in the API population, GAPSN has to find a way to provide the recent Asian lgbt immigrants a place where they can have their needs addressed. GAPSN is re-directing a significant portion of it's resources to help empower the recent immigrant API lgbt community. GAPSN is also working on building tolerance for API lgbt in the immigrant API community.

This is not to say that GAPSN is going to move away from its current programming, we will continue the cultural, educational, and political programming to meet the needs of the API lgbt community.

GAPSN, as always, remains an organization dedicated to the advancement of the API lgbt issues.

We look forward to your support in the upcoming year!

Pei-Chi Chang

Henry Lo

Patrick Mangto

Alex Perez

Chairs Message

Happy Chinese New Year! GAPSN hopes that you enjoy a happy and rewarding Year of the Snake!

Last year was a very successful year for GAPSN, as GAPSN reassessed the marginalized API community needs and attempted to address them. GAPSN has reinvented itself and the Board hopes that this year we can build on our achievements from last year. There have been some unsubstantiated rumors circulating that GAPSN is no longer for its members and we no longer listen to what they have to say. We would just like our members to rest assured that the GAPSN you know of has not changed.

The Board is merely looking at new ways to enhance our existing programs, and to try out new programs that will attract more API LGBT to GAPSN. However, we are looking for individuals who would be willing to help us program for socials and other activities. The Board currently has a very full plate and is open to any suggestions about how to encourage membership. However, people need to take an active role in making this a GAPSN that represents your interests - we can't do everything! So we are in dire need of a Social Chair - if you know of people who might be interested, please give us a ring immediately. We want GAPSN to be an enjoyable experience and to offer programming as an alternative to the bar and disco scene.

This year's Pacific Bridge Awards were very successful. We had over 300 attendees, and the awardees themselves were inspirational. (Please see the pictures and accompanying article.) The banquet received incredible coverage, including *Frontiers*, *In Magazine*, *Lesbian News*, *AsianAvenue.com*, *PlanetOut.com*, and *Outlook*, just to name a few.

GAPSN is currently reformatting the GAPSN Raps. They will now be held in conjunction with API PFLAG. By co-programming with API PFLAG, we are better able to provide support members who are having issues coming out with their parents and their friends. The first rap will take place at the Village, Sunday, February 11 from 2-4 p.m. Please check the front counter for the exact room.

GAPSN will be changing the format of the newsletters. They will now be sent out via e-mail and distributed not only to the GAPSN members, but anyone who signs up to receive information about GAPSN. They will be in an e-zine format and the articles will be linked directly to the GAPSN Web page and other sources. The reasoning behind this change is threefold. The increased price for both postage and copying is now becoming cost prohibitive. Each newsletter printed and mailed costs GAPSN almost a dollar. Many of our members have not renewed membership with us, yet still attend our events and receive the newsletter. We'd like to keep everyone in the fold without cutting anyone out. A huge portion of the GAPSN budget goes towards the newsletter that can be better used for programming. Most of your membership dues go to the newsletter. And we can all agree that the newsletter is not the focus of GAPSN.

GAPSN has had difficulty retaining an individual to do the newsletter. It takes up valuable time to lay out, copy, fold, and mail the newsletter. The Board member could still do an e-newsletter in an hour and have time to help program for other events with his time. We have someone who is willing to lay out the newsletter in a brief e-zine, but we no longer have a Board member to do newsletter. The e-newsletter will drive traffic to GAPSN's Web site at www.gapsn.org. It is important that we start using this valuable resource that is currently being underutilized. There is a wealth of information available and every GAPSN member should have the site bookmarked on his computer.

If you are not on our e-list, please go to GAPSN's e-list, please subscribe by going to GAPSN@EGROUPS.com. If you do not have access to the Internet we can still mail you a copy of the e-newsletter but it will merely be copies of the articles directly printed out from the Web site. They may also not be mailed in a timely manner. Please let Pei or Patrick know if you still require a mailed version of the newsletter.

Once again, we welcome all feedback. Please feel free to contact the chairs or any board members or email us your comments at GAPSN@YAHOO.com

Pei and Patrick

White House Liaison to Asian Community Comes Out at Gay Asian Awards

by Patrick Mangto



Patrick Mangto, Shamina Singh, and Pei-Chi Chang

Shamina Singh, Executive Director for White House Initiative On Asian American and Pacific Islanders, came out of the closet at the Gay Asian Pacific Services Network's (GAPSN) 16th Annual Pacific Bridge Awards saluting "Women of Distinction."

"I am here to proclaim myself a proud gay woman,"

"I am here to proclaim myself a proud gay woman," Singh announced. Singh received a standing ovation for coming out. When asked about her decision, she replied, "I felt it was time to come out, and I thought that the GAPSN Awards was the best opportunity. I felt very supported here. Out of all of the awards I've ever received, this means the most to me."

Pacific Bridge Awardee Margaret Cho

by Pei-Chi Chang



Margaret Cho accepting the Pacific Bridge Award

Margaret Cho expressed her heartfelt feelings after receiving a Pacific Bridge Award. "It is so hard to grow up gay in America. It is so hard to grow up Asian in America. To be both gay and Asian, is just so tremendously painful, I'm impressed anyone makes it. This Award certifies that all of the pain and struggle was worth it."

"This Award certifies that all of the pain and struggle was worth it."

Margaret also provided a humorous anecdote about how her Korean father came to terms with his own homophobia after losing a valuable friendship to his own internalized homophobia.

GAPSN's Raps are Back!!

by Pei-Chi Chang

Raps have been a big part of GAPSN. In fact, GAPSN started as a rap group 16 years ago. Since then, GAPSN Raps have provided a safe place for Asian Pacific Islander gay and bisexual men to come together and talk about issues that affect them.

We are currently reformatting GAPSN Raps. They will now be held in conjunction with API PFLAG. This will allow us to provide better support and services to our API community on issues of coming out and dealing with their families and friends.

The API PFLAG parents are dedicated in providing support to our community, and this will also allow all API LGBT access to the support group.

The first meeting is set for February 11th at 2pm at the Village at Ed Gould Plaza - 1125 North McCadden Place, one block west of Highland and half a block north of Santa Monica. The combined raps will then be every 2nd Sunday of the month, from 2 to 4pm at the Village.

Korea's First Out Gay Celeb

by PlanetOut News Staff

Hong Sok-chon is Korea's first openly gay celebrity. The actor/comic publicly identified himself as a gay man on national television in an interview on October 4 -- not proudly but apologetically, with tears and sobs. His jobs have vanished almost overnight, and that scares him. Yet he takes heart from outpourings of support

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from many friends and activists. He told the Korea Herald that he is not a hero but he is a pioneer, saying, "I think I have gotten people talking about homosexuality. This is my contribution. Maybe parents and children will discuss me in their living room. That will be a big start. In the past homosexuality was something that could never be mentioned in ordinary c o n v e r s a t i o n . "

Ironically Hong, 29, is best known for playing a very swishy fashion designer on the sitcom Three Men, Three Women, a character full of stereotypically gay mannerisms (who nonetheless had occasional heterosexual dates in the course of the series). He started that role in 1997, having previously worked primarily on the stage. His main job at the time he came out was hosting the children's show Po Po Po -- in fact, in his TV interview he referred to his work with the children leading him to ask himself, "How can I tell these children not to lie or deceive when I'm doing it myself?" -- but producers told him almost immediately that he needn't return. He was also quickly fired from his regular role on a radio sitcom, No One Can Handle My Family. But his broadcast media career consisted largely of guest appearances, and even the variety show that started the rumors about him has cut him off. Hong attributes his firings to "the decisions of the few old men that run the industry" and believes the "vast majority of the people in the business" support him. He takes hope from a TV director who said he'll be working again in a few months, and he's still doing entertainment reports on IBC and appearing in an Internet sitcom Paradise. Hong's real love is musical theater and he's currently touring in Guys and Dolls, but the broadcast work pays his bills and brings name recognition that leads to better stage roles.

Hong seems always to have known he

was gay, but he's largely devoted his life to his arts, leaving little time for relationships. He had come out to his siblings before he began to go public but not to his parents, although their relationship was particularly close and loving because he is their youngest child. In their small village, it would be a source of shame. Hong believes family is the main barrier to most gay and lesbian Koreans coming out. But at least his mother seems to be handling the changes in his life, although she harbors a wish that he'll still find "the right g i r l . "

Hong more or less stumbled into his coming out. When he was taping a segment for Seo Sae-won's Wild Night (also translated Sexy Night), he was shocked when another comic asked if he liked men, and responded, "Yes, I do. What's the problem with that?" The remark was taped but never aired, although word got around. Gay journalist Rex Wockner dated Hong's coming out September 21 after an "outing" in the Daily Sports newspaper on September 17. As Hong told it in an interview with the Korea Herald, when a reporter for the magazine Women's Jung Ang 21 asked in an interview about his sexuality, he said he'd answer only if the story were held back from publication for three months so he could prepare. As might be expected, it was published two days later. Hong told the Herald he'd come out to the women's magazine because, "I am tired of people talking about me behind my back. To my face so many people tell me that they love me, but when my back is turned they say, 'Hey, you know what, he's gay.' I wanted to be able to say to everyone, 'Yeah, I'm gay. So what.' Now they have to find something else to talk about."

But for now, Hong is what they are talking about more than ever. The Herald editorialized that, "If Hong's coming out is to mean anything at all, it must force a discussion of the government's failure to protect the rights of homosexuals. The deci-

sion to come out and the reaction of family and friends are private issues, but the government has a responsibility to ensure that people are not fired, as Hong was, because of their sexual orientation."

STD In The News

by Michael Lou

"Female Condoms to Launch in China" *Agence France Presse (w w w . a f p . c o m)*
Starting next year, Western-made female condoms will be available in China, where at least 500,000 people are infected with HIV. A report in the Shanghai Daily indicated that the Female Health Company of Chicago has registered its Femidom female condom in China, and is working with a local firm to market the condom online. Xu Jinxun of Shanghai's Municipal Commission for Population and Family Planning surveyed 30 couples about Femidom two years ago. According to the newspaper report, 90 percent of the husbands and wives thought the product was acceptable, and 80 percent of women and 73 percent of men said it was preferable to the male condom. Domestically made condoms were introduced in China last year, but they have not been much of a hit, with cost and comfort cited as two main issues.

"36 Died of AIDS in Japan So Far This Year" *Kyodo News Service (h o m e . k y o d o . c o . j p)*
Japanese health officials reported Tuesday that 36 people died from AIDS in the first 10 months of 2000. In September and October alone, there were four AIDS deaths, 62 new cases of AIDS diagnosed, and 88 new HIV infections. The Health and Welfare Ministry said that there are now more than 7,000 people with HIV or AIDS in Japan.



Patrick & Assemblymember Gloria R.



Gwenn Baldwin



InDisguise



Patrick M., Joo-Hyun Kang, & Pei C.



Erin O'Brian



Patrick M. & Allison De La Cruz

Upcoming Events

February 4, Sunday

4:00 p.m.

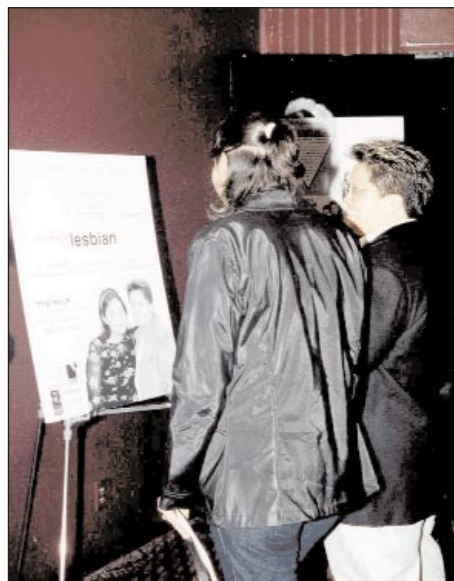
Classic Potluck Social

It's been a number of months since we've had a Classic event, so we hope you will be able to make this first one planned for this year. Since it's a social event, everyone is invited, don't forget to bring a dish for the potluck.

Edmond's home

340 Orange Grove Ave.

South Pasadena



"Women of Distinction" guests



Patrick M., Margaret Cho, and Pei C.