

SPEAKERS Lunar New Year Parade for All

Press Conference

Chatham Square, NYC Chinatown

12 noon

Saturday, January 30, 2010

MRS. DEANNA CHANG is the proud mother of two sons and has two beautiful grandsons. She grew up in Taiwan and Hong Kong and moved to the United States in 1970 with her late husband Richard, to whom she was married for 40 years. Deanna worked as a secretary to Sir Run Run Shaw at Shaw Studios in Hong Kong and later at an accounting firm. She has also done volunteer work in hospitals. Deanna loves classical music and needlework, and she is fluent in Mandarin, Cantonese, and Shanghainese. She even has a Facebook page!

THE REV. PATRICK S. CHENG is an ordained minister with the Metropolitan Community Church and has ministered to the LGBTQ Asian American community for the past decade. Patrick recently completed his Ph.D. degree in systematic theology from Union Theological Seminary, an affiliate of Columbia University. Patrick is also a graduate of Yale College and Harvard Law School. He lives in New York City with Michael, his partner of 18 years, and their six-month old puppy. For more information about Patrick, see <http://www.patrickcheng.net>.

JAMIE TAM, student and member of Project Reach

I found Project Reach on the Internet when I was 13 years old. I was looking for a place where I could come out and be comfortable as a young lesbian.

After I came out to the community at Project Reach, I cut off my shoulder length hair and began to explore my feelings and behaviors around being male.

At my junior high school I was constantly attacked for using the women's bathrooms and when I cautiously used the male bathrooms, I was also attacked.

I began taking action against these forms of discrimination by initiating the first homophobia/transphobia workshops in my high school.

And I became the first transgender female/male identified person to ever be admitted to an all-women's college, Russell Sage College.

PENELOPE BLUM, student and member of Project Reach

My name is Penelope Blum and I am a bisexual Chinese woman. Throughout the history of the Lunar New Year parade LGBTQ, and LGBTQ youth has never been represented---we have been silenced for too long!

Throughout the history of LGBTQ media, we have been silenced. In June of 2000, Shanghai, China tried to have a LGBTQ pride march; however, it was shut down by the government few days before. They were forced into a large lobby where 250,000 people showed up. There was little coverage, close to no coverage on this big event. I found out from the the Economist magazine. A similar story happened in Washington, DC and

there were close to no reporters on site, FOX was not present. I found out from the Stephen Colbert show. We need to be seen and fight for our rights.

When society standards silence young people it silences the future. One of the ways to un-silence this structure is to embrace all people with love. Lunar New Year falls on Valentine's Day; New Year should be filled with love.