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PRIDE & HERITAGE CELEBRATES ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Local groups recognize Shiva Subbaraman of Georgetown University and API Equality-LA for May 2 Asian Pacific American Heritage Month event

WASHINGTON - *Pride & Heritage*, a coalition of local community-based organizations serving the Asian/Pacific Islander (API) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities, will hold an event celebrating its 10th anniversary next month. Along with the 10th anniversary, *Pride & Heritage* will honor individuals and organizations working to empower API and LGBT communities in celebration of May's Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. The event will be held on May 2, 2009 at Christ Church, Washington Parish on 620 G St. SE, Washington, DC at 6:30 pm.

This year's honorees are Sivagami "Shiva" Subbaraman, the first director of the only LGBTQ resource center of a Catholic/Jesuit university in the country, and Asian Pacific Islander Equality-LA, a Los Angeles, CA-based nonprofit organization working in the Asian/Pacific Islander community for equal marriage rights, fair treatment, and overall acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

"This year, we are proud to honor both Shiva Subbaraman and API Equality-LA," said 2009 *Pride & Heritage Celebration* Committee member Hyacinth Alvaran. "Shiva is well-respected in our communities as a queer feminist educator and activist of South Asian descent. API Equality-LA has been instrumental in galvanizing Asian and Pacific Islander communities to speak out on behalf of marriage rights for same-sex couples. I cannot think of two more deserving honorees."

Shiva Subbaraman became the first Director of the LGBTQ Resource Center at Georgetown University in August 2008.

"I feel particularly honored and privileged to be doing this work – at this moment – and Georgetown University has been a wonderful space to have conversations around LGBTQ issues and faith," said Subbaraman. In her former role as Associate Director of University of Maryland's Office of LGBT Equity, she co-developed and implemented trainings and dialogues among the university's LGBT community and allies, and was honored as *Champion of Our Community* and *Outstanding Woman of Color*. Shiva has also published, written, and spoken extensively about popular culture, diverse feminist theories and issues faced by queer women of color, and the issue of part-time and adjunct labor in the academic world. Her articles have been published in the journal *Interventions* and the reader *Women's Studies on Its Own*. Shiva serves on the board of several local community organizations promoting awareness about LGBT issues, domestic violence, and culture through film and literature. She has been committed to exploring the place and space of South Asian queers in the larger U.S. LGBTQ communities, and in 2007, was honored by South Asian LGBTQ organization KhushDC in its first celebration of Women's History Month.

API Equality-LA is a coalition of organizations and individuals committed to community education and advocacy in the Greater Los Angeles Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities for equal

marriage rights and fair treatment of LGBT families. Marshall Wong, API Equality-LA Co-Chair and the first Special Assistant to the DC Mayor for API Affairs during his time in Washington, will be on hand to accept the award on behalf of the organization. API Equality-LA and its partner API Equality in San Francisco waged a statewide campaign to educate the API community about the negative impact of the homophobic Proposition 8 in California.

“We are honored that our work is recognized by our friends and colleagues around the country and I am pleased to come back to Washington to accept this on behalf of our organization,” said Mr. Wong.

In addition to recognizing the accomplishments of our community, *Pride & Heritage* will also feature a number of cultural performances and some surprises to celebrate its 10th year anniversary. Part of the proceeds from this year’s event will support participation from the DC metropolitan area for “Transgress, Transform, Transcend: A National Conference of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Asian Americans, South Asians and Pacific Islanders (API),” a historic conference being organized by the National Queer API Alliance (NQAPIA; for more information, please visit www.nqapia.org).

For more information about the event, please e-mail dcprideandheritage@gmail.com or visit the website www.dcprideandheritage.org. To interview one of the awardees, please contact Hyacinth Alvaran at (650) 353-0978.

Pride & Heritage is a coalition of local community-based organizations serving the API and LGBT communities: KhushDC, the D.C. Chapter of the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF-DC); Asian/Pacific Islander Queers United for Action (AQUA); and Asian Pacific Islander Queer Sisters (APIQS).

APIQS is an organization for API (Asian and Pacific Islander) lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning women in the DC-metro area, focusing on queer issues, education, community and sisterhood. Visit www.apiqsdc.org for more information.

AQUA is an organization serving the gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning members of the Asian and Pacific Islander (A/PI) community in the DC-metro area. AQUA strives to project a positive image of queer API men in the community through advocacy, education, outreach, and social events. Visit www.aquadc.org for more information.

KhushDC is a social, support and political group that provides a safe and supportive environment, promotes awareness and acceptance, and fosters positive cultural and sexual identity for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (LGBTQ) and additional gender or sexual minority South Asians in the DC-metro area. Visit www.KhushDC.org for more information.

NAPAWF-DC (Washington, DC Chapter of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum) strives to create a community of APA women leaders working to educate and advocate for our social and economic justice, emphasizing a local angle on national issues. Visit www.napawf.org for more information.