2001

glaad was there
january

GLAAD’s Dissertation Fellowship Program awards eight scholastic researchers with fellowships to foster and promote scholarship as a vital form of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) intellectual activism.

Throughout the year GLAAD’s internship program allows 19 students to earn college credit and to obtain valuable firsthand experience in organized activism. The students are involved in all aspects of GLAAD’s work.

february

GLAAD’s work drawing attention to hip-hop artist Eminem’s homophobic and misogynistic lyrics is climaxed when he is given several Grammy nominations. GLAAD’s educational campaign includes a rally at the Grammy Award ceremony where GLAAD brings together a diverse coalition of LGBT and allied organizations concerned about Eminem’s hate lyrics and the lack of corporate responsibility in promoting such. In Los Angeles, GLAAD co-sponsors with the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences the “Intolerance in Music: A Town Hall Meeting.” In New York, GLAAD mounts the “Homie-Sexual Hip-Hop Panel” to examine the intersection of hip hop, race and homophobia.

MediaEssentials, a core training designed to give a thorough introduction to media skills, is given at the University of California LGBT Association Conference. Throughout the year GLAAD gives this and other trainings, including several specifically for communities of color, to AFL-CIO Pride at Work Conference, National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum, North American Conference on Bisexuality, YouthPride Atlanta and others.

march

Laura Schlessinger’s television show, Dr. Laura, is canceled after GLAAD runs a smart, high-profile campaign that exposes Schlessinger’s unqualification to give life advice and for selective use of “facts” to promote her anti-gay rhetoric and extreme personal prejudices. The work, which wins PRWeek’s Non-profit PR Team of the Year for 2001 award, presents a clear, indisputable example of defamation and tells corporations, advertisers, media outlets and the American public that the LGBT community will not be silent about disparagement and mistreatment.

GLAAD’s efforts to bring LGBT visibility to daytime television pays off when ABC’s All My Children begins a major-role, teenage-lesbian storyline. Soap Opera Digest acknowledges GLAAD’s part in this key development in a timeslot reaching an audience not often exposed to gay or lesbian characters.

april

The annual GLAAD Media Awards ceremonies recognize media for outstanding fair, accurate and inclusive LGBT representations. The ceremonies — April 16 in New York, April 28 in Los Angeles, May 12 in Washington, D.C. and June 9 in San Francisco — create a high visibility for the community. Special honorees include actress Vanessa Redgrave, columnist Liz Smith, producer/writer/director Paris Barclay, longtime lesbian activist Barbara Gittings, and filmmakers Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman of Telling Pictures.

“AM/FM Activism” is launched on GLAAD’s Web page giving activists anywhere the tools to plan a structured response to offensive humor and inaccurate or biased reporting. When a Washington, D.C., radio station begins “The Running of the Bull Dykes,” a contest based on lesbian stereotypes, GLAAD is alerted through “AM/FM Activism.” By working with local activists the contest is shut down. GLAAD is able to educate the station and its listeners as to why stereotyping is offensive and gives permission for violence. Later in the year, a Florida activist uses “AM/FM Activism” to rally community organizations and contact local media concerning a radio personality whose shtick is referencing the Taliban and terrorists with variations of “fag” and “queer,” e.g., Talifags. The activist and supporters contact the station. Working on another front, GLAAD contacts the radio personality’s manager. The anti-gay humor noticeably lessens and then stops.

may

The Asian Pacific American Heritage Month kit is released. The Latino Heritage Month kit goes out in September. The media resource kits use nationally recognized heritage months as a springboard to provide resources and information for coverage by mainstream and LGBT media about LGBT people of color.

The New York Post is taken to task for placing an opinion piece based on rumor and unsubstantiated claims on the front page. The article, “SCHOOL KILLS MOTHER’S DAY: Gay parents force principal to ban cards,” is then covered by Fox News Channel as a legitimate news story. With a GLAADAlert Today, GLAAD exposes the sensationalistic reporting and the connection between the outlets — both are owned and operated by Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation. GLAADAlert is used during the year to draw attention to other outlets such as the Associated Press and USA Today.
june

To mobilize support for PBS' P.O.V. airing Scout's Honor, a documentary about the Boy Scouts of America's ban on gay boys and men, GLAAD issues the national GLAADAlert Today and the five regional Call to Actions. This is to counter attacks on local PBS outlets by anti-gay political action groups demanding the show not air. LGBT activists respond and no stations cancel.

For Pride Month, GLAAD staff works with several groups around the country to organize events and media coverage. GLAAD staffs a booth at many festivals. For the media, GLAAD issues its annual Pride Media Guide to encourage varied and non-stereotypical coverage of events and parades. During the year, other media guides are issued for Valentine’s Day and Memorial Day, plus GLAAD’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Media Reference Guide is updated.

july

GLAAD continues its regional work, addressing local defamation. For example, when a Bronx health agency places ads in bus-stop shelters to target men who have sex with men, Infinity Outdoor pulls them for being “inappropriate.” GLAAD works with local groups to have the ads replaced and brings the story to several local outlets and the Associated Press, exposing the unfair treatment and the underlying issue of homophobia preventing health care.

After Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic uses the word “faggot” to reference a linesman with whom he disagreed, the remark is not commented on in the ensuing coverage of the match. Many media outlets had no problem with a major sports figure using a defamatory word. GLAAD contacts ESPN about the lack of coverage and comment. The outlet then runs a segment on SportsCenter and posts a detailed article to its Web site about homophobia in sports media.

In Oklahoma City, GLAAD works with community group Cimarron Alliance to develop a media plan after the mayor forces his homophobia on the city. Cimarron paid to hang 44 banners promoting Pride on utility poles. The mayor has them removed saying they are inappropriate, irreligious and that aspects of being gay “are illegal.” With GLAAD’s help, Cimarron is able to draw media attention to the issue and many of the banners are replaced.

august

Research initiative “Sex, Class and the Making of the LGBT Market” begins. It looks at the production of LGBT-oriented advertising in both mainstream and LGBT media. Other initiatives include “Lesbian Representations on Daytime Television: The Case of All My Children” and “When in Rome: Homophobia, Masculinity and Sports Talk Radio.” All three are released before the year ends.

GLAAD is a strong presence in Cortez, Colo., the small town where 16-year-old Fred Martinez, Jr., an openly gay, Two-Spirit Navajo youth, was murdered. His alleged killer is quoted in a police affidavit bragging he “had beat up a fag.” GLAAD works to ensure fair and sensitive coverage. Through GLAAD’s efforts, several media outlets take deeper looks into Martinez’s life and hate crimes. GLAAD helps organize vigils in several cities and encourages media coverage of anti-gay violence.

GLAAD presents on LGBT media representations to 150 students in the master’s program at Columbia School of Journalism. Also, GLAAD presents at Northwestern University and is a featured speaker at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Kansas. GLAAD obtains media coverage for other campuses’ Pride days and LGBT-themed school events.

september

Following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, GLAAD contacts media professionals one-on-one and issues a media resource kit to give guidance for LGBT-inclusive reporting. GLAAD collects and posts LGBT-related stories to its Web page as a resource for continued coverage. GLAAD contacts CNN after it runs as legitimate news Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson blaming, among others, gays and lesbians for the attacks. FOX Family Channel is contacted about its contract to run Robertson’s shows, regardless of content. GLAAD posts a complete timeline of the controversy following the Falwell/Robertson statements. It includes broadcast transcripts and links to Web pages, making it easy for reporters and others to follow the story. GLAAD’s Sept. 11 work continues throughout the year.

In response to unchallenged anti-gay comments made on a Kansas City television program, GLAAD contacts the station. A policy meeting is held to define the program’s boundaries. Producers decide future defamation will not go unaddressed.

october

GLAAD and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center organize a New York gathering to remember and honor those lost in and affected by the Sept. 11 terrorism. Almost 1,000 people come together to demonstrate renewed commitment to combating hate.
intolerance and prejudice. GLAAD obtains national and local media coverage to remind the public of the community's losses.

GLAAD responds immediately to an Associated Press photo taken aboard the USS Enterprise. It's of an Afghanistan-bound bomb with "High Jack This Fags" scrawled on the side. AP pulls the photo and asks media outlets to remove it from files because it contains an "offensive slur." GLAAD advocates for outlets to examine the photo's inherent homophobia.

Because of GLAAD's entertainment media work, the new television season presents for the first time more LGBT characters in dramas than comedies. GLAAD consults with producers, writers and actors to shape storylines and provide background material. One example is GLAAD's work with CBS’ The Education of Max Bickford, which includes a recurring transgender character. Related to the show, a transgender reference guide is distributed to 300 mainstream media professionals in anticipation of coverage.

GLAAD staff attends the NGLTF's annual Creating Change conference to present several well-received media workshops and panels. Yearly, GLAAD participates in many events, including the Geffen Symposium, the National Religious Leadership Roundtable, Pridefest, and conferences for the Society of Professional Journalists, SMAAC Youth Center, and the National Communication Association.

The GLAAD Fairness Awards ceremonies recognize institutions and individuals who have taken active, front-line positions in the work for fair, accurate and inclusive representation of lesbians and gay men. Honorees are AT&T and Lifetime Television in New York; Pacific Bell and Sun Microsystems in San Francisco; and Bright Kauffman Crane Productions and Lee Rose Productions in Los Angeles.

GLAAD meets with The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, an outlet that sets a tone for southern states, to discuss coverage of the LGBT community. Throughout the year GLAAD contacts and works with many other print outlets such as the Los Angeles Times, Newsweek, The New York Times, Time, the Washington Post and USA Today; and with all broadcast networks, plus others such as CNN, FOX News Channel, HBO, Lifetime and Showtime.

After a St. Louis television station runs a three-day, sensationalistic series about public sex in parks, GLAAD organizes a response with several LGBT organizations. The group meets with the station manager, who makes a commitment to provide more nuanced and well-researched LGBT stories and asks GLAAD to provide story ideas.

GLAAD continues media work on Sept. 11 LGBT issues. When the New York City Anti-Violence Project begins distributing fund checks to families of gay men and lesbians who were killed, GLAAD pitches the story and obtain coverage in such outlets as ABC, the Associated Press and MSNBC to ensure this precedent-setting local story goes national.

photo captions

1. GLAAD and allied organizations rallied outside the Grammy Award ceremony to bring attention to Eminem's violent lyrics.
2. For its successful Laura Schlessinger campaign, GLAAD won the PRWeek Award for Outstanding Non-profit PR Team of the Year.
3. Eden Riegel plays the transgender daughter of Susan Lucci on All My Children. GLAAD consulted with writers on the storyline.
4. Actress Vanessa Redgrave accepted the Excellence in Media Award at the 2001 GLAAD Media Awards ceremony in New York.
5. GLAAD led the response to stop this radio show contest that was based on stereotypes.
6. Activists around the country are able to access and use this GLAAD feature to fight defamation in their own communities.
7. Conservative groups tried to stop the airing of Scout's Honor, Tom Shepard's award-winning documentary.
8. Volunteers and GLAAD staff worked in Pride festival booths across the country.
9. GLAAD stepped in when the ad company removed this Bronx Lesbian and Gay Health Resource Consortium ad from bus-stop shelters.
10. The Cimarron Alliance called on GLAAD's help to combat homophobia in Oklahoma City.
11. The late Fred Martinez, Jr., an openly gay, Two Spirit Navajo youth murdered in Cortez, Colorado.
12. GLAAD's Web page was a main resource for LGBT-related Sept. 11 reporting.
14. GLAAD contacted the Associated Press as soon as this photo was released. In response, AP pulled it from its files.
15. The Education of Max Bickford features Helen Shaver (middle) as college professor Erica, a transgender woman. The cast includes (from left) Marcia Gay Harden and Regina Taylor.
16. At the San Francisco Fairness Awards: Mayor Willie Brown, GLAAD Executive Director Joan M. Garry and Laura Fennell, vice president legal, for honoree Sun Microsystems.