

[BEEPS]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

DAN DE LEON: Hi I'm Dan de Leon.

SUZANNE And I'm Suzanne Anderson, and you are watching TV Montrose.

ANDERSON:

DAN DE LEON: Suzanne, how was your trip to the South of France?

SUZANNE Bonjour Merci beaucoup. I know. It went well. I had a good time.

ANDERSON:

DAN DE LEON: Voulez vous coucher avec moi.

SUZANNE Something like that, and I made a little side trip over to Italy. I had a great trip. Thank you very much.

ANDERSON:

DAN DE LEON: Well, welcome back.

SUZANNE Thank you.

ANDERSON:

DAN DE LEON: And I just want you to know that Jason and Carlos had a great time substituting for you while you were gone, and they hope that you will be taking a vacation sometime soon again.

SUZANNE What is this about them wanting my job? One more week vacation, you know.

ANDERSON:

DAN DE LEON: Well, tonight's show is a special presentation that will exclusively cover the recent HRC winter gala fundraiser.

SUZANNE That's right, and I was really fortunate to interview all the major speakers at the gala, and I had so much fun.

ANDERSON: We've got a great show in store for you tonight.

DAN DE LEON: Also in tonight's show is a 10 minute documentary about the Galluccio family that consists of two gay men that sued the state of New Jersey to adopt two children, and they won the court case.

SUZANNE Now incredible documentary. This was shown at the gala, and it brought joy and tears both to everybody's eyes.

ANDERSON: It's very moving. Don't miss it.

DAN DE LEON: Well, Suzanne, I want to see your story about HRC, and learn about what the gala is all about.

SUZANNE All right, Dan, let's roll it.

ANDERSON:

[MUSIC PLAYING]

DONNA RED WING: Tonight I bring you greetings from the Human Rights Campaign where we envision an America where we are ensured of our basic rights. Where we can be honest and open and safe at work, at home, and in the community. I bring you greetings from our membership of more than 250,000 individuals around this country. People living in those places between the West Village and West Hollywood, that place called America, I bring you greetings from the front.

The front, that's where the political right has launched a deliberate organized attack in order to promote the stereotypes and the misinformation about who we are, and how we love, and about our families. The theme of their new campaign is "The truth shall set you free." As we know they ran full page ads across the country, in city after city, and there was no truth, and there was no freedom in that campaign.

Their goal was to depict us as sick and perverted, as somehow being damaged goods, as being the antithesis of family values. They sent this message to hundreds of thousands of gay youth and their families. Gay youth and their families struggling with sexual orientation.

SUZANNE ANDERSON: The Human Rights Campaign Winter Gala attracted 600 participants that came to express support of HRC. Local HRC members and event host Arden O'Donnell and George Hawkins did an exceptional job keeping the event moving. A number of distinguished speakers, locally and from across America that inspired the crowd. Particular note where the Galluccio Family with their adopted children that won a New Jersey court battle to adopt, as well as HRC national field director Donna Red Wing, who gave a powerful and motivating speech.

And Andrew Tobias treasurer of the Democratic National Committee who gave an often humorous look at gay rights movement from years back to the present. Awards were given to several local people and organizations that have worked hard for equality. Later we'll hear more from these award winners that include PFLAG, Chase Bank, and Harold Schultz of Bank United.

DAN DE LEON: It is really obvious that if it were not for such national organizations as HRC, the movement for lesbian gay equality would be a lot further behind than it is today.

SUZANNE ANDERSON: That's true, Dan, and you know HRC is the nation's largest lesbian and gay political organization. It was founded in 1980, and currently it has 2,500 local members and 250,000 members nationally.

DAN DE LEON: Well, we'll tell you more about HRC later. But for now, let's hear from the sponsors that have made one year of lesbian, gay television possible here in Houston.

CANDACE GINGERICH: Hi, I'm Candace Gingerich, and you're watching TV Montrose.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

JEFFREY BULES: Are you still using your parents' insurance agent? How good is your insurance if you're not comfortable talking to your agent? At the Schmerler Insurance Agency we understand the special needs that special couples have. We ensure the autos, homes, and businesses of people just like you all over the Houston area. We also handle health insurance, life insurance, renters insurance, and any other insurance needs you may have. I'm Jeffrey Bules.

ROB And I'm Rob Schmerler. Give us a call and let us help with your insurance needs.

SCHMERLER:

JEFFREY BULES:The Schmerler Insurance Agency is here for you.

BANK UNITED So what we got is?

ADVERTISOR 1:

BANK UNITED Free checking at Bank United.

ADVERTISOR 2:

BANK UNITED Beyond the year 2000.

ADVERTISOR 3:

BANK UNITED And we want to?

ADVERTISOR 1:

BANK UNITED Make it sing!

ADVERTISOR 2:

BANK UNITED Give it some sizzle.

ADVERTISOR 3:

BANK UNITED Don't forget the steak.

ADVERTISOR 1:

BANK UNITED Right. How about unbelievably free checking.

ADVERTISOR 2:

BANK UNITED Free checkorama!

ADVERTISOR 3:

BANK UNITED Ch-ch-checking.

ADVERTISOR 2:

BANK UNITED OK, let's review.

ADVERTISOR 1:

BANK UNITED No monthly service charges.

ADVERTISOR 2:

BANK UNITED Good.

ADVERTISOR 1:

BANK UNITED No minimum balance.

ADVERTISOR 3:

BANK UNITED Excellent.

ADVERTISOR 1:

BANK UNITED Beyond the year 2000.

ADVERTISOR 2:

BANK UNITED Swell.

ADVERTISOR 1:

BANK UNITED Monstrously free checking.

ADVERTISOR 3:

BANK UNITED Checkzilla.

ADVERTISOR 2:

BANK UNITED Free checkosaurus.

ADVERTISOR 3:

BANK UNITED With toys.

ADVERTISOR 1:

BANK UNITED Nah.

ADVERTISOR 2:

BANK UNITED Got it! Super free checking!

ADVERTISOR 3:

BANK UNITED We could get that song.

ADVERTISOR 2:

[MUSIC - "CAN'T TOUCH THIS"]

BANK UNITED Get free checking beyond the year 2000 at Bank United.

ADVERTISOR 4:

BANK UNITED Thank you, Bank U.

ADVERTISOR 3:

SUZANNE ANDERSON: Don't even think about buying or selling a home without hiring a professional. A home is the biggest financial investment that you will ever make, and I am always amazed at how casually people select a realtor. They'll call the name off of a sign, or take the name of a friend of a friend. To be a good realtor you have to be a good listener, and I've listened to my clients, and I customize my services to fit your needs. We listen, present creative solutions, and help you make decisions in buying or selling a home.

ADVERTISOR: Baba Yega, a Montrose tradition. Two lush patios and a spectacular waterfall make dining at Baba Yega a peaceful experience. The only thing better than the atmosphere is the food. With a wide variety of fine entrees, there's something for everyone's taste, including a veggie menu. The Jasmine room is perfect for business or social meetings. Also visit the Wild Earth herb shop next door. Excellent food, superb staff, tranquil surroundings, and moderate prices make Baba Yega the complete dining experience.

BETTY DEGENERES: Hello, my name is Betty DeGeneres, and my kid is the greatest. You know her. She's Ellen, and she's gay. For too long gay Americans have suffered discrimination. As long as our sons and daughters are excluded from the basic protection of law, we must share that burden as a family.

ALL: So let's not waste one child, and let them all reach for the stars.

LEE BROWN: I'm mayor Lee Brown, and you're watching TV Montrose.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

SUZANNE ANDERSON: Welcome back.

DAN DE LEON: Well, Suzanne, what is up next from the HRC Winter Gala?

SUZANNE ANDERSON: Well, we're going to show the Galluccio family documentary, and this is really will inspire the audience the fact that lesbian and gay couples can fight the system and win the right to adoption.

DAN DE LEON: I can't wait to see it.

SUZANNE ANDERSON: It's great.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

REPORTER: As the new year approaches we have a portrait of a new American family. One that doesn't fit the usual vision of mom, dad, and the kids. It's a lazy Sunday in the New Jersey suburbs, and Michael Galluccio, a 36-year-old sales director, plays with his three-year-old son Adam. It is only when Adams other daddy, John, along with foster sister Madison joined the group that people realized this is a different kind of family. The Galluccio's-- John chooses to go by Michael's surname-- might not be traditional, but with 500,000 kids in foster care, this type of family is fast becoming part of the American Patchwork.

MICHAEL GALLUCCIO: We went through every option, and we decided on adoption. Because of the fact that there are just so many kids out there that need homes.

REPORTER: Gay adoption really isn't all that new. It's just that in most states it's been done a little more discreetly. One partner adopts, and then the other applies for second parent recognition. All of which is time consuming and costly. As an infant, Adam was considered a difficult placement. When Michael and John took him in as a foster child, he was frail and sickly.

Few children were as needy as Adam, who was addicted to drugs and HIV positive when the couple took him in as a foster child.

MICHAEL GALLUCCIO: I'm holding this baby who has been crying for the last couple of hours, and you know that it's drug withdrawal. And I'm watching his eyes shake back and forth in some kind of convulsive thing, and I'm thinking to myself that thought, I'll do anything for you.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

REPORTER: Tonight at 6:00 on Eyewitness News. Do you think that a gay couple should be able to adopt a child?

The couple who wants to adopt isn't married and can't get married under New Jersey law. They are gay.

They've cared for the little boy since infancy, but the state won't let them adopt and they're fighting back.

A gay couple wants to adopt their foster child, but the state of New Jersey says no way.

A gay couple is suing the state to adopt the child they nursed back to health.

Now a gay couple from New Jersey is taking their adoption battle to court.

Now they're in the middle of an adoption fight. They want to be his parents, but the state says no.

Together 15 years, the two men want to become his legal parents. Their families and church support them.

PASTOR: They love that child, they care for him, they're constantly responsive to his needs, but they're not smothering, and they're not overly emotional. They're just, they're really good parents.

REPORTER: But is there some psychological justification for not allowing this adoption?

STEPHEN REICH: As far as I'm concerned, the only thing that is relevant is the ability to give a stable and loving home to that child. Nothing else.

JOHN GALLUCCIO: I would define a family as a group of people that are committed to one another, that love one another.

MICHAEL GALLUCCIO: Gay, straight, black, white, orange, whatever. It's-- love is what makes a family. It's who you are, not what you are.

MICHAEL ADAMS: If the state is going to treat an unmarried couple differently from a married couple, there has to be a reason. There's no reason here. In fact, it's counterintuitive. It's illogical. And that's a violation of equal protection.

JOHN GALLUCCIO: We have faith in ourselves. We would not be here if we weren't sure we were serving our child's best interests. And above all we have faith in God that his will is being carried out today.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

JUDGE: This was the best part about being a judge, is doing adoptions.

MICHAEL ADAMS: The state of New Jersey has agreed to repeal its policy that prohibits or prohibited lesbian and gay couples from jointly adopting.

JOHN GALLUCCIO: We had many people that called us and said keep up the fight.

WOMAN: We have never opposed this right. We were following our policy, which was based on our interpretation of the law.

MICHAEL How do you feel?

GALLUCCIO:

ADAM Happy!

GALLUCCIO:

MICHAEL Yay!

GALLUCCIO:

[CHEERING]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

JOHN From the bottom of our hearts, we are so truly grateful that we stand here today with our son.

GALLUCCIO:

REPORTER: A landmark ruling concerning gay couples and adoption. A controversial decision and a breakthrough for gay rights.

Gay rights activists are hailing the case as a landmark that makes New Jersey the first state to put homosexual unmarried and married couples on an equal footing when it comes to adopting a child.

But some Americans have difficulty with this family portrait.

WOMAN 2: Basically what we've done here is rob Adam of the opportunity to have a mother. And that's the irresponsible of the state to have made that decision.

MAN: I feel that the decent, right thinking people in America and in New Jersey will rise up, and I can guarantee you that the Christian Coalition is not going to sit idly by.

REPORTER: For the Galluccio's, providing a loving home was more important than outside opinions. By the time they won their battle to adopt Adam, they'd taken in Madison as a foster child. They hope to adopt the toddler as well as her 16-year-old sister.

JOHN There was nobody in authority willing to stand up and do the right thing for our child until it got to court.

GALLUCCIO:

REPORTER: The state of New Jersey gives gay and unmarried couples the green light to adopt children. Will there be a nationwide backlash to this controversial ruling?

JOHN The Reverend Falwell spoke about him not having role models or seeing a husband, wife relationship. But we don't live in a gay vacuum. We realize our son and our child is raised in a village, and our village has grandparents. They have aunts, uncles, cousins, teachers, classmates. So he sees lots of different role models.

MICHAEL My child is the most important thing in my life. And if I thought for a second that I was doing anything that would hurt him in any way, I couldn't do it.

GALLUCCIO:

REPORTER: And Reverend Falwell, though, thinks you are.

MAN: I really do sense sincerity and love in your voice and heart. I would say to you that if you ever change your mind about Adam and would be willing to place him in a heterosexual family, I will take him the first day and place him in a family that I know you'll approve of.

We are going to try to get legislation passed to protect these children from being placed in homes where the fathers die early, in homes where there is no real mother, where there is no father. We are cheating these children.

29% of children raised in a homosexual household are likely to be sexually molested by that parent.

REPORTER: You know what a lot of heterosexual couples are saying tonight. They're saying this is a travesty that this gay couple is going to raise this child to be gay. What's your response?

JOHN GALLUCCIO: Well, we have heterosexual parents. I'm sure they raised us to be heterosexual, and that didn't happen. We have no intention of raising our son, interfering with his sexuality. That's his sexuality, and not ours.

PRESENTER: Tonight we are pleased to present a National Human Rights family award to John and Michael Galluccio.

MICHAEL GALLUCCIO: Thank you.

JOHN GALLUCCIO: We have a few words that we'd like to say, and we're going to be brief. But there's a few people that we'd like to thank first. And first is Elizabeth Birch, and the entire staff at the Human Rights Campaign.

REPORTER: This is a special Thanksgiving for Maywood couple Michael Galluccio, John Holden, and their son Adam. It's their first as a family. They overcame his health problems only to be faced with another. They had to fight to adopt Adam as a couple without the state's consent, and they did it.

SINGER: (SINGING) Yesterday you came to lift me up. As light as straw and brittle as a bird. Today I weigh less than a shadow on the wall, just one more whisper of a voice unheard. Tomorrow leave the windows open. As fear grows, please hold me in your arms. Won't you help me if you can to shake this anger? I need your gentle hands to keep me calm, cause I never thought I'd lose, I only thought I'd win. I never dreamed I'd feel this fire beneath my skin. I can't believe you love me, I'll never thought you'd come. I guess I missed the love between a father and his son.

REPORTER: And someday they plan to tell Adam how he helped change the world.

SUZANNE ANDERSON: What even made you think that you could do something like that?

JOHN GALLUCCIO: Well, we felt equal and we wanted it to be truly equal, so we fought for it. And it was the right thing to do for our children, and the right thing for Adam.

SUZANNE ANDERSON: When you went into this, did you really think that you were going to succeed? I mean, you must have-- or was it just a shot? You thought I'll just throw something up on the wall and see if it sticks?

MICHAEL GALLUCCIO: Well, no. You know, when things are right, you know you've got to win it. And we knew that it was right. It made absolute perfect sense logically and intuitively that it was the right thing to do.

SUZANNE I understand that both of the children were born HIV positive. These children look really healthy. I mean,

ANDERSON: something's happening right. Tell me a little bit about what's going on?

MICHAEL Well one of the newest I guess statistics is that almost 90% of children born HIV positive, actually sero convert

GALLUCCIO: within the first two years. It's up from a couple of years ago, but it happens an awful lot of the time. And luckily we got-- we have two children who did that. It's a lot easier going that route.

JOHN Starts with love. Just love and holding them, and they want to thrive. Any baby wants to thrive if you hold them

GALLUCCIO: and love them hard enough.

SUZANNE And that was a fabulous video. And sitting at the table with those two men and these precious, precious children.

ANDERSON: I mean, there's nothing like a couple of gay men dressing up a little girl. I mean she had her fur coat on, she had her tiara. She was wonderful.

DAN DE LEON: Oh, how precious. How can someone get more information and to join HRC?

SUZANNE Well, for people that want to get a hold of them on the internet the HRC address is www.hrc.org, or you can call

ANDERSON: Robin McGuire at 713-524-2840.

DAN DE LEON: Thanks. Well, great. Let's take our second sponsor break, and when we return, we will look at more from the HRC Winter Gala.

MAN: [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

ALL: You are watching TV Montrose.

RUSSIAN: [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

BOOKSHOP Lobo Bookshop and Cafe, Houston's only exclusively gay and lesbian bookstore, serving the gay and lesbian

ADVERTISER: community for 25 years. Lobo carries a full spectrum of fiction and non-fiction books, including the largest selection of used books in Houston. And also the largest selection of theatrical movies and other videos of interest to gays and lesbians. Lobo offers a wide selection of cards for any occasion, and plenty of merchandise to select gifts for others or yourself. And there's nothing better than a cup of fresh brewed coffee at the Lobo Cafe. Select from 40 flavors and a menu of specialty coffees. Lobo Cafe also carries fresh made sandwiches and a wide assortment of desserts, including cheesecakes and cookies. For videos, magazines, and merchandise exclusively of interest to the gay and lesbian community, there is no other place like Lobo Bookshop and Cafe.

DANCE CLUB Celebrating 15 years, it's Houston's premiere alternative dance club. Rich's has the hottest music hits, the largest

ADVERTISER: dance floor, four huge bars, and the wildest theme parties. Rich's is a place to be for fun and action. The only New York style dance club for the gay and lesbian scene. Rich's, where the real world ends and your imagination begins. Be a part of the fun and Rich's this week. Rich's, where you can always be yourself.

NARRATOR: Some of them will be three times more likely to commit suicide than their friends. There's also a greater chance that someday some of them will be assaulted, beaten, threatened, harassed, or even murdered, just because they may be lesbian or gay. But look at them. They deserve it. Don't they? The message brought to you by the Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

BILL: Hi, I'm Bill.

BRIAN: And I'm Brian.

RAYMOND: And I'm Raymond.

PAUL: And I'm Paul.

BILL: And we're the grand prize winners of TV'S Montrose first year anniversary. We're on our way to see Patti Lebel, and you're watching.

ALL: TV Montrose. Woo!

[MUSIC PLAYING]

DAN DE LEON: Welcome back.

SUZANNE ANDERSON: Well, let's take another look at the coverage from the HRC Gala and learn more about this valuable organization. HRC financially survived from memberships and from silent auctions held at galas such as this one. Tonight's Houston event raised \$100,000 local the national fight for equality. Let's get back to the gala and hear from Andy Tobias and Candace Gingrich.

ANDREW TOBIAS: The television. Network television. Well, one of my great heroes in the world is Ellen, and a year or two, I guess there's not even two years ago, but whenever that all happened, boy, what a great breakthrough. But huge controversy. Now just a year later, look at the difference. Now, there's a show called *Will and Grace*. Most of you have probably seen. If you haven't, you really should. And it's on in primetime on NBC.

And the big story to me is, there's no story. There's no controversy. It's got great ratings, nobody's shouting about it. People are loving it. I read a statistic the other day that follows *Just Shoot Me*, which is very fun. And 89% of the people who watch *Just Shoot Me* stick around to watch *Will And Grace*. Now they can't all be gay, right? I'm guessing that of the 11% who fall off, some are tired, and a few are fanatic religious right people who think that we shouldn't exist.

This is enormous progress. I mean and the crowning television thing, of course, is the Teletubbies. The best thing that ever happened to us. I believe two things. First of all, I mean believe clearly Tinky Winky is gay, is what I believe. But so what? And he is not molesting any of the other Teletubbies. Great, he's gay. He's a gay Teletubby. Who cares?

SUZANNE ANDERSON: Andrew Tobias, Harvard Business School, three times best seller, New York Times. Incredible having you here tonight.

ANDREW TOBIAS: It's very nice to be here.

SUZANNE ANDERSON: What ties you into the HRC? What was your motivation to become a part of this?

ANDREW TOBIAS: Well, I'm on the board of directors of HRC, and it's a wonderful organization. We all, in the gay and lesbian movement, I think-- or, well, maybe not all, but I certainly feel like Elizabeth Birch is my leader, and Winnie Stachelberg who is the political director just does a fantastic job. And I think it's a great opportunity to try to move ahead the cause of civil rights, which still means African-American civil rights to me, and all sorts of other civil rights, but now in the '90s, and the new Millennium, it's kind of us. I mean we're the Civil Rights movement now.

SUZANNE ANDERSON: You're a very significant part of HRC. Now what exact role do you play there?

CANDICE GINGRICH: Well, right now I'm the manager of the National Coming Out Project. When I first started working with HRC I was a spokesperson for National Coming Out Project. In fact that was what brought me to Houston the first time in '95. I went on this huge 52 city tour to talk about coming out, and why it's important. And it's four years later, and if anything the importance of coming out has increased.

We've seen this new attack by the far right on us. Their full page ads. Hope for healing, the truth shall set you free and all of that. And I think one of the best ways we can counter that is by living our lives openly and honestly, and showing people that being gay doesn't mean that you're unhappy, or unhealthy, or sick in any way. That this is who we are. And if anything, we're unhealthy or unhappy because of the way society treats us. Not because we're gay.

SUZANNE ANDERSON: Prestigious awards were given to several local people, including Gail and Pat Ricky of Houston PFLAG.

PAT RICKY: We're so proud to accept this very distinguished honor. I've told a lot of groups that our life changed for the better when we found out we had a lesbian daughter. It just made a world of difference to us.

[APPLAUSE]

We know so many people in this room. We just love to give you all a hug, and we love you all, and it's a great honor. Thank you very, very much.

[APPLAUSE]

SUZANNE ANDERSON: Also honored with the Corporate Equality award was Chase Bank of Texas.

RICHARD BIELEC: Our organization hasn't been following the pack on diversity issues. We've been leading the way, many times out there in front with a very rare company. Because of that we've taken some heat along the way, when we were the first Houston corporation to form a group to participate in the Pride Parade, for example. Or when we were the first Texas bank to advertise on a regular basis in publications that cater to a gay and lesbian audience.

SUZANNE ANDERSON: A special note was an award for Harold Schultz, formerly of Chase Bank, and now with Bank United for his long history of dedication to Corporate Equality and initiatives, as well as long term association with HRC.

DAN DE LEON: We really hope that you enjoy tonight's special presentation about the Human Rights Campaign, and then maybe some of you will join HRC and help shape the political future of our community.

SUZANNE That's right, and if political action is a personal interest then HRC as an organization that you really should look
ANDERSON: closely at becoming a member of.

DAN DE LEON: We want to thank the Galluccio family for providing their inspiring family video.

SUZANNE And [? Arden ?] what an incredible job you did co-hosting. We want to thank Jim McColgan, Robin McGuire, and of
ANDERSON: course Peggy Testa, and the many others that helped make this episode possible for the show. For TV Montrose
and until next week, I'm Suzanne Anderson.

DAN DE LEON: And I'm Dan de Leon. Good night.