



About

Founded in 1990, GAPIMNY is an all-volunteer, membership-based community organization with the mission to empower queer and trans Asian Pacific Islanders* to create positive change. We provide a range of political, social, educational, and cultural programming and work in coalition with other community organizations to educate and promote dialogue on issues of race, sexuality, gender, and health.

**Queer & Trans – We use this term to include all identities within the larger LGBTQ community, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, two-spirit, transgender, same-gender loving, gender non-conforming, queer, and questioning people.*

**Asian Pacific Islander – We use this term to include many ethnic identities including East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, and Mixed-Race people.*

OUR VALUES

A commitment to anti-racism: Throughout GAPIMNY's history, members have challenged racial bias and discrimination in the LGBTQ community, not just against Asian and Pacific Islander communities but against other communities as well.

A commitment to anti-homophobia and transphobia: GAPIMNY has launched campaigns and participated in various events and actions to challenge homophobia and transphobia, particularly in the Asian Pacific Islander (API) communities.

Solidarity with black, latinx, and indigenous communities: Historically, GAPIMNY has been connected with other LGBTQ people of color organizations including Men of All Colors Together (MACT), Audre Lorde Project, FIERCE, and Project Reach. GAPIMNY members understand that the issues we experience as queer and transgender Asian Pacific Islanders are connected to the issues of other queer and transgender people of color.

Immigrant Justice: Many folks who have joined GAPIMNY are undocumented. GAPIMNY has worked with LGBTQ and immigrant rights organizations to make sure that their stories are heard.

Inclusion: Throughout the years, GAPIMNY has thought about how to be more inclusive and representative of all people that comprise LGBTQ and API. Some of the groups that we have actively discussed:

- Trans and gender non-conforming inclusion (see above)
- Pan-ethnic inclusion (not just East Asian)
- Language inclusion (not just English-speaking)
- Class inclusion (making sure that events are affordable/have affordable options and marketing events to people from all class backgrounds)
- Age inclusion (multi-generational)

-Disability inclusion (making our events accessible in all forSafer Spaces: We do not believe there is any space that is totally safe from harm, violence, and oppression, but we strive to create spaces that are as safe as possible. In addition, we respect that some members may not want their participation to be public. For example, at our events we ask folks to tell us if they do NOT want their photos taken/posted.

Economic Justice: GAPIMNY prioritizes the needs of working class and resource-poor members of our community and other communities of color. This commitment to combating capitalistic self-interest and income inequality is exemplified by our history of redistributing funds from class-privileged community members and allies to those in need.

History Timeline

1990 – THE EMBRYONIC YEAR

GAPIMNY is formed by John Chin, Don Kao, and John Manzon. Goals, vision, structure, and essential groundwork were discussed at the Inaugural Retreat. The first informal bi-weekly meetings begin at Project Reach, providing supportive space for Asians & Pacific Islanders (APIs) to discuss issues such as coming out. GAPIMNY officially debuts at the 1990 Lesbian & Gay Heritage of Pride Parade.

1991 – MISS SAIGON PROTEST

GAPIMNY begins its affiliation with the LGBT Center by participating in an Executive Negotiators Retreat, which hosted workshops on racism. GAPIMNY sponsors a forum that focuses on the issues of negative stereotypes of women and Asians, as well as the issue of white actors taking on Asian roles in “Miss Saigon”. GAPIMNY leaders team up

with Asian Lesbians on the East Coast (ALOE) and other people of color groups for the “Heat is on in Saigon” campaign to protest the whitewashing and misrepresentation of Asians in the “Miss Saigon” musical, and to protest the LGBT Center’s partnership with the musical’s producers. They protest on the opening night of “Miss Saigon”. Media coverage is extensive and six supporters are arrested.

1992 – GROWING PAINS

GAPIMNY members describe a period of turmoil at the beginning of the year over who has authority over the direction of the group, politically or socially. A controversial second anniversary celebration takes place at the LGBT Center in which a variety show featured a Filipino drag performer lip-synching a song from “Miss Saigon” a la Lea Salonga. Several attempts are made by guests to stop the performer from going on. The emcee cautions the audience that although they might enjoy the performance, they should also recall the racial underpinnings of the show’s story and production practices.

1993 – CATSKILLS MOUNTAIN SUMMER RETREAT

The first “Mah-jong Tournament” takes place at the Catskills Mountain Summer Retreat. GAPIMNY members join other API groups in the march on Washington. Planning and discussions are started for a possible gay API conference.

1994 – FIRST GRANT AND STRUCTURE

Chung To and Curtis Chin are at the helm as GAPIMNY begins to take on more structure. GAPIMNY receives a grant from the North Star Foundation to organize the very first “Rice Conference,” a one-day affair that takes place in June 1994. GAPIMNY receives another grant from GCHP National Programs: Center for Disease Control to help the group organize its efforts in combatting the spread of AIDS in the community through outreach and education.

A record of 50 people attend the Catskills Fall Retreat.

GAPIMNY bylaws are drafted by a small core of individuals including Jerome Zorilla, Curtis Chin, Chung To, Kin Tam, Lam Duc Kim, Randy Lao and Julio Chan-Sanchez.

The first holiday party at the December meeting is organized.

1995 – FIRST OFFICIAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

GAPIMNY by-laws are put into effect and the first official Steering Committee meeting takes place. Co-Chairs Jerome Zorilla and Warren Ng are elected by the general membership. The GAPIMNY information line, (212)802-RICE, makes its debut, providing meeting and events information. The Queens Pride Parade welcomes the GAPIMNY contingent for the first time. GAPIMNY receives fiscal sponsorship from APICHA. Some 75 people attend the first annual Society Hill Thanksgiving Bash hosted by Leung Lee.

1996 – LAUNCH OF THE WEBSITE

GAPIMNY launches its website under leftnet.net. Co-Founder Don Kao's presentation "Racism from an Asian American Perspective" draws a record number of attendees to the May workshop. The GAPIMNY logo is created, displaying interlocking male symbols within an apple. The Lesbian & Gay Pride Parade experiences the debut of GAPIMNY drag queens, Mimi Yu and Red Azalea. Social events include: The United Nations Spring Potluck Party, Benefit Fundraiser Party on Mercer Street, Indian Summer Barbecue, Tubing Down the Delaware with Sundance.

1997 – DYNASTEIA

GAPIMNY hits a low note. Talks of disbanding the group are rumored. GAPIMNY member Pauline Park joins others in lobbying Congress to address violence against transgender people. Doug Lee hosts the first annual DynasTea party, "Queens for Queens". This becomes a signature event for GAPIMNY. GAPMNY celebrates artist Ho Tam, treating members to an early screening of his video "The Yellow Pages," part of "Season of the Boys," which was shown at MIX NYC 1997 Film Festival.

1998 – GROWING STRONG

GAPIMNY members Julio Chan-Sanchez, Leung Lee, and Pauline Park participate in the LGBT Centers "Skirting the Pacific Rim: Emerging Asian American Sexualities." GAPIMNY is visible at the Asian American Heritage Festival, a day-long event celebrating API roots. Workshop topics include: "Homosexuality and Buddhism," "Postcards from the New Gay Paradise," "Coming Out: The 2 Part Workshop Series," "Exercise and Nutrition."

GAPIMNY Member-at-Large Weiben Wang is interviewed by the National Broadcast News of Taiwan at the Gay Pride Parade. The South Asian Lesbian Gay Association (SALGA) joins GAPIMNY for the annual DynasTEA Dance benefit at The Web.

The jam-packed annual Holiday Party at the LGBT Center is a success, with plenty of raffle give-a-ways, a Korean go-go dancer, and a surprise visit from the man in the red suit.

1999 –WINTER BALL

The first ever “Winter Ball: An Evening of Elegance and Taste” dinner banquet at Raymond’s Café is created and organized by Doug Lee and Algene Wong. GAPIMNY hosts a two-part Sexuality Series, “Discovering Your Sexual Identity” and “Making Safe Sex Fun” with guest speakers from APICHA and the Young Men’s Survey. Workshop topics include “HIV Today,” “Marriage Equality”(facilitated by Marriage Equality New York), “Coming Out at Work,” “Self Defense Safety and Awareness” (hosted by Ruckus), and the highly attended “Drag-o-Rama”

GAPIMNY sponsors a reception honoring Chingusai-Seoul and Kiri-Kiri, recipients of the 1999 Felipe de Souza Award from the International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission.

GAPIMNY takes part in the LGBT Center’s “Out Inside the City: A May Day Orientation for LGBT Immigrants,” the Asian American Heritage Festival at Union Square, and a discussion at WBAI’s Out FM radio on issues faced by queer Asian communities and organizations.

2000 – 10TH ANNIVERSARY AND DEBUT OF *PERSUASIAN*

GAPIMNY gets its own web domain: gapimny.org hosted by queernet. The Green Tea Dance fundraiser is held at Pegasus Lounge on St. Patrick’s Day.

PersuAsian newsmagazine debuts.

GAPIMNY celebrates “Reflections” observing its 10th anniversary at the LGBT Center, honoring founding members Don Kao, John Manzon, and John Chin.

GAPIMNY conducts voter registration at Pegasus Bar and The Web alongside the LGBT Center’s “Promote the Vote” efforts, presenting a voter education program called “What’s at Stake in the Elections for Gay Asian Americans?”

GAPIMNY testified before the US Presidential Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders at the Commission's Eastern Region Town Hall Hearing in NYC on the unique concerns and unmet needs of queer Asian Americans.

2001 – GILL FOUNDATION GRANT

GAPIMNY wins a major grant from the Gill Foundation to support outreach and education efforts, including the release of the first organizational brochure, which is distributed to community organizations and service agencies, and a mass printing and distribution of *PersuAsian*.

2002 – GROWING PARTNERSHIP

GAPIMNY holds a spring banquet celebration, "Springderella," and honors Council Member John Liu, the first Asian American elected to the NY City Council, and Joo Hyun Kang, Executive Director of the Audre Lorde Project.

GAPIMNY holds "Boiling Rice: LGBT Asian Americans Speak Out," a political forum celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Almost 100 LGBT APIs and other gay activists begin to lay foundation for an LGBT Asian political agenda.

GAPIMNY partners with Queens Pride House in Woodside to host Gay Asian Open House and Brunch, featuring singer/songwriter Daniel Morito Katz.

GAPIMNY partners with Asian CineVision and co-sponsors two movie screenings at the Asian American International Film Festival, *The World of Mei Lan Fang*, and *Ke Kulana He Mahu*

Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields and City Council member Alan Gerson honors GAPIMNY at their Gay Pride Month Celebration. GPAIMNY is the only Asian organization or individual to be honored.

2003 – BE ALL OF WHO YOU ARE

GAPIMNY launches a poster campaign entitled "Be All of Who You Are," to educate the community about being gay, hanging the posters on lampposts, in neighborhood Laundromats, community centers, and libraries in Manhattan and Queens.

GAPIMNY members travel to Washington, DC to lead an empowerment workshop for Asian Queer United in Action (AQUA).

GAPIMNY partners with the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) to sponsor a forum on immigration issues for LGBT Asian Americans.

In light of some negative coverage concerning the US Supreme Court's decision striking down Texas's anti-gay sodomy statutes, GAPIMNY hosts a bilingual press conference to educate the Asian-language press on the impact of the ruling.

2004 – DETAILS MAGAZINE PROTEST

GAPIMNY joins the national Asian Pacific American Coalition for Equality (APACE) to fight for the legal right for same-sex marriage.

Ten years after the Rice Conference, GAPIMNY spearheads “Queer Asian Pacific Legacy” a historic regional conference for LGBT pan-Asian Pacific Americans to network, organize, agitate, educate, and build capacity. GAPIMNY helped organize this historic conference drawing 400 activists to NYU. Actor B.D. Wong, author Urvashi Vaid, and activist Joo-Hyun Kang (1st Director of Audre Lorde Project) delivered the keynote address. The conference is the first-ever queer, multi-gender and pan-Asian conference of its kind, taking place at New York University in NYC. This lays the groundwork for the National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA).

GAPIMNY joins forces with Asian Media Watchdog and organizes a 200-person demonstration in front of the office building of *Details* magazine, protesting the magazine's feature “Gay or Asian?” and its stereotypical depictions of LGBT people and APIs. The editors issue a national apology, agreeing to diversity sensitivity trainings, and to include more diverse features and images of LGBT APIs in their magazine.

To support queer Asian women, GAPIMNY hosts a pan-gender workshop “Gender and the Queer API Experience” at its monthly general meeting, which is normally attended only by men. From there, women organize Q-WAVE (Queer Asian Pacific Islander Warriors Achieving Visibility and Empowerment).

GAPIMNY's theme in marching in the 35th Annual lesbian/Gay Pride Parade is “Gay and Asian: Nothing Lost in Translation.” GAPIMNY distributes multilingual stickers, buttons, and carries twenty gigantic three-foot balloons – with “gay” written in Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Hindi.

Speaking out against the right-wing policies of the Bush administration, GAPIMNY organizes a contingent of over 50 gay Asians to march against the Republican National Convention, held in New York City.

2005 – MULTILINGUAL OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

GAPIMNY works with the Asian American Federation of New York and Center to release a report on API same-sex households derived from the 2000 US Census data. The groundbreaking study examined Asian gay and lesbian households in NYC metro area, their numbers, where they were concentrated, and offered insights into policy implications.

GAPIMNY releases a study with the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute revealing that 82% of LGBT API people surveyed had experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation, and the same percentage had experienced discrimination based on their race and ethnicity. The study, “Asian Pacific American Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender People: A Community Portrait,” by Alain Dang and Mandy Hu, is based on analyses of survey data from the pool of attendees at the March 2004 Queer Asian Pacific Legacy regional conference.

GAPIMNY launches multi-lingual outreach palm card and poster campaign targeting Chinese and Korean speakers.

GAPIMNY celebrates its 15th year anniversary. Check out the video:

2007 – DOWNTIME FOUNDED

In 2007, Terrence Gong and Daniel Ho start DowneTime to create a confidential, supportive space for young queer and questioning Asian men and transgender individuals to talk about issues related to identity.

GAPIMNY also participates in a workshop on Queer Asian Americans at the East Coast Asian American Student Union (ECAASU) at Yale University, featuring former GAPIMNY SC member Pauline Park.

2009 – [IN]VISIBLY AMERICAN

DowneTime continues to grow in number. Monthly support meetings welcome 20-30 people each. DowneTime’s workshop on HIV and stigma attracts 75+ folks.

GAPIMNY helps organize the first queer Asian immigration forum in support of immigration reform featuring stories of undocumented immigrants. Over 100 people, including media, were in attendance.

GAPIMNY participates in the National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance conference in Seattle. Check out the video:

2010 – ORGANIZING AGAINST ROCKIT & RACIST LGBT NIGHTLIFE

GAPIMNY and DowneTime join a long legacy of calling out racism in the LGBT nightlife scene by [organizing against Rockit](#), a party owned by Tony Fornabaio and Brandon Voss, for racial discrimination at the doors of their party.

2010 – LUNAR NEW YEAR FOR ALL

GAPIMNY joins Q-WAVE in the first queer contingent in Chinatown's Lunar New Year Parade. This action inspires the [Asian Pride Project](#), which aims to document stories of parents and siblings of LGBT Asians. [Check out the video of Lunar New Year for All in the New York Daily News](#).

2011 – HONG KONG SHOWER-IN

GAPIMNY hosts a Trivia Bee fundraiser to propel GAPIMNY's programming.

GAPIMNY makes headlines in NYC and Hong Kong by protesting groups in the U.S. exporting ex-gay conversion therapy to Hong Kong. Check out the video:

In 2011, GAPIMNY also organized against a gay party held at a popular gay bar for using casually racist stereotypes of Asian people as a theme for their party. GAPIMNY was able to change the theme and received an apology.

2012 – Q-ASPIRE RETREAT

GAPIMNY makes a strong showing at the 2nd National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA) Summit offering workshops and facilitating caucuses.

GAPIMNY leads the organization of a leadership retreat, building a collaborative alliance between long-standing partner groups, Q-WAVE and SALGA.

2013 – GROWING STRONG

GAPIMNY welcomes its first Co-Chair who identifies as transgender.

GAPIMNY revitalizes DownTime with a focus on high-school and college-age gay, bisexual and transgender Asian and Pacific Islander men. GAPIMNY also participates in Busting Bunty Berman, a campaign denouncing the casual homophobia and transphobia in the play, *Bunty Berman Presents*.

GAPIMNY also joins the MinKwon Center for Community Action on their APA Community Town Hall on immigration to lift up the stories of LGBTQ API folks in immigration.

GAPIMNY partners with the Asian Pride Project to launch their website. The Asian Pride Project is a multimedia arts platform telling stories of love and acceptance of API parents of their LGBTQ children.

GAPIMNY members help launch two special projects: Poongmul Movement Builders (Korean drumming troupe) and QASAPI “Queer Asian South Asian Pacific Islander” (for explicitly political projects)

GAPIMNY meets with LGBT Youth Japan to exchange stories and information about LGBTQ activism in the U.S. and Japan.

GAPIMNY members also do an unprecedented amount of media, with appearances on WBAI Asia Pacific Forum, NY1, and New American Media.

2014 – INTRODUCING ELIXIR

GAPIMNY introduces its bi-weekly happy hour socials called Elixir. GAPIMNY also organizes the first LGBTQ contingent in the Flushing Lunar New Year’s parade.

GAPIMNY participates in the National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance’s (NQAPIA) first annual Community Catalyst Awards.

GAPIMNY revitalizes its tradition of a social retreat at Don Kao’s cabin in upstate New York.

2015 – BLACK LIVES MATTER AND SAME SEX MARRIAGE

GAPIMNY holds a joint workshop with Q-WAVE and SALGA about our part in the Black Lives Matter movement and how to combat anti-Black and white supremacy within our communities.

GAPIMNY celebrates Supreme Court's upholding of same sex marriage and highlights continued issues facing API LGBTQ communities with local and national Asian media during Manhattan Pride.

GAPIMNY organizes a joint Steering Committee retreat with AQUA-DC.

2016 – PROUDLY GAPIMNY AND THE GAYSIAN DIARIES

GAPIMNY launches fundraising campaign Proudly GAPIMNY which succeeded in increasing membership from 37 to 100 members before Manhattan Pride.

GAPIMNY is recognized with the Membership Growth Award at the NQAPIA Conference.

GAPIMNY launches [The Gaysian Diaries](#), a series of personal diary-style entries written by queer and trans Asian Pacific Islanders.

2017 – UPLIFTING OUR COMMUNITIES

GAPIMNY launches theme "Uplifting Our Communities," a reaction to the racist, homophobic/transphobic, and anti-immigrant policies created by the new White House administration.

GAPIMNY develops 3-month arc of programming focused on trans/gender non-conforming community to increase awareness of issues facing the trans community and create safe spaces for trans APIs.

GAPIMNY presents 3-month arc of programming titled "Navigating Our Cultural Identities," which created spaces to explore and reflect upon how we experience our Asian & Pacific Islander identities as queer/trans people living in America.

2018 – GAPIMNY NO LONGER AN ACRONYM

GAPIMNY drops “Gay Asian Pacific Islander of New York” from its name, an action in solidarity with trans/gender non-conforming Asian Pacific Islanders. Going forward, the organization is formally known as “GAPIMNY” with the tagline “Empowering Queer & Trans Asian Pacific Islanders.”

2019 – GAPIMNY FORMS TRANS JUSTICE COMMITTEE

GAPIMNY forms the Trans Justice Committee (TJC), composed of six trans/gender non-conforming Asian Pacific Islanders (TGNC APIs), with the mission to “create a space for Asian / Pacific Islander gender variant people to amplify visibility, power, and solidarity with other groups in the margins.”

The TJC hosts the Starfruit Summit in July at the New Women Space in Brooklyn: there was a bazaar of TGNC API wares/snacks, a discussion, and cocktail hour.

In November, the TJC hosts the Starfruit Harvest at the LGBT Center: there was a panel discussion of trans femmes discussing self-love and solidarity across different racial and ethnic backgrounds and TGNC API performances in the evening. The first issue of the Starfruit Zine, compilations of art and writing by TGNC APIs, is passed out.