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Innovative Spanish-Language Radio Soap Opera Developed to Reach Latino Households with Stories of LGBT Acceptance and Equality
Radio Soap Operas Will Air on Radio Bilingüe Stations Across California From February 11 through March 31

(Salinas, CA, February 3, 2011)—Proyecto Poderoso, the Family Acceptance Project, and Radio Bilingüe are proud to announce the on-air premiere of their radionovela series, a Spanish-language radio soap opera developed specifically to reach California's Latino families with stories about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) acceptance and equality.

The three-part series—called “Bienvenidos a Casa,” or “Welcome Home”—will premiere between 6-7 p.m. February 11, 2011 on Radio Bilingüe’s “Rock-in da House.” The premiere will be followed by a discussion about the key issues addressed in the radionovela. In all, the radionovela will air a total of 10 times from February 11 through March 31 across California’s eight Radio Bilingüe stations, reaching Spanish-speaking radio listeners across the state.

The innovative radionovela—similar to radio soap operas popular during the Golden Age of Radio—is based on groundbreaking research from San Francisco State University’s Family Acceptance Project (FAP), which conducted the first comprehensive study of Latino LGBT adolescents, young adults, and families, including family dynamics and the impact of family acceptance and rejection. The series weaves together pivotal social issues into storylines that have historically been difficult for traditional Latino families to discuss and address. This innovative evidence-based series is intended to help begin the dialogue in households by addressing crucial social and political issues, including bullying, coming out, and family acceptance.

“Through this unique storytelling platform, we hope to open up the dialogue in Spanish-speaking Latino households, breaking down the walls of communication, and helping Latino families begin conversations on issues they otherwise would never talk about, and providing them with a greater understanding of the hurt and damage experienced by adults, children, and youth who don’t have their family’s full, loving support and acceptance,” said Proyecto Poderoso Manager Dan Torres, Esq.

In 2007, the National Center for Lesbian Rights and California Rural Legal Assistance partnered to create Proyecto Poderoso—or Powerful Project—to provide legal assistance for low-income LGBT people in rural California. Proyecto Poderoso leaders soon recognized a common issue faced by their clients—their clients couldn’t discuss the social struggles and pain they often faced as members of the LGBT community with their families.
The series was made possible through a grant awarded to Proyecto Poderoso from the Horizons Foundation. Proyecto Poderoso collaborated with the Family Acceptance Project and Radio Bilingüe to engage the state’s normally hard-to-reach Spanish-speakers by developing the radionovela. Spanish is the second most common language spoken in California households, with more than 26 percent of residents ages 5 and older speaking it at home, U.S. Census data show.

The team used research findings and messages developed by the Family Acceptance Project with Latino families with LGBT members to pinpoint the issues and create the storylines. Over the last three months, team leaders have also held several focus groups with LGBT Latinos and families to determine the best ways to address key social issues, with field direction provided by Jorge Sanchez, FAP’s Project Coordinator. Delia Saldivar, station manager for Radio Bilingüe KHDH, then used the research and focus group information to draft the series script, with input from FAP. The series will address bullying, and more specifically, the need for LGBT youth, or those perceived to be LGBT, to be able to turn to their families for support, to talk about problems, and find solutions together. The series will also address the struggles of coming out as LGBT, family acceptance and a family’s overwhelming support for an adult child in a loving, same-gender relationship.

“We are excited to collaborate with Proyecto Poderoso and Radio Bilingüe on this innovative initiative to help Latino families support their LGBT family members,” said Dr. Caitlin Ryan, Director of the Family Acceptance Project. “Since our research indicates that family acceptance and rejection impact the health and mental health of Latino LGBT young people—including suicidal behavior, depression, substance abuse, HIV and STDs, self-esteem, sense of the future, and overall health and well-being—the series will have both a health and social impact in supporting LGBT individuals and strengthening Latino families.”

Information on the Family Acceptance Project’s research on how family acceptance and rejection affects their LGBT children is available on their website, including materials for Latino families, in Spanish and English, at www.FamilyProject.sfsu.edu/publications.

The radionovela will air on Radio Bilingüe network stations from February 11 through March 31:

- KS JV 91.5 FM - Fresno
- KMPO 88.7 - Modesto/Stockton
- KTQX 90.1 - Bakersfield
- KHDC 90.9 - Salinas
- KUBO 88.7 - El Centro
- KVUH 88.5 - Laytonville/Mendocino

The National Center for Lesbian Rights is a national legal organization committed to advancing the human and civil rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education. www.NCLRights.org

California Rural Legal Assistance’s mission is to provide high-quality legal services that improve the quality of life for low-income individuals and their rural communities. CRLA legal services are shaped by the needs of our diverse client community. Through a state-wide network of 21 offices, our staff conducts litigation, outreach and legal education on the most pressing issues facing low-income communities: housing; employment; education; workplace safety; discrimination; income maintenance and healthcare access. Visit www.CRLA.org for more information.

The Family Acceptance Project is a community research, intervention, education and policy initiative that is designed to: 1) improve the health, mental health, and well-being of LGBT children and adolescents; 2) strengthen and help diverse families support their LGBT children; 3) help LGBT youth stay in their homes to prevent homelessness and the need for custodial care in the foster care and juvenile justice systems; 4) inform public policy and family policy; and 5) develop a new evidence-based, family model of wellness, prevention, and care to promote well-being and decrease risk for LGBT youth. Research, publications and services are provided in English and Spanish. For more information, please visit www.FamilyProject.SFSU.edu.
Radio Bilingüe, a non-profit radio network with Latino control and leadership, is the only national distributor of Spanish-language programming in public radio. This satellite network was formed to provide stations with news, information, and cultural programming in Spanish and musical programs showcasing a variety of Latino formats with emphasis on Mexican folk and Afro-Caribbean rhythms. Satellite Radio Bilingüe builds on Radio Bilingüe’s decades-old tradition of talk programs and special events coverage. www.RadioBilingue.org.