

MEDIA ADVISORY

KABC-TV TO AIR REJECTED AD WITH GAY FAMILY

Gay families part of KABC family, issue not controversial, says station GM

LOS ANGELES, JANUARY 23, 2009 – Los Angeles television station KABC announced today, following a meeting with the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) and GetToKnowUsFirst.org, that it would begin to air ads from GetToKnowUsFirst.org in primetime as early as Sunday, Jan. 25. The ABC-owned television station came under fire for refusing to air the ad during Tuesday's inaugural celebration, for what a KABC station ad exec cited at the time as "a very controversial topic" to air during "programming that will include large family audiences."

"We are pleased that KABC was willing to meet and discuss this serious issue with us so quickly," said GLAAD President Neil G. Giuliano, "and that this important message about our families will be seen by KABC's audiences in the days and weeks to come."

The 30-second ad initially rejected by KABC features two married African American men raising five children ages 6 to 25. However, the ad was broadcast before, during and after the inauguration in 42 of California's 58 counties, where Proposition 8 garnered the majority of the vote. In Los Angeles, the ad appeared on NBC's owned-and-operated affiliate KNBC.

KABC President and General Manager Arnold J. Kleiner attended today's meeting along with GetToKnowUsFirst.org Project Coordinator John Ireland and GLAAD Director of Entertainment Media Damon Romine. Kleiner explained that independent of the ad, the station had made a decision that during the inauguration they would not air any advocacy advertising, regardless of the content or subject matter.

"I regret that the decision to not air the ad was communicated in a way that was misleading and inaccurate, and I apologize for the misunderstanding that resulted," said Kleiner. "Having seen the ads, we believe these spots are suitable for airing during any day part on our schedule. Gay and lesbian families are part of our KABC family, and issues of equality are certainly not a controversial subject for us."

Ireland expressed satisfaction with the meeting's outcome. "The point of airing the ad on KABC during the inauguration was to reach the broadest, most diverse audience possible, and that moment has sadly passed and cannot be re-created," he said. "We are grateful that KABC has taken our concerns seriously and further clarified their initial decision. Mr. Kleiner has assured us that he will find high-profile positions to air the ad during the coming weeks."

KABC will air the ad during Sunday's episode of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," which regularly ranks among the top 10 series on television. The ad can also be seen on www.GetToKnowUsFirst.org

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