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SAALT Celebrates LGBT Pride Month

As a national organization that seeks to amplify the voices of South Asians in the United States and ensure that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) is proud to stand with our partner, the [National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance](#) (NQAPIA) for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month. We remain steadfast in our commitment to work toward justice, inclusion, and equality not only for South Asian Americans, but for the many communities in the U.S. that struggle against injustice, including those who identify as LGBT.

As the coordinating member of the [National Coalition of South Asian Organizations](#) (NCSO), a network of 49 organizations across the nation, SAALT strives to support organizations that engage, educate, and mobilize our communities to ensure that all South Asian Americans are afforded equal rights, protections, and dignity, across intersections of identity. Many of the individuals served by our partner organizations continue to face bias, oppression, hate violence, discrimination, and many other challenges stemming from their sexual orientation or gender identities. For South Asian Americans, this host of challenges is often compounded by the racial, ethnic, and religious bias they continue to face in the U.S. The NCSO's [National Action Agenda](#) outlines how LGBT South Asians in the United States often face multiple levels of discrimination and unfair treatment in various contexts, and points to policies relating to hate crimes, immigration, marriage equality, and discrimination that have a significant impact on our communities.

SAALT is committed to advocating for justice for all individuals from both a policy and a programming perspective. We seek to build a just and inclusive society in our policy advocacy by encouraging equality and justice in legislation and court decisions, such as creating immigration options for those in same-sex partnerships or signing onto Supreme Court amicus briefs. Likewise, our programs seek to support community-based advocacy to this end through efforts such as [We Build Community](#) (WBC), the [Young Leaders Institute](#) (YLI), and [SAALT Circles](#), which include collaboration with LGBT partner organizations within the NCSO and broader AAPI communities. This year, WBC, SAALT's flagship capacity-building program, is assisting five NCSO members to explore and develop innovative community-based approaches that, among other intersectional lenses, focus on LGBT justice and allyship in South Asian communities. In addition, LGBT justice and allyship is the central theme of this year's YLI program. In July 2014, YLI will support the development of rising leaders as they plan campus and community-based projects that focus upon LGBT justice and allyship. Finally, SAALT is proud to announce that today's DC SAALT Circle will focus on "Exploring Gender and Sexuality in South Asian American Communities."

We are excited to celebrate LGBT Pride Month with NQAPIA and continue our work to build a just and inclusive society for all.