



MAKING POSITIVE CHANGES ONE STEP AT A TIME

One Step A La Vez
Making Changes One Step at a Time
 421 Sespe Ave, Fillmore CA

SERVING TEENS IN THE SANTA CLARA RIVER VALLEY
SINCE 2007
MYONESTEP.ORG

1ST PLACE
 BEST COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATION
 2026
 Best of Heritage Valley

2ND PLACE
 BEST CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES / CENTER
 2026
 Best of Heritage Valley

3RD PLACE
 BEST NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
 2026
 Best of Heritage Valley



SANTA CLARA RIVER VALLEY
PRIDE
Brunch

PRESENTED BY
 ♥ *One Step A La Vez* ♥

SUNDAY, JUNE 21ST, 2026
NOON – 3PM

PALAZZIO EVENT CENTER
 814 E MAIN STREET • SANTA PAULA, CA

INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER

K. ROCCO SHIELDS
 an internationally acclaimed Directors Guild of America filmmaker and former Hollywood script supervisor for J.J. Abrams and Gore Verbinski.

RECIPIENT OF THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

SAL FUENTES
 A pioneer, advocate, and dedicated leader whose lifetime of service has made a lasting impact in our community.

FREE SUNDAY BRUNCH & COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

to engage and promote wellness for LGBTQ+ youth, their families and community allies.

Nanni & Deeda's **TOYS** *Childhood Treasures. Lifetime memories.*

Nanni & Deeda's **GATHER + PLAY**
Board Game Cafe

MYONESTEP.ORG



FEATURING



In 2011, K. Rocco Shields — an internationally acclaimed Directors Guild of America filmmaker and former Hollywood script supervisor for J.J. Abrams and Gore Verbinski — released a ten-minute short film called *Love Is All You Need?* that does one deceptively simple thing: it flips the world.

In the film, being gay is normal and being straight is the deviation. The audience is forced to feel what it's like to live on the wrong side of someone else's assumptions. It has reached over two hundred million people in twelve languages, and schools on four continents now show it in their classrooms.

As a self-proclaimed "activist by default," Shields has learned that a lot of unexpected things happen when you tap into the art of empathy and storytelling. Multiple teachers across the country were fired for showing it — including one in Palatka, Florida, the first openly gay teacher in his district. Shields cashed in her frequent flyer miles and flew out to stand beside him. When someone needs her to show up, she shows up. That's been the pattern ever since.

The feature-length version earned 30+ international festival awards, a Certificate of Merit from the United States Congress, and premiere screenings at the Newport Beach and Brooklyn Film Festivals. Coverage in *Variety*, *HuffPost*, *Upworthy*, and *BuzzFeed* helped propel the film into a global conversation about empathy, identity, and what happens when a story forces you to see the world from someone else's shoes. It also brought death threats from the Westboro Baptist Church. In response to these threats, Shields screened the film directly across the street from their compound at the Equality House.

After losing her father to addiction and mental health complications, Shields founded *Genius Academy* — an AI-powered simulation platform that trains the next generation of therapists and counselors to sit in the hardest conversations and not flinch. Her theory: if these tools had existed earlier, her father might still be with her today. She aims to change that for people worldwide. Her work has been profiled in *Forbes*, *Entrepreneur*, and *Variety*, and covered by *NBC News*, *CBS*, *CW*, *Fox*, *Yahoo! Movies*, and *The Washington Blade*. She has spoken at *SXSW* and *SXSW EDU*, universities nationwide, major mental health conferences, LGBTQ+ advocacy events, and innovation forums, and serves on the *SXSW EDU* Advisory Board.

She speaks at this year's *SCRV Pride Brunch* in honor of her best friend, Tommy Weisbecker, who served on the *Pride* committee and whose LGBTQ+ scholarship fund lives on through *One Step A La Vez*.

THOMAS JAMES WEISBECKER LGBTQ+ SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In Loving Memory of Thomas James Weisbecker

March 19, 1981 – June 21, 2025

The Thomas James Weisbecker Scholarship Fund was established to honor the life, work, and enduring legacy of Thomas James Weisbecker — a gifted teacher, minister, counselor, advocate, and compassionate community leader whose life was dedicated to uplifting others through love, education, spirituality, and service.

Thomas was born in the San Francisco Bay Area on March 19, 1981, with a rare congenital condition that caused him lifelong physical pain and challenges. Yet from the very beginning, he was surrounded by extraordinary love. Through the unwavering devotion of his parents, Francine and Gerard Weisbecker, and the support and protection of his older brothers, Mathew and Michael, Thomas grew up knowing acceptance, safety, and belonging. That foundation of love shaped the person he would become and informed the compassion he extended so freely to others throughout his life.

Those who knew Thomas remember a man who consistently chose compassion over bitterness, inclusion over judgment, and hope over fear. He possessed a rare ability to make people feel truly seen, accepted, and valued. Despite the challenges he carried privately, he moved through the world with humor, grace, warmth, and emotional courage.

Thomas studied Philosophy and Design at the University of San Francisco before earning a Master's Degree in Theology from Loyola Marymount University in 2011. He later completed a second Master's Degree in Transpersonal Psychology from the California Institute of Transpersonal Psychology while continuing his lifelong exploration of spirituality, healing, and human growth.

Throughout his life, Thomas served young people and faith communities with deep empathy and authenticity. He worked as a Youth Minister for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles at Corpus Christi Parish and St. Mel's, helping young people navigate questions of identity, belonging, faith, and self-worth with kindness and understanding. While living in Dallas, Thomas served as Director of Congregational Life at Cathedral of Hope, the world's largest LGBTQ+ church, where he helped create inclusive and affirming spiritual spaces grounded in dignity, compassion, and radical acceptance.

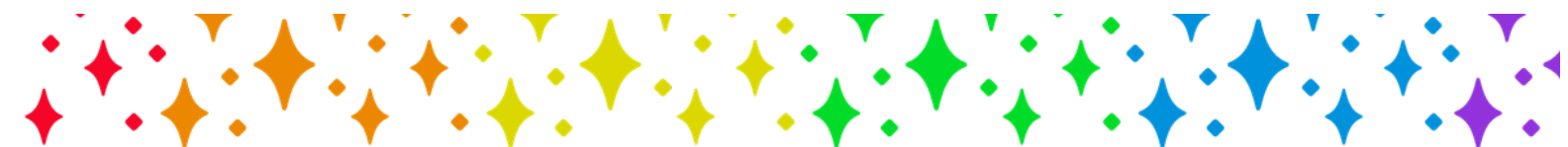
Thomas met his beloved husband and soulmate, Vibay Chandran Weisbecker, in Los Angeles in 2009. Together for sixteen years and married in 2013, the two shared a partnership defined by profound devotion, laughter, intellectual companionship, adventure, and unconditional love. Together they built a life rooted in creativity, spirituality, community, and care for others. Those closest to them often described them as two people who were truly made for one another.

After returning to California, Thomas and Vibay made their home in Santa Paula, where Thomas continued his work in ministry, wellness, and community service. In 2025, he became Congregational Director at the Universalist Unitarian Church in Santa Paula and was elected to the Board of Directors of Spirit of Santa Paula, a nonprofit organization dedicated to community wellness and dignity for all.

The Thomas James Weisbecker Scholarship Fund exists to carry forward Thomas's belief that every young person deserves encouragement, opportunity, belonging, and the freedom to become fully themselves. This scholarship supports youth who demonstrate compassion, resilience, intellectual curiosity, authenticity, service to others, and a commitment to building a more humane and inclusive world.

Thomas's life reminds us that true legacy is not measured by status or recognition, but by the lives we touch, the people we uplift, and the love we leave behind.

To Apply for the Thomas J. Weisbecker LGBTQ+ Scholarship Fund please contact Pedro Chavez by emailing Pedro@myonestep.org or call 805.813.3670.





PROGRAM



Welcome & Introductions
Land Acknowledgment/Inspirational Moment
Opening Message & Recognition of Sponsors
Pride in an Age of Progress and Resistance
Brunch & Community Resource Fair
Inspirational Speaker: K Rocco Shields
Video Tribute for Thomas J. Weisbecker
TJ Weisbecker Scholarship Announcement
Grupo Folklórico Fusion Mexicana
Lifetime Achievement Honoree: Sal Fuentes
Closing Remarks
Dance! Dance! Dance!





A COMMITMENT TO THE ONE STEP PROMISE

The One Step A La Vez mission is to serve the communities of the Santa Clara River Valley by providing a safe environment for 13-19-year-olds and preparing informed, empowered youth who are equipped with the tools to lead; cultivate cultural awareness; bridge the gaps of inequality; and advocate for fair, just and healthy individuals and community.



Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (J.E.D.I)

Our Commitment To Build a Fair and Just Society

One Step A La Vez is committed to the values of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (J.E.D.I). These are action-driven behaviors that we practice throughout all levels of our organization. Our history in addressing systemic barriers deepens our commitment to these values. We are a community-centric organization serving teens who identify with their Latino background, culture, and roots and our board, staff, donors, and volunteers represent the diversity found in the community we serve.

We have adopted hiring practices to ensure that we have culturally proficient staff that connect with the struggle faced by many of our teens. This makes us empathetic to understanding their issues and leads to effective youth outcomes.

J.E.D.I is at the heart of our mission as we believe that every teen – regardless of who they are – deserves an equal opportunity to thrive and succeed in school, work, and life. To cement these values is a moral imperative but also the foundation for building strong, resilient, and healthy communities. One Step A La Vez is rooted in the struggle towards social and racial justice and equality and our commitment continues as we serve the needs of the historically underserved and underrepresented throughout the Santa Clara River Valley.



SPONSORS



- PATRICIA A COSTANTINO
- JANE LAX
- JOHN PROCTER
- RAJI CHANDRAN
- MARIA ESTHER LUNA
- MIA MARTINEZ

COMMITTEE



Committee Leadership

- Brittany Botts, Chair
- Francisco S Estrada, Co-Chair
- Pedro A Chavez, Staff Liaison

Members

- Amanda Garza
- Brian Clay
- Nancy Grass
- Amalia Ochoa
- Yuliana Suarez
- Zack Tinwong
- Deirdre Weaver
- Vibay Weisbecker



2026 Lifetime Achievement Award Honoree

Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient: Sal Fuentes

SCRV Pride is proud to present the 2026 Lifetime Achievement Award to Sal Fuentes, whose courage and advocacy helped advance civil rights protections for people living with HIV/AIDS and contributed to greater healthcare equity throughout California and beyond. In 1992, Fuentes became the plaintiff in a landmark civil rights case after seeking treatment for an injury at a Ventura County urgent care clinic and being denied medical care solely because of his HIV status. At a time when misinformation and fear surrounding HIV/AIDS remained widespread, Fuentes chose to challenge the discrimination he experienced rather than remain silent. The clinic ultimately agreed to compensate Fuentes for the harm he suffered, making the case one of the earliest successful applications of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to address discrimination against individuals living with HIV/AIDS. The impact of the case extended far beyond the courtroom. It helped reinforce the importance of "universal precautions" in healthcare settings—such as the use of gloves and established infection-control practices for all patients—rather than discriminatory treatment based on assumptions about HIV status. The case contributed to greater understanding among healthcare professionals and helped advance evidence-based standards of care that protected both providers and patients. Fuentes' courage helped create greater awareness, stronger legal protections, and improved access to healthcare for countless individuals living with HIV/AIDS. His willingness to stand up against discrimination made him an important figure in the broader fight for equality, dignity, and civil rights. The SCRV Pride Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes his enduring legacy of resilience, advocacy, and service to the community. His example continues to inspire future generations working to build a more equitable and compassionate society.



THANK YOU



- One Step A La Vez
- Brittany Botts
- City of Santa Paula
- Pedro A Chavez & Francisco S Estrada
- Alex Gallardo
- Amalia Ochoa
- Heather Fleming
- Nancy Grass & Deirdre Weaver
- Maria Esther Luna
- Maria "Coco" Macias
- Jose Luis Melgar & Gilbert Moreno
- John Procter
- Jane Lax
- Martin Ledesma
- Mia Martinez
- Michael S. Solarez
- Parque 1055
- Vibay Weisbecker
- Kevin Winger



"With love and gratitude, I celebrate Pride and stand alongside the LGBTQ+ community as an ally. Everyone deserves to be seen, valued, and loved for exactly who they are, and I am proud to support a world where acceptance, respect, and belonging are shared by all."



From:
Mia Martinez



Francisco Solis Estrada

"If you give us the chance, we can perform. After all, Ginger Rogers did everything that Fred Astaire did. She just did it backwards and in high heels." -Ann Richards, former Texas Governor

I was born in Oxnard California to migrant parents from Mexico. My mother worked in the strawberry fields of Oxnard and my father in agriculture as well. As a young boy I loved dancing in my mother's high heels around the house and playing bank with my cousins. In elementary school I would get bullied and beaten by other boys in school because I was different. My mother decided to move to a smaller town where I was embraced by my teachers and friends. I went to Cal State Northridge University and received by BA in Liberal Studies. I have been working in the banking industry for over 30 years. In 1999 I met my soulmate Pedro A. Chavez, and we were married in 2005. I currently have a management position with Citizens Business Bank, in the leadership council of Diversity Equity and Inclusion and was awarded the employee of the year in 2023.

Vibay Chandran Weisbecker

"Believe in yourself, work hard, love who you are, and ignore the naysayers."

I was born in Kolkata, India, and grew up moving around the country with my family because my father was a colonel in the Indian Army. From a young age, I felt different and was often teased at school. My mother always comforted me and made sure my teachers looked out for me. Often, as a young person, I felt like a stranger among people and questioned my self-worth. I channeled my feelings into studying, reading, and making art. This dedication led me to complete my engineering degree and land my first job while still an undergraduate, which took me to England and then the US. In America, I found a community where I could be myself. I met my husband, Thomas, in Los Angeles 14 years ago. He is the light of my life, and together we have created a tranquil life for ourselves. I continued my connection to learning, and graduated with a Master's in Project Management from Pennsylvania State University. My education and experience have enabled me to transform technology for companies like Warner Brothers, British Telecommunications, and Mindbody, among others. Thomas and I now live in Santa Paula with my parents, and I lead a team of engineers and program managers at a start-up company that creates cutting-edge technology using artificial intelligence for the insurance industry.

PRIDE



Nancy Grass, Ph.D.

"Life is good, but rarely easy!"

After failing out of college in the 1980s to marry and have kids, I returned to school to earn my BA, MA and PhD. I am currently the Chair of Communication and Media Studies at Santa Monica College, and have been teaching Communication Studies for over 25 years. I have been with my partner, Deirdre, for 26 years, and together we raised two amazing kids. We are now proud grandparents to three beautiful grandsons. Together we own Nanni and Deeda's Toy Store and Gather and Play Board Game Cafe in Santa Paula.

Deirdre Weaver

Favorite pastime: ping pong! It's purely joyful, and reminds us that we can always strive to be better, and have fun doing it!

As a musician, songwriter, entrepreneur, and educator, my journey from New York City to Santa Paula has been an incredible adventure. I met the love of my life when I walked into a coffee house, then owned by my now wife, Nancy Grass. Twenty-six years later we have three beautiful grandchildren, own a toy store, and a board game cafe on Main Street in Santa Paula, where we share our passion for creating spaces that foster community and spread joy. I am also proud to be a board member of the Santa Paula Chamber of Commerce, and an administrator for the last 12 years at Santa Monica College.





RESOURCES



Apisak "Zack" Tinwong

"There's nothing wrong with you. There's a lot wrong with the world you live in."
 – Chris Colfer

I am from Thailand, and I met my husband, Brian, in 2006 in Hawaii. We then moved to Thailand and returned to university to pursue our Master's degrees while working full-time jobs. I worked as an E-Commerce Manager for several 5-star hotel brands like Accor and Marriott. Brian was the Head of the Science Department at BCC, one of the oldest schools in Thailand. After over a decade, just before the pandemic, we decided to move back to the USA to be closer to Brian's family. Now, we reside in Santa Paula. Stepping into new career paths, Brian returned to a management role at Applebee's, while I work two jobs at Dee Thai Restaurant and as a Home Care Giver. Our 18-year journey has not been easy, especially given our crossed cultures, different backgrounds, families, and beliefs, but LOVE WINS!



Nanni & Deeda's

GATHER + PLAY

Café

 Happy Pride Month!

Wishing everyone a happy, safe, and loving Pride Month!
Look in your gift bag for a free game play coupon.


We can't wait to see you at the Café!

Gather and Play Café, A place to play board games 📍 943 East Main Street, Santa Paula
Follow us: @GatherAndPlayCafe

Nanni & Deeda's



Childhood Treasures. Lifetime memories.

 Everyone Deserves a Playful and Fun Childhood.
Happy Pride from Nanni and Deeda!

Nanni & Deeda's Toys 📍 925 East Main Street, Santa Paula
Follow us: @NanniAndDeedasToys

Membership is FREE

One Step Center Hours

Monday – Friday
1:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.

Open to teens ages 13-19

Food Share Hours

Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of
the month from 3:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Contact Us

421 Sespe Ave

Fillmore, CA 93015

Office: 805-625-7067

One Step Center: 805-625-7066

Info@MyOneStep.org



MyOneStep.org



Scan to
learn more.



421 SAGE AVE, FILLMORE CA

SERVING TEENS IN THE SANTA CLARA RIVER VALLEY

SINCE 2007

MYONESTEP.ORG

CHANGEMAKERS COMMITTED TO LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Sal Fuentes
Chair

Susan Johnson
Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

Aracely Avila
Brittany Botts
Mia Martinez
Norma Perez-Sandford
Mario Rodriguez
Nancy Rodriguez-Hernandez
Christina Villaseñor
Vibay Weisbecker

FOUNDER

Lynn Edmonds

LEADERSHIP

Pedro A Chavez
Executive Director

HELPING TEENS TAKE THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS A POSITIVE FUTURE

Teen Center in Fillmore & Teen Annex in Santa Paula
Our after-school teen center serves as a safe and inclusive place and the home base for all of our programs and services.

Adelante: Empowers teens to discover and use their voices to advocate for social justice, equity, and positive change in their communities. Through leadership development and civic engagement, youth build the confidence and skills needed to address issues that matter to them.

Bienestar: Provides teens with access to early intervention and mental wellness services, including case management, counseling, and peer support groups. The program helps young people build resilience, strengthen their emotional well-being, and connect with resources that support their overall health.

Conocimiento: Evidenced-based prevention program that helps youth with adverse childhood experiences access wellness education and leadership development while breaking down small-town rivalries that lead to positive behavioral changes.

Next Step: Serves youth referred by the Ventura County Probation Agency as well as schools, community members, and law enforcement. Participants complete court-appointed community service hours while receiving individualized case management and guidance that supports accountability, growth, and positive life outcomes.

Bienestar Familiar: Provides families with critical emergency assistance, including support for basic needs, utility and rental assistance, while connecting them through a referral network for social services to help stabilize households during times of need.

Food Access: Staff, youth and volunteers coordinate our twice-monthly food distributions to local families to combat hunger and food insecurity.

Circle of Care: A monthly community collaborative representing different service providers, community stakeholders, and county and local agencies that work together to find community-based solutions.

Thank you to our Institutional Funders, Foundations and Community Partners!

Rotary
Club of Santa Paula

THE FOUR-WAY TEST
Of the things we think, say, or do

The Four-Way Test is a nonpartisan and nonsectarian ethical guide for Rotarians to use for their personal and professional relationships.

1. Is it the **TRUTH**?
2. Is it **FAIR** to all concerned?
3. Will it build **GOODWILL** and **BETTER FRIENDSHIPS**?
4. Will it be **BENEFICIAL** to all concerned?

Pride in an Age of Progress and Resistance



By: Pedro A. Chavez

Once again, communities across the nation are gathering to celebrate Pride Month through festivals, flag raisings, proclamations, social events, and other community-centered activities. For many, Pride is a celebration of how far we have come. Yet in 2026, Pride is also a reminder that progress is never permanent. The rights and freedoms we enjoy today were not freely given. They were earned through decades of struggle, sacrifice, and perseverance. As we witness continued efforts to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and roll back protections for LGBTQ+ Americans under President Donald Trump's second administration, we are reminded that equality requires constant vigilance.

For members of the LGBTQ+ community, the journey toward acceptance has been long, painful, and deeply personal. Many of us carry scars from years of bullying, discrimination, rejection, and violence. Too many friends and loved ones were lost along the way—to the AIDS epidemic, hate crimes, addiction, mental health struggles, or the crushing weight of societal rejection. The emotional toll of living in a world that often viewed us as less than equal left lasting wounds on our minds, bodies, and spirits. Yet despite those hardships, we survived. We endured. And our lives stand as proof that change is possible.

I will say it again: being gay or lesbian is not a choice. What is often mistaken as a choice is the courage required to embrace one's authentic self in a world that may not always be accepting. Coming out is deeply personal, and every person's journey is unique. Some are fortunate enough to be supported by loving families and communities. Others face barriers shaped by fear, religious doctrine, cultural expectations, or personal trauma. Many spend years trying to live according to society's expectations before realizing they can no longer deny who they truly are. Healing begins when we stop carrying the shame imposed upon us by others. It begins when we choose self-acceptance over self-denial.

While we celebrate our progress, we cannot ignore the challenges unfolding around us. Over the past two years, we have watched federal policies target diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, restrict recognition and protections for transgender Americans, and embolden a broader political movement that seeks to redefine who belongs and whose rights deserve protection. For many LGBTQ+ Americans—particularly young people—these actions have created fear and uncertainty about the future.

Perhaps most troubling is the sense that our nation is revisiting debates many believed had already been settled. The hard-fought gains of previous generations are increasingly being challenged, and rhetoric once confined to the political fringes has entered the mainstream. The result is a growing feeling that the arc of progress has been interrupted—and in some cases, reversed. History reminds us that civil rights are never self-sustaining. Every generation inherits the responsibility to defend the freedoms secured by those who came before them. Equality is not a destination; it is an ongoing commitment.

At its core, the American story has always been about striving toward a more perfect union. While our nation has never fully achieved that ideal, each generation bears the responsibility of moving us closer to it. The expansion of civil rights, the recognition of human dignity, and the inclusion of those once pushed to the margins are not departures from American values—they are the fulfillment of them. The LGBTQ+ movement is part of that continuing journey, seeking not special rights, but equal opportunity, equal protection, and equal respect under the law.

The Pride flag has become one of the most powerful symbols of that aspiration. Earlier this month, I once again witnessed its raising at the Ventura County Government Center. Yet the Pride flag remains banned at Santa Paula City Hall due to a lack of political courage among local elected officials. In 2023, not a single member of the City Council was willing to stand beside me and support the LGBTQ+ community by amending the policy that prohibited its display.

For millions of people, the Progress Pride Flag represents hope, acceptance, belonging, and the promise that no one should have to hide who they are. It reminds young people struggling with their identity that they are not alone, that they are worthy of love, and that there is a community ready to embrace them. In times of uncertainty, the Pride flag stands not as a symbol of division, but as a beacon of inclusion, dignity, and humanity.

Today, more than ever, we need our allies to stand with us. We need people who are willing to speak up rather than remain silent, and to take bold action that uplifts the voices of those who have been marginalized. Silence and inaction in the face of discrimination have never advanced justice. Progress has always depended on people of conscience who challenge misinformation, defend human dignity, and refuse to look away. We need leaders, neighbors, faith communities, educators, businesses, and families to choose the path that enlightens rather than censors, educates rather than bans, and builds bridges rather than walls. The future of equality depends not only on those directly impacted, but also on those willing to stand beside us in solidarity. We are all children of God.

Pride in 2026 is about more than celebration. It is about remembrance, resilience, and resistance. It is about honoring the victories of the past while recognizing that the fight for equality is far from over. It is about refusing to allow hard-won progress to be erased by policies rooted in exclusion rather than inclusion. Most importantly, Pride is about hope—the belief that future generations will inherit a world where they are accepted, embraced, and celebrated for exactly who they are.

As we celebrate Pride in 2026, let us recommit ourselves to the belief that every person deserves to be seen, valued, and respected. Let us reject fear and embrace understanding. Let us continue the work of building communities where diversity is celebrated, inclusion is practiced, and love triumphs over hate.

That is how we move closer to the more perfect union envisioned by our founders and strengthened by every generation that has fought to expand freedom and opportunity for all. We are resilient. We are strong. We have overcome adversity before, and we will do so again. Be proud. Be visible. Stand with courage. Speak with conviction. And never stop believing that a better tomorrow is possible.

Change is inevitable. The question before us is whether we will allow fear to shape that change—or whether we will continue bending the arc of history toward justice, equality, and human dignity.

