

curvatures

Finding Community in the Capital

There was a time when Sonali Gulati thought she was the only South Asian lesbian on the planet. That was long before the Richmond, Va., resident and native of India discovered Khush-DC, a social and political group for LGBT South Asians, based in Washington D.C.

"It helps contribute to social change," Gulati says of the organization, which hosts film screenings, dinners, panel discussions and other events to promote the visibility of LGBT people in the South Asian community. In April, while serving as the vice president of the group, Gulati, 36, helped organize a monumental event that brought together group members and their

parents for a dinner celebration and discussion.

"As queer people, we're always coming out, and coming out is just part of our identity," she says. "It's a rite of passage. Coming out to parents...within the South Asian community [is] particularly valuable, because South Asians, culturally, prefer not to air our dirty laundry outside. We're much more private people. And so, to really be out there, publicly speaking about [being gay], it's a huge deal, because there's so much shame attached to being gay."

Gulati, a professor in Virginia Commonwealth University's department of photography and film, says she was surprised to learn about the existence of Khush-DC when she was coming out in the mid-'90s. "I just assumed that the only places where one would find organized groups would be San Francisco and New York," she says.

And though the group has evolved since then, its purpose remains the same. "I think it's really important for South Asians themselves to know that there are people like them. Imagine growing up and not having a reflection of yourself in the mirror," Gulati says. "That's a really odd way to live your life. And in some ways, Khush-DC is that confirmation that, yes, there are people like you." (khushdc.org) [Yusef Najafi]



Gulati (right) and partner Geeta Jahberi

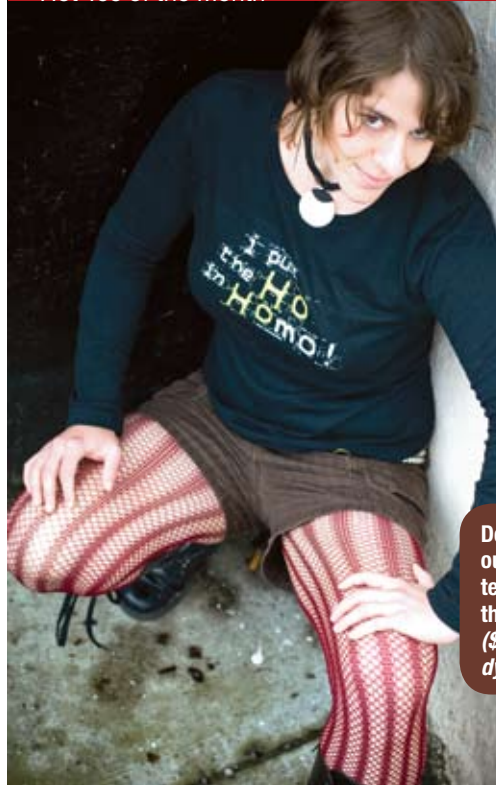
HIGH-END HAWAII FOR A GOOD CAUSE



When a disease affects one in eight women, you can bet the lesbian community is going to take up the cause to fight it. While there are many events close to home

aimed at supporting breast cancer research, why not use your vacation to help fight the cause? This year some of Honolulu's swankiest hotels, spas and adventure programs have designed a heavenly break for women who want to make a difference. For each reservation in the Travel Pink, Travel Oahu program made before December 31, 2009, participating hotels will make a substantial donation to the Susan G. Komen breast cancer appeal. Pink Travel enticements include various combinations of room upgrades, spa treatments and goodies, cocktails and, at the Royal Hawaiian, a luxurious fuchsia teddy bear for the ultra-femme in your life. The idea of a beachside body treatment for two would make any lesbian blush with excitement—supporting women with cancer doesn't get much more romantic than that. (visit-oahu.com/travelpink) [Gillian Kendall]

Hot Tee of the Month



Deck yourself out in this festive tee—just in time for the ho-ho-holidays. (\$23 and up, dyketees.com)



GOODBYE MISS DAISY

Sadly, Daisy, the 5-year-old lesbian puppy companion of popstar Jessica Simpson has reportedly fallen victim to homophobic wildlife. The puppy-dyke was abducted by a coyote in L.A. this fall, just days after Simpson outed the Maltipoo via Twitter, saying, "Daisy and her best friend Bella back together again," captioning the attached photo, "Lesbian loves forever!" In July, Ozzy Osborne's Pomeranian, Little Bit, fell victim to a coyote as well. No word yet if there is a serial killer loose in L.A. While chances are slim, **curve** and Simpson, who says her "heart is broken" over the disappearance of Daisy, continue to hope for her safe return. Anyone with information on Daisy's abduction can write to findmissdaisy@gmail.com. [Rachel Shatto]