

The Alliance

Dedicated to promoting unity, justice, equal opportunity, ethnic awareness, cross-cultural understanding and appreciation for diversity.

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Activist and Advocate Jack Hyde Takes a Look At Special Education for Friday, April 13, Meeting

A long-time teacher of high school students with special needs, ACEH member Jack Hyde will speak at the Friday, April 13, meeting of the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony. The meeting is at 7 p.m. at the Center for Women in Transition, 411 Butternut, and is open to the public. The children's group, UNITY, also will meet.

Jack worked with students whose challenges ranged from autism to dyslexia, and teamed with them and their parents as an activist and their advocate within the school system. "My style was humanitarian, rather than the scientific approach," he says. He taught for 33 years in New Jersey and suburban Chicago and holds degrees in special education from Trenton State College and Northern Illinois University, with other study at the University of Illinois and the National College of Education.

He is the author of a book, "Just Another Brick or How I Survived over 8500 School Lunches," about his teaching experiences; he also writes a twice-monthly column for the *Holland Sentinel*. A humorous and insightful speaker and writer, Jack will give us a stimulating presentation.

No May Meeting: Fiesta Fun Instead

NOTE: There will be no general ACEH meeting in May. Instead, we'll get together at Fiesta, the annual Latin Americans United for Progress (LAUP) celebration, on Friday night, May 4, outside the Holland Civic Center (Pine Ave. at 8th and 9th). Meet at the front door at 7 p.m., sample delicious food, enjoy the band, have a good time!





Alliance Thanks These Renewing Members

A big thank you to renewing members **Tony and Ginner Castillo** and **Debra Quade**.

Please consider joining with Tony, Ginner, Debra, and other ACEH supporters as we work together for social justice and appreciation for diversity, to make West Michigan a place where all are welcomed and respected. The ACEH dues structure is as follows:

Individual: \$20.00 one year; \$35.00 two years
Family: \$30.00 one year; \$50.00 two years
Nonprofit: \$40.00 one year
Business: \$75.00 one year

The ACEH fiscal year runs October 1 – September 30. In lieu of, or in addition to, paying dues, you may make a pledge of service to ACEH. Checks or service pledges should be made out to ACEH and sent to Treasurer Janie Briones, ACEH, P. O. Box 3007, Holland, MI 49422-3007. To pay by credit card, go to our website www.harmonyalliance.org, click on “Join Us” and use the secure Pay Pal system.

ACEH People in the News

Phil Beal wrote a "My Side" article for the *Holland Sentinel* opinion page March 20, calling the Christian church to account for its silence on the war in Iraq and the toll of death and injury to U.S. soldiers and to the people of Iraq.

John Buttrey is head of the regional advisory board for Justice for Our Neighbors, a program of the national Methodist Church, offering immigration legal advice at clinics in Holland and Grand Rapids. Several other ACEH members volunteer also.

Jill Cooper, UNITY director and 2006 ACEH president, is a candidate for the West Ottawa School Board. School board elections in Holland, Saugatuck, and West Ottawa are May 8.

Mary and Dean De Ridder and **Dianna** and **Lee Strebel** spent time in Biloxi, Mississippi, in March, working to rebuild homes destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

Robert Engle was pictured in the *Holland Sentinel* as part of the Accordion Club that meets in Saugatuck. You may spot him later this spring as the organ grinder at the Eighth Street Marketplace in Holland; he also plays the auto harp and other instruments.

Media Stereotypes of Asians Can Create, Not Just Reflect, Reality

Asians living in the United States sometimes are looked at – by the media and society – as only one group of people. In reality, there is a lot of variety, says Ji Hoon Park, assistant professor of communications at Hope College. He spoke to the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony March 9 on "Asian Stereotypes in the Media."

Born in Korea, Professor Park did graduate work in Vancouver, Canada, and in Philadelphia. "We are the foreign-born, the American-born, Asian adoptees, biracial Asians; we are immigrants, we are refugees, we are students, we are U.S. citizens," he said, "but often we are all believed to be foreigners with different looks, different foods, different culture."

Asians can be self-identified, or put into an arbitrary racial category in the United States, based on society's expectations of what an Asian person is, he said.

While some people believe that the media only reflect reality, Professor Park thinks the media construct much of society's perception of Asians and other minorities by deciding what should be covered and how. Media coverage, including press, broadcasting, TV, and movies, confers status--"if a group is not covered, we don't know or think about it, generally," he said.

The main problems, according to Professor Park, are (1) underrepresentation: a symbolic annihilation; (2) misrepresentation: the media don't present complex images of minorities and the range of representation is very narrow; and (3) separate representation: not showing much interaction among racial groups.

Every group, he said, has some stereotypical characteristics; those for Asians include the "perpetual foreigner" and the "model minority," with talent in classical music and math; women who are submissive, or hypersexual and dangerous; men who always speak English with an accent, are involved in martial arts, who are short and asexual. Some stereotypes may be valid, but they are problematic when they become the basis of discrimination and when they create an internalized racism or a self-fulfilling prophecy of negative behavior.

Asians are under- and misrepresented in movies for several reasons, he believes: Few people of color are in Hollywood positions of power; there are negative feelings about Asian Americans in mainstream society; Asian audiences in the U.S. have not created a major outcry about stereotypes in films; and Asians outside North America don't seem to find Asian stereotypes problematic, so the films do well overseas.

Changes may happen, Professor Park said, when the Asian American market grows to a size where it can exert significant financial pressure on Hollywood, and when we reach the point that Hollywood's economic benefit from Asian American audiences overrides the film industry's concern of alienating white audiences.

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*Bringing People
Together from Worlds
Apart*

Core City To Hold Annual Fundraising Dinner April 19

Educational leader Gene Fisher, who is the founder and president of the high-achieving Watts Learning Center Charter School in California, will be keynote speaker at Core City's annual fundraising dinner Thursday, April 19. His topic is "Education—the Fertile Soil, Nurturing the Early Years."

The event will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at West Ottawa High School, South, located at 3600 North 152nd Ave., Holland. Tickets are \$45 and you can reserve yours by calling at 355-0071 by April 13. Sponsorships also are available.

Core City CDC is a 501c3 faith-based organization that provides life skills training and educational programs and emergency support "to help people in need build self-sufficient and productive lives." It is located at 21 West 16th Street, Holland.

For more information or to make a reservation, contact Wayne Coleman at 355-0071 or wcoleman@corecityholland.com The organization's website is www.corecityholland.com

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