

*"Families Valued" event will celebrate gay, lesbian parents and their children*

CHICAGO—On Monday, Congressman Mike Quigley (D-IL) and “[The Hearty Boys](#)” – Chicago restaurateurs and Food Network Stars Steve McDonagh and Dan Smith – will host a “Families Valued” dinner for same-sex parents and their children. In addition to several Chicago families, Quigley has invited former Arkansas Governor and Fox News host Mike Huckabee, who recently likened marriage equality to legalizing drug use, incest, and polygamy and stated that gay couples like McDonagh and Smith should not be allowed to adopt because “[children are not puppies.](#)”

Immediately following these remarks in April, McDonagh and Smith [sent a letter to Huckabee](#) and invited him to dinner with them and their son, Nate. Huckabee did not respond, but now has another opportunity:

**WHAT: Families Valued Dinner**

**WHEN: Monday, June 7, 2010**

**5:00pm – 7:00pm**

**WHERE: Hearty Restaurant – 3819 N. Broadway, Chicago**

*Media who plan to attend are encouraged to RSVP in advance for space accommodations.*

“The event should be as extraordinary as it is typical,” **stated Quigley.** “These are just American families sitting down for dinner as any other family might do on a given weeknight. While they don’t have equal rights, they do have macaroni and cheese, scraped knees, and

stories about the day at school. When there are so many kids in need and so many parents who are unable to care for their children adequately, why we would criticize or think twice about a loving couple providing a loving home is beyond me.”

“After we sent the letter to Mike Huckabee, we received hundreds of responses. These emails – touching, warm, and sometimes shocking – have made us come to realize that there is a large population of American families who feel unrepresented, disenfranchised, and threatened,” **said McDonagh.**

“Dan and I see that a need exists in our community to ensure the well being of families like ours, and we are thankful to Mr. Huckabee for being a catalyst in helping us to focus our voices. We continue to hope that he will consider joining us because as food people, we understand that it becomes a lot more difficult to fear someone after you've broken bread with them.”

The Families Valued Dinner takes place at the beginning of Pride month, when Chicago hosts a month of awareness activities and one of the country’s largest LGBT parades. Throughout the dinner, kids will be encouraged to draw pictures of their families in crayon while guests watch a slideshow of family photos provided by attendees in advance.

Last week, Rep. Quigley sent the following letter to Gov. Huckabee:

Dear Governor Huckabee,

It recently came to my attention that two of my constituents, Steve McDonagh and Dan Smith, professionally know as The Hearty Boys, invited you to have dinner in Chicago with them and their son, Nate. As you know, Steve and Dan are restaurateurs, stars of a Food Network program, cookbook authors, and most importantly, dads.

I understand you may have been unavailable to accept their invitation at the time, but fortunately, you have another opportunity. On Monday, June 7, I am having dinner with Steve, Dan, and Nate. I cordially invite you to join us.

We’re also expecting about a dozen other families with 19 children of all ages. These families

## Quigley, Hearty Boys Invite Mike Huckabee to Dinner

Thursday, 03 June 2010 12:57

---

represent the very best in American life – accomplished professionals and successful entrepreneurs and most importantly, devoted parents. They're involved in their communities and schools and add immensely to the rich life of our great Chicago metropolitan area. And these wonderful, loving families are also guided by nurturing parents of the same gender.

I'm looking forward to spending time with them and hearing the family stories that you and I will immediately recognize as parents ourselves – of fussy eaters, after school sports and recitals, grandparents, and scraped knees.

Again, you are welcome to join us.

Please contact me [info redacted] for the details.

With regards,  
Mike Quigley, Member of Congress (IL-05)