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Rodnina's Daughter Nominated For LGBT Award

By Anna Dolgov

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Irina Rodnina made headlines when she reportedly tweeted a racist picture of U.S. President Barack Obama.

U.S. news show host Alyona Minkovski — daughter of Russian skater and lawmaker Irina Rodnina — has been nominated for an LGBT media award for highlighting the cause of gay-rights activists on her program.

The GLAAD Media Award, seeks to honors "outstanding media images of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community that inspire change," media monitoring group GLAAD said in a recent online statement.

Minkovski's mother, Rodnina, is a State Duma deputy from the pro-Kremlin United Russia faction and has championed Russia's anti-gay laws and a ban on American adoptions of Russian orphans. Last year, she was named joint-winner of the Silver Galosh intolerance award by radio station Serebryanny Dozhd.

Like mother, unlike daughter?

An organization for Russian-speaking LGBT people in the U.S. congratulated Minkovski on her nomination in an English-language statement posted online Wednesday, but used a Russian slang word that loosely translates as "freakish" to describe the mother's political activities.

"Alyona, please, could you also try to inspire change in your mom?" RUSA LGBT said. "Could you please let her know that all this child-"saving" is what makes children flee Russia?"

Supporters of Russia's recent bans on gay "propaganda" to minors, U.S. adoptions of Russian orphans, and the adoption of Russian children by same-sex foreign couples have presented the measures as an attempt to protect Russian children from being mistreated abroad.

The irony of the fact that some of the bills' most ardent advocates have raised their own children oversees has not been lost on users of Russia's social networks.

"This is the kind of patriots that we have: They vote for the laws of the scoundrels, and they keep their children in America," a reader of the Ekho Mosvky radio website said Thursday, commenting on a blog post about Rodnina and Minkovski. The comment received a "thumbs up" from nearly 700 users within a few hours.

Rodnina — a winner of three successive Olympic gold medals and 10 successive World Championships — was chosen to light the Olympic torch at the Sochi opening ceremony, in recognition for her achievements.

However, last September, Rodnina provoked international outcry when a doctored and racially insensitive picture that featured U.S. President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle was posted from her Twitter account.

The tweet prompted Minkovski to speak out in her mother's defense, saying in a Twitter message last week that her mother was "neither a racist nor a homophobe," but adding that the doctored photograph of the Obamas was "extremely insensitive."

While Rodnina initially defended the image as an expression of freedom of speech, she recently apologized for the post, saying that the doctored photograph of the Obamas had been sent from her account by hackers.

Also see:

Ex-Olympian Rodnina Apologizes For Racist Twitter Picture

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