



## Concern grows over the disturbing trend of transgender women murdered in Washington DC

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) mourns the loss of Lashay Mclean, a 23 year old transgender woman of color, who was murdered in Washington DC, early on the morning of Wednesday, July 20, 2011. This continues a disturbing and persistent trend of murders of transgender women in our nation's capital over the last several years, including the murders of Tyra Henderson (2000), Ukea Davis (2002), Stephanie Thomas(2002), Imani Williams (2003), Emonie Kiera Spaulding (2003), and Tyli A Nana Boo Mack (2009). According to Metro Weekly, Washington DC was ranked as having the highest rate of transgender murders in the United States between 1995 and 2006 (Please find a link to the article [here](#)).

NCAVP stands in solidarity with local LGBTQ organizations, including the DC Trans Coalition (DCTC), Transgender Health Empowerment (THE), Gays and Lesbians Opposing Violence (GLOV) at The DC Center for the LGBT Community, and the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE), in calling for local authorities to respond to this extremely disturbing trend and a call for local communities to work together to end violence against transgender women of color.

A vigil for Lashay is scheduled for Saturday, July 23, 2011 at 7PM on the 6100 block of Dix Street NE, the site where Lashay was killed. The DCTC is one of the lead organizers of the vigil. NCAVP strongly encourages anyone who may be in Washington DC area to attend the vigil. A press release from DCTC is below and also available [here](#)

*[NCAVP](#) works to prevent, respond to, and end all forms of violence against and within lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and HIV-affected (LGBTQH) communities. NCAVP is a national coalition of over forty local member programs, as well as affiliate organizations and individuals, who create systemic and social change. NCAVP is a program of the [New York City Anti-Violence Project](#).*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 7, 2011

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DC Trans Coalition Grieves After Violence Claims Yet Another Transgender Woman's Life Group Calls for Solidarity in Response to Violence in Our Communities

Washington, DC - In the early hours of Wednesday, July 20th, 2011, Lashay Mclean, a 23 year old transgender woman, was murdered in Northeast DC. The murder took place near the Wanda Alston House, a housing program for homeless LGBTQ youth operated by Transgender

Health Empowerment (T.H.E.). Another trans woman was present during the attack and, thankfully, escaped. The Metropolitan Police Department has no leads or possible motives, and has not classified Lashay's murder as a hate crime.

Lashay was a friend to many people in the community - including several DC Trans Coalition (DCTC) organizers who offer our sincerest condolences to those grieving this loss. We must stress once again the absolute necessity for the police and media to respect Lashay's gender identity. The least we can do to honor her memory is to respect her chosen, lived identity.

While nothing can bring back those we have lost or undo the suffering we share, we can and should confront the daily terror and anxiety that trans and gender non-conforming people face. We can do this by building networks of mutual support and solidarity that sustain our efforts to feel safe and make change. Together, we must challenge institutional racism, poverty, transphobic attitudes, lack of social services, criminalization of sex work, and other policies that jeopardize our security.

We demand that MPD make finding Lashay's killer a top priority, lest she become a repeat of the unsolved 2009 lethal stabbing of Tyli'a "NaNa Boo" Mack in broad daylight, or the 2010 assault of Chloe Moore by an off-duty MPD officer who has not been charged in the case. "Lashay's murder is yet another visceral reminder that transgender women are consistently placed in dangerous situations. These acts of violence are not isolated incidents. The recent findings of the DC Trans Needs Assessment show trans communities in DC have overwhelming concern for our physical safety," said Sadie Vashti, a DCTC organizer who knew Lashay. "Regardless of the individual motive in this case, our lives are institutionally marginalized and regarded as expendable.

This makes trans women - especially women of color and those involved, or presumed to be involved, in the sex industry - far more susceptible to violence."

We continue to hope for a future where there are no more senseless and violent deaths in our communities. Lashay's memory will strengthen our resolve to continue surviving, supporting one another, and struggling for a better world. There will be a vigil July 23rd at 7pm on the 6100 block of Dix Street NE, the site where Lashay was killed.

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The DC Trans Coalition (DCTC) is a volunteer, grassroots, community- based organization dedicated to fighting for human rights, dignity, and liberation for transsexual, transgender and gender-diverse people in the District of Columbia. To learn more, please visit our website at [www.dctranscoalition.org](http://www.dctranscoalition.org). You can also find us on Twitter and Facebook.