

MEDIA RELEASE



For Immediate Release - March 17, 2011

Media Contact: Roberta Sklar | (917)704-6358 | rsklar@avp.org

AVP is working with hate violence survivor Barie Shortell and responding to recent and brutal hate violence in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island

New York, NY– The New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP) is alarmed by recent violence in Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer (LGBTQ) New Yorkers, and individuals perceived to be LGBTQ. We urge the media to help us bring attention and awareness to this violence.

On February 22, Barie Shortell, a 29-year old gay man, was attacked one block from his home in Williamsburg, Brooklyn near the Bedford Avenue L train stop. A small group shouting anti-gay slurs approached and then viciously beat him. Shortell was hospitalized and required surgery due to the severity of his injuries and has been working with AVP. “My experience has led me to see the greatest importance in connecting the types of violence to which we can all be victims” said Barie Shortell in response to his brutal attack. “Violence does not discriminate based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, or anything else and we must continue to open this important dialogue to create a safer community absent of hate and fear.”

The Barie Response is organizing a benefit for Barie to assist him in paying his medical bills. The benefit will be at on Wednesday March 23, from 7PM to 10PM at Blackout Bar, 916 Manhattan Avenue in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. **Any press who are interested in covering the event can contact Barie Shortell directly at media@bariebenefit.com.** While AVP is not sponsoring the benefit, we will be present to provide safety and outreach information.

In the weeks following the attack on Barie Shortell, two other incidents have occurred both of which ended in fatality. On February 26, Staten Island resident Ronald Jones beat and choked his friend, Robert Jenkins, to death. Jones has told police that he was driven into a murderous rage by Jenkins’ unwanted sexual advances. Then on March 12, five men entered a party in Woodhaven, Queens, shouting anti-gay slurs and brutally attacked 18-year old Anthony Collao when he tried to flee. Collao has since died from the injuries he sustained. Collao did not identify as gay; however, this did not stop his alleged assailants from making an assumption about his identity and targeting him for violence. In recent months, AVP has documented and responded to additional incidents of anti-LGBTQ violence in Williamsburg, Brooklyn and throughout Queens and will continue to monitor and respond to these incidents.

The New York City Anti-Violence Project is dedicated to eliminating hate violence, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and HIV-affected communities through counseling, advocacy, organizing and public education. We provide free and confidential assistance to victims and survivors of violence through our 24-hour bilingual (English/Spanish) hotline: 212-714-114. If you or anyone you know needs help, please call us today.

###