

A Report from  
the National  
Coalition of  
Anti-Violence  
Programs

# Stories of Loss

LGBTQH

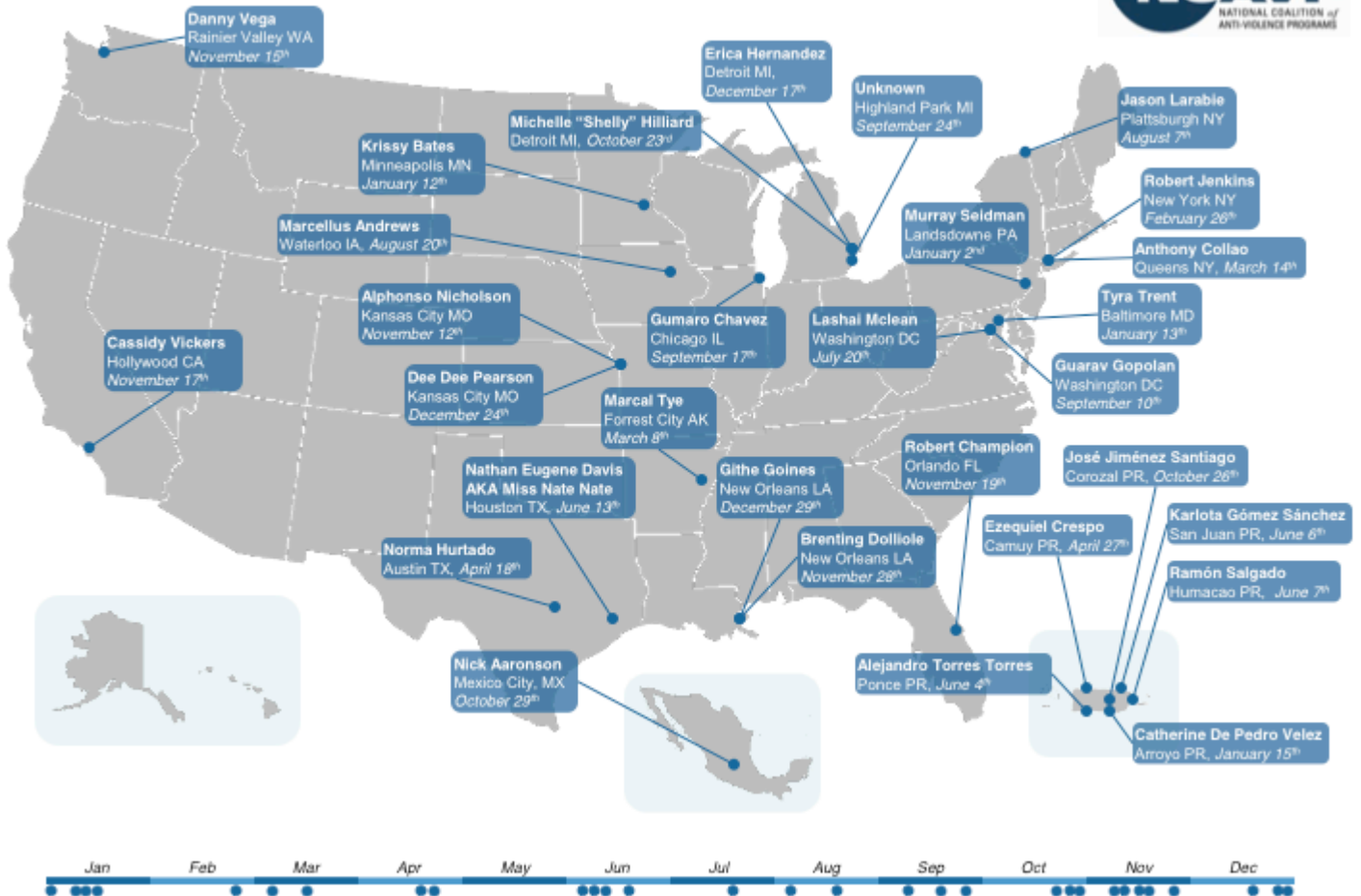
Murder Narratives  
from 2011

# INTRODUCTION

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) presents this collection of stories of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and HIV-affected (LGBTQH) victims of murder in 2011 as a supplement to the annual hate violence report. The purpose of this document is to provide a snapshot of the individual victims' experiences, and to commemorate the lives lost to murder.

In 2011, the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) saw the highest ever reported number of murders against LGBTQH (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, and HIV-affected) communities since NCAVP began documenting this violence. NCAVP documented 30 murders in 2011, an increase of nearly 11% since 2010. While murders rose, NCAVP also documented a 16% decrease in overall hate violence incidents from 2,503 in 2010 to 2,092 in 2011. NCAVP member programs report that this continuing trend of increasing murders is reducing the capacity of LGBTQH anti-violence programs to conduct outreach and other activities to contact survivors, publicize their programs, and document incidents.

## Anti-LGBTQ murders reported in 2011



As found in previous years, hate violence murders continues to impact transgender people, people of color, and transgender people of color disproportionately. Also consistent with previous years, gay non-transgender men represented half of the anti-LGBTQH murder victims. These statistics show that despite the disproportionate impact on transgender and people of color communities hate violence remains a pervasive and persistent issue for all LGBTQ people. These findings continue to shed light on the importance of prevention, strategic response, research, and accurate reporting of hate violence as it affects LGBTQH communities.

This supplemental report brings to light the severity of hate violence against LGBTQH communities, in the hopes of allowing the reader to examine themes in anti-LGBTQH murder and to see the diversity of 2011's murder victims. The report highlights the narratives of thirty known LGBTQH hate motivated murders and homicides in 2011. **The majority of these narratives are not anonymous, because this information is public and critical to understanding which identities are most vulnerable to anti-LGBTQH murder.** Some of these incidents have not been classified as hate crimes. However, NCAVP member programs have carefully selected these stories because they include evidence of actual or suggested anti-LGBTQH hate motives. NCAVP wrote these narratives using information from media outlets, family/friends, and local NCAVP members. NCAVP is not responsible for the complete accuracy of these narratives and the specific details pertinent to allegations, police investigations, and criminal trials.

These stories illustrate the need for the existence and expansion of LGBTQH anti-violence programs. If you are interested in starting an anti-violence program, becoming a member of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, or if you would like more information, contact NCAVP at [info@ncavp.org](mailto:info@ncavp.org) or 212.714.1184.

This report was produced in part with the generous support of the Arcus Foundation.

## NARRATIVES OF HATE MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

### ***Marcal Tye, 25, African American transgender woman, Forrest City, AK, March 8, 2011***

Police found the body of 25 year-old Marcal Tye on Highway 334 in Forrest City, AK, about 45 miles from Memphis, TN on the morning of March 9. Tye was reportedly shot at least twice, subsequently run over, and dragged behind a car. Ms. Tye was the apparent victim of anti-transgender hate violence, but Arkansas has no hate crime law. The sheriff in charge, Sheriff Bobby May, who referred to Ms. Tye inappropriately as a cross dresser, claims that this was just an ordinary murder.

### ***Cassidy Vickers, Age unknown, African American transgender woman, Hollywood, CA, November 17, 2011***

On November 17, at around 9:55 p.m., a transgender woman named Cassidy Vickers was reportedly shot in the chest and killed in Hollywood, CA on Lexington Avenue and Gower Street. Police have identified a suspect who shot at and robbed another African American transgender woman in the same area. Ms. Vickers was known as a sex worker.

### ***Guarav Gopalan, 35, Indian American gay non-transgender man, Washington, DC, September 10, 2011***

On September 10, 2011, Guarav Gopalan, 35, an immigrant from India, was found dressed in drag, beaten to death, and collapsed along the sidewalk just a block from his home and his car. When he was found, his car keys were missing, as was his car. It was eventually found on Girard Street NW. By being dressed in drag Gopalan was not unveiling what he thought of as a transgender identity. His friends say he was clear on that. Gaurav was an actor who enjoyed playing the role of a woman but did not identify as transgender. Police said Gopalan may have been a victim of a crime targeting transgender persons. Gopalan's culprit or culprits remain unidentified.

### ***Lashai McLean, 23, African American transgender woman, Washington, DC, July 20, 2011***

Lashai Mclean, a transgender woman of color was shot to death around 4:30a.m. on July 20, 2011 after allegedly exchanging words with her pursuers in an alley well known as a gathering place for transgender sex workers. Shots were fired, and McLean was struck at least once. The shooting occurred about 10 blocks from a group home for homeless gay and transgender youth where Mclean had sought housing assistance. The murderers remain unidentified to the public, but news reports state that that two males are suspected and being sought by the police. Police have not ruled out the possibility that Lashai's murder was a hate crime, but they have not classified it as such.

### ***Robert Champion, 26, African American gay non-transgender man, Orlando, FL, November 19, 2011***

Robert Champion, 26, of Orlando, FL, died after a hazing ritual on a chartered band bus, which was stationed in a hotel parking lot after a football game. Champion was a member of Florida A&M's famed Marching 100 Band. 30 college students were involved in this incident. 13 of them are currently being charged with murder. Although this murder has not been classified as a hate crime by police, the Champion family lawyer believes Robert received harsher hazing because he was a band disciplinarian, opponent of hazing, and gay.

### ***Gumaro Chavez, 28, straight ally, Latino non-transgender man, Chicago, IL, September 17, 2011***

On September 17, 2011, Gumaro Chavez, 28, was reportedly robbed, beaten, then stabbed to death by five people, Crystal Cruz, 28, Ramiro Carrillo, 21, Victor Redding, 21, Jesus Cabrales, 25, and Yessenia Torres, 25, while leaving La Cueva, a transgender bar on Chicago's South Side. Media sources state that they later ransacked his apartment and celebrated by going to a McDonald's restaurant, and then to another nightclub. The three men and two women involved have all been charged with two counts each for first-degree murder.

***Marcellus Andrews, 19, African American gay non-transgender man, Waterloo, IA, August 20, 2011***

Marcellus Andrews was hanging out at a church member's Waterloo, Iowa home when reportedly, a pickup truck stopped in front of the house, and its occupants started antagonizing his friends and taunting him with homophobic slurs. When two female friends came to his aid, a physical confrontation ensued. 19 year-old Marcellus had been beaten to the ground with a baseball bat and kicked in the face. He died August 20, 2011, after a night on life support. Marcellus had just bought his textbooks for an interior design course at Hawkeye Community College and was the step team leader at his church. Paris Anding, a 19 year-old male, was charged with second-degree murder for Andrews' death. He was convicted of voluntary manslaughter in April 2012, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

***Breting Dolliole, 22, African American, gender non-conforming, New Orleans, LA, November 28, 2011***

Media sources state that police discovered gender non-conforming Breting Dolliole at about 2:50 a.m., November 28, 2011 near South Broad Street in New Orleans, LA. Breting had been reportedly beaten to death. An autopsy found that Breting Dolliole, 22, died of severe head trauma about a half hour before the body was found. Police have identified no suspects in this case.

***Githe Goines, 23, African American transgender woman, New Orleans, LA, December 29, 2011***

Local police found the dead body of Githe Goines, a 23-year-old transgender woman, in a scrap yard in New Orleans, Louisiana after she had been missing for two weeks. Local media reports have not accurately identified Goines as a transgender woman in the reporting of her death, but New Orleans sources assure that Goines identified as a woman. The Orleans Parish coroner's office believes Goines was strangled to death. Local law enforcement have not released information regarding possible suspects in their investigation of this homicide.

***Tyra Trent, 25, African American transgender woman, Baltimore, MD, January 13, 2011***

Tyra Trent, a 25 year-old transgender woman was found strangled to death in a vacant, city-owned Baltimore basement on February 20, 2011. Trent had been reported missing two weeks before by her mother, who became worried after not hearing from her for several days. Family members report that she had been a victim of hate violence in the weeks prior to her death; however, police have found no motive or made any arrests in the case. Friends stated in media reports that Tyra was working towards getting her GED and one day attending nursing school.

***Erica Hernandez, Age unknown, Latina transgender woman, Detroit, MI, December 17, 2011***

Erica Hernandez, a Latina transgender woman, died of stab wounds on December 17, 2011. A suspect, Titus Willis, is currently awaiting trial for second degree murder. Media sources state that a second suspect believed to be involved is free. According to police and prosecutors, Erica reportedly got into an altercation with Titus Willis and a second person after Hernandez, who knew and was visiting Willis, stepped on one of the suspects' sunglasses. A verbal altercation escalated, and became physical. At one point, one of the suspects allegedly stabbed Hernandez in the back of the neck. Hernandez was pronounced dead at the emergency room.

***Unknown, Age unknown, African American transgender woman, Highland Park, MI, September 24, 2011***

The body of an unknown African-American transgender woman was found burned post-mortem in a building in Highland Park, MI. She had been murdered and then her body transported to the location where police found her. The cause and manner of death are unknown. In media reports, the police described that most of the body was burned beyond recognition, that they knew that the body belonged to a person who was "biologically male," but the only identifiable clothing were the victim's shoes (women's shoes). This is also an area frequently known for LGBTQ sex work, and is near the Ruth Ellis Center. The body was never identified.

***Michele “Shelley” Hilliard, 19, African American transgender woman, Detroit, MI, October 23, 2011***

Michele “Shelley” Hilliard was a transgender woman whose torso was burned and found covered with a mattress. Media sources state that Shelley was decapitated, dismembered, and burned to death. She was going home in a cab when she asked the driver to stay on the phone with her until she reached her home and she knew it was safe. The cab driver heard her say, “No,” and muffled noises until the phone went dead. He reportedly did not call police. She was later identified by a tattoo on her arm.

Hilliard was an informant for a drug sting run by the Madison Heights, MI Police, according to reports. By some family accounts, Shelley felt coerced into assisting police. As a part of the sting, officers later arrested Qasim Raqib. According to media sources, he was certain that he was set up by Hilliard and wanted revenge. After posting bond, Raqib purchased a cell phone and lured Hilliard to the address in Detroit where she was dropped off on October 23 by a cab driver and later killed. Hilliard supposedly asked Raqib to deliver drugs to a motel when police apprehended Raqib, who was released hours later. According to family members, Shelley was never informed about Raqib’s release from police custody. Two days later, on October 23, 2011, Raqib allegedly called Shelley, posing as an out-call client, and lured her to her death. According to Raqib’s testimony, he and a second suspect, planned to murder Shelley after Raqib was released by the Madison Heights police, and lost \$500 to police forfeiture. When Shelley arrived at the named location, the second suspect greeted her, paid her cab driver, and Raqib drove a large SUV to pick up Shelley and the second suspect. Raqib then explained that the second suspect pushed Shelley into the car, climbed on top of her to subdue her as she struggled, and could be heard beating her until there was silence. Raqib then testified that the second suspect had strangled Hilliard until she stopped breathing. They later mutilated her body out of fear that DNA evidence could be found on her body as a result of the struggle. Raqib reportedly plead guilty to 2nd degree murder. The second suspect is currently awaiting trial for false imprisonment, kidnapping, first degree murder, and mutilation of a body. Hilliard was well loved, and had a reputation for being polite, pleasant, and considerate to her peers and staff at the Ruth Ellis Center, which she frequented. Hilliard did not live at home, but, for at least an intermittent 2-month span prior to her death, apparently lived in a motel. 30 year-old Qasim Raqib was arrested in December, charged with her murder, and sentenced on March 26 to serve 25-40 years in jail.

***Krissy Bates, age unknown, white transgender woman, Minneapolis, MN, January 12, 2011***

Krissy Bates had only lived in Minneapolis four months before becoming the city's first murder of 2011, on January 12. According to news reports, she was found strangled, beaten, and stabbed to death in her apartment after an out-of-state friend asked neighbors to check on her. Krissy was reportedly known by her neighbors to be involved with sex work from her house, and had posted several Craigslist ads offering massage services since her arrival to the city. Arnold Darwin Waukazo was arrested later in the month for her murder. He claimed he met Bates online and had been dating her for a week, when they got into the argument that led to her murder. He was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 30 years in prison.

***Alphonso Nicholson, 42, African American gay non-transgender man, Kansas City, MO, November 12, 2011***

Alphonso Nicholson, 42, was killed in a Kansas City apartment on November 12, 2011, during a drug deal. Bronson Joyce has been charged with Nicholson's murder. Joyce reportedly told detectives that he murdered Nicholson because he was HIV positive and was infecting multiple partners.

***Dee Dee Pearson, 31, African American transgender woman, Kansas City, MO, December 24, 2011***

In the late hours of December 24, Dee Dee Pearson, a 31 year-old transgender woman, was found murdered in Kansas City, MO. The Kansas City Police Department arrested 26 year-old Kenyan L. Jones shortly after arriving at the scene. The murder took place on East 43rd Street in Kansas City. The shooting was a result of hate motivated pick-up violence. Jones told police he paid to have sex with Ms. Pearson, believing her to be a woman, but hours after having sex with her, discovered she was not. Angry by what he considered a deception, he retrieved a 9mm-caliber handgun, found Ms. Pearson, chased her three blocks to her front door, and shot her there. There has been no independent verification that Ms. Pearson was a sex worker or that Jones’ story is otherwise true. Court reports indicated that Jones has a history of drug-related offences.

**Robert Jenkins, African American, non-transgender man, Staten Island, NY, February 26, 2011**

Early on Saturday morning, February 26, Robert Jenkins' son discovered his father's badly beaten body at his home in Staten Island, New York. A medical examiner's report revealed that he had been choked, as well as beaten. On Monday February 28, 2011, Jenkins' friend, Ronald Jones, was arraigned on second degree murder charges. According to news reports, Jones has told police that he was driven into a murderous rage by Jenkins' "unwanted sexual advances."

**Anthony Collao, 18, straight ally, Latino non-transgender man, Queens, NY, March 14, 2011**

Anthony Collao had recently graduated from high school and was planning to join his family's ice cream selling business, when his life was abruptly cut short. On March 12, 2011, Collao attended a Queens, NY birthday party thrown by two openly gay men at an abandoned home. It was reported that a group of teenagers crashed the party, and in the process vandalized the property, going on a tirade of homophobic slurs and name-calling. Collao, who was not gay, started to flee the scene but was accosted by several of the disruptive teens. They pinned him against a car and beat him nearly to death. Collao was placed on life support but died two days later, on March 14, 2011. Four 17 year-old boys and one 16 year-old boy were indicted on a range of charges, based on their role in the murder. These charges include gang assault in the first degree, second degree murder as a hate crime, manslaughter in the first degree, and criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree.

**Jason Larabie, 32, white gay non-transgender man, Plattsburgh, NY, August 7, 2011**

Jason Larabie, 32, formerly of Tupper Lake, NY, and most recently of Plattsburgh, was strangled to death on Sunday, August 7, 2011, in Plattsburgh, NY. He appeared to be a victim of pickup violence. Dustin Hill reportedly confessed to the murder claiming that it was part of a robbery. Although, according to Hill the murder was prompted by a pickup and subsequent sex. He performed oral sex on Larabie at Larabie's request, for about three minutes. Then, Hill stood up and punched Larabie in the face, grabbed him and put his arm around the man's neck. Hill squeezed hard for about 10 seconds, then brought him to the ground, continuing to squeeze until he reportedly heard him "take a last breath," the court documents read.

**Murray Seidman, 70, white gay non-transgender man, Lansdowne, PA, January 2, 2011**

According to news reports, a case of religious frenzy resulted in John Thomas, 28, of Upper Darby, PA stoning Murray Seidman, to death sometime between January 2 and 6. Thomas supposedly used a rock stuffed in a sock to strike Seidman approximately 10 times in the head. Thomas, a younger friend of the 70 year-old Seidman, alleged that Seidman had made unwanted sexual advances towards him. Thomas spent nearly every day with Seidman and he reportedly confessed to the murder after initially feigning that he found the body. Thomas was found outside of Seidman's apartment crying, "I'm not going down there again. There is too much blood." Media sources state that he told police he killed Murray Seidman because the Bible refers to stoning homosexuals in certain situations. He also stated that after the final blow he "made sure the victim was dead." Thomas was Seidman's sole beneficiary.

**Catherine De Pedro Vélez, 19, Latina lesbian non-transgender woman, Arroyo, Puerto Rico, January 15, 2011**

According to news reports, Catherine De Pedro Vélez was killed on January 16, 2011. She was killed in Puerto Rico allegedly by her ex-husband after she left him for a lesbian relationship. She was nineteen years old.

**Ezequiel Crespo, 20, Latino gay non-transgender man, Camuy, Puerto Rico, April 27, 2011**

On April 27, 2011, Joel Pérez Hernández was reportedly arrested on charges of strangling Ezequiel Crespo, 20, on a public beach in Camuy, Puerto Rico. This murder is being investigated as a hate crime.

***Alejandro Torres Torres, Age unknown, Latino gay non-transgender man, Ponce, Puerto Rico, June 4, 2011***

Media sources state that Alejandro Torres Torres was stabbed to death in Ponce, Puerto Rico, on June 4, 2011. He was the first of three LGBT murders in Puerto Rico in a 72-hour span.

***Karlota Gómez Sánchez, 19, Latina transgender woman, San Juan, Puerto Rico, June 6, 2011***

Karlota Gómez Sánchez, a 19 year-old transgender woman, was found dead on June 6, 2011, in San Juan's Santurce district. She was reportedly shot three times. Her murder was the second of three murders in a 72-hour span of violence against LGBT people in Puerto Rico.

***Ramón Salgado, 46, Latino gay non-transgender man, Humacao, Puerto Rico, June 7, 2011***

On June 7, 2011, media sources state that Ramón Salgado was found dead near a highway in Humacao, Puerto Rico. Salgado, a gay man, was the third LGBT person to be murdered in a span of 72 hours in Puerto Rico. Coroners reportedly ruled Salgado's death a homicide due to blunt force trauma. No arrests have been made public.

***José Jiménez Santiago, 55, Latino gay non-transgender man, Corozal, Puerto Rico, October 26, 2011***

José Jiménez Santiago, 55, was found with head and shoulder wounds, dead in Corozal, Puerto Rico on October 26, 2011. According to media sources, Santiago was a very private person, and very little is known about him including his sexual orientation. Investigators have said that he was gay. Family members did not disclose information about his sexual orientation. Local law enforcement do not suspect that the murder was motivated by anti-gay bias. Investigators have yet to uncover a clear motive behind Jiménez' murder.

***Norma Hurtado, 24, Latina lesbian non-transgender woman, Austin, TX, April 18, 2011***

24 year-old Norma Hurtado and her mother were shot and killed in their Austin, Texas home allegedly by the father of Norma's 18 year-old girlfriend, Jose Alfonso Aviles. According to news reports, friends of Hurtado had seen several texts from Hurtado's girlfriend's parents before the incident, threatening Hurtado and her mother's life if she did not end her relationship with their daughter. Media reports also state that there were several police incidents on record between the Hurtado and Aviles families, and a family disturbance several months before the shooting. Jose Alfonso Aviles was charged with capital murder by Austin police on April 19, 2011, just one day after the murders.

***Nathan Eugene Davis, "Miss Nate Nate," 44, African American transgender woman, Houston, TX, June 13, 2011***

On June 13, 2011, 44 year-old Nathan Eugene Davis, known as "Miss Nate Nate," wearing feminine attire, was found shot in the head and dumped behind a trash bin at her home, an apartment complex in Houston Texas, at about 12:30 a.m. according to news reports. A witness reported to police that they heard a gunshot and saw a man fleeing the scene. They were able to provide a description of the man's appearance. The police came up with a composite sketch of the potential suspect. No motive has been announced for the murder. A \$5,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of the suspect has been posted as an incentive to the public.

***Danny Vega, 58, Thai American gay non-transgender man, Rainier Valley, WA, November 15, 2011***

On November 15, 2011, Danny Vega, 58, a resident of Seattle, WA was robbed and brutally beaten in a Rainier Valley parking lot next to the salon where he styled hair for twenty years. Before Vega lost consciousness, he was reportedly able to walk home and call 911 telling them that he was jumped by three unidentified teenaged attackers. Vega was placed on life support after falling into a coma before dying. Friends and family members believe Vega was targeted for his sexual orientation. Because his attackers were never found, the police have not classified this incident as a hate crime.



***Nick Aaronson, 27, white gay non-transgender man, Mexico City, Mexico, October 29, 2011***

According to news reports, the body of US Airways flight attendant Nick Aaronson, 27, was found bound, naked, and strangled to death inside his hotel room in Mexico City on October 29, 2011. Hotel lobby surveillance cameras reveal Aaronson checking in a guest as a friend, known as Jose Luis Ramirez after meeting at a nearby gay bar. Ramirez was charged with robbery and homicide but this murder was not recognized as a hate crime, though Aaronson may have been targeted for being gay.