

# NCAVP ALERT



National Advocacy  
for Local LGBTQH Communities

February 7, 2012

## NCAVP Monthly Update: Recent reports of violence affecting LGBTQH communities in the United States

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs ([NCAVP](#)) is concerned by reports of violence impacting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and HIV-affected (LGBTQH) communities across the United States that were reported during the month of January, 2012. This month, NCAVP is including incidents that occurred in September, November, and December 2011 which were reported to NCAVP in January, 2012. **In total, 18 reported incidents of violence have occurred in Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin.**

September 4, 2012: Starquineshia Palmer, 20, [fatally stabbed her girlfriend](#) Shannon Washington, 20, in the back and neck during a dispute in **Tallahassee, Florida**. Faculty and students at Florida A&M University, where Washington attended, [held a vigil](#) for her on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. Washington's family and friends also held a memorial service on January 23<sup>rd</sup> to honor her life. The LGBTQA Task Force of Tallahassee held an event to raise awareness of violence in LGBTQH communities following Washington's death.

November 17, 2011: An unknown man approached a 16 year old transgender woman, forced her against a fence, and [sexually assaulted](#) her in **Baltimore, Maryland**. Baltimore Police are currently searching for the man and have asked for the public's assistance in their investigation.

November 19, 2011: Robert Champion, 26, was [found dead](#) on a bus parked at a hotel outside **Orlando, Florida**. Investigators believe that Champion was killed as a result of hazing from fellow Florida A&M University band members. The Florida state medical examiner said that Champion had bruises to his chest, arms, shoulder and back and internal bleeding that caused him to go into shock which caused his death. In January 2012, Champion's parents announced that Champion identified as gay. The [National Black Justice Coalition](#) (NBJC) released a [statement and call to action](#) for the United States Department of Justice to investigate Champion's death as a possible anti-gay hate crime in response to this news. NCAVP signed on in support of NBJC's petition.

December 17, 2011: Titus Willis and an unnamed man reportedly used anti-gay slurs and [stabbed](#) Charlie Hernandez, 26, which resulted in Hernandez' death at an apartment building in **Detroit, Michigan**. The men attacked Hernandez, whose family says identified as gay, after Hernandez accidentally stepped on a pair of sunglasses. Detroit police arrested Titus Willis and

the other man, who was later released, in connection to this incident. Hernandez' family and friends held a candlelight vigil on January 10<sup>th</sup> to commemorate Hernandez and are calling for a murder charge against Willis.

December 30, 2012: Sagal Mohamod Sadiq, 40, reportedly [attacked and killed](#) her wife's mother, Yvonne Marie Kirk, 65, with a machete in her home in **San Jose, California**. Kirk was the mother of Sadiq's wife Minema Kirk, 36. Minema Kirk has reported that she was trying to end her relationship with Sadiq, and that she had experienced prior domestic violence from Sadiq. Friends and family placed flowers on Kirk's porch in response to this homicide. Sadiq has been charged with murder and has plead not guilty. She is currently in custody without bail in Santa Clara County jail.

January 1, 2012: Three white men in their 20s made a "derogatory comment" and [punched two unnamed men multiple times](#) as they left a bar because they thought the two men were gay in **Santa Barbara, California**. One of the survivors sustained a broken jaw and severe head injury as a result of this attack. The other survivor sustained minor injuries. Santa Barbara Police Chief Cam Sanchez responded during a press conference saying "hate crimes like these will not be tolerated and those responsible will be held accountable." Police Chief Sanchez also asked for the public's help to identify the suspects.

January 1, 2012: Openly gay Jeffrey Fehr, 18, [completed suicide](#) in **Granite Bay, California**. Fehr's family believes that a lifetime of anti-gay bullying and taunting drove him to suicide. Approximately 1,000 people gathered for Fehr's funeral on January 7<sup>th</sup> to commemorate his life. Fehr's father urged those present during the reception following the funeral to "embrace diversity, be tolerant, and do not bully."

January 2, 2012: Raymond Earl Baker, 35, [fatally shot](#) Desiree Marie Harrell, 43, a well-known LGBTQH activist in **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**. Baker has stated that he was angered by a remark Harrell made directly before he shot her. According to the complaint filed in circuit court, Harrell was romantically involved with Baker's wife. Harrell's friends and family held a [candlelight vigil](#) honoring Harrell on January 4<sup>th</sup>.

January 4, 2012: An unofficial Alabama Crimson Tide fan website was selling t-shirts that read, "HEY HOMEAUX WE JUST [BEAT THE HELL OUT OF YOU](#)" for the January 9<sup>th</sup> Bowl Championship Series game between Alabama Crimson Tide (**Tuscaloosa, Alabama**) and Louisiana State University. Multiple blogs including [Towleroad](#) and the [Huffington Post](#) reported that this shirt was being sold and made reference to its supporting anti-LGBTQH violence. Shortly after this media coverage, the site selling these shirts went offline.

January 8, 2012: Two unnamed men approached Drew Childs and Trenton Theiler, who identify as gay, after they left Blake's bar in **Atlanta, Georgia**. The men then [attacked and robbed](#) Childs and Theiler by striking Theiler in the head, hitting Childs in the face several times, and then taking Childs wallet. The LGBT liaisons for the Atlanta police have been notified of this incident and are involved in the investigation.

January 8, 2012: Two unnamed men yelled anti-gay slurs and [physically assaulted](#) Emilio Moreno, 23, who identifies as gay outside Rumors Sports Club in **El Paso, Texas**. Moreno required hospitalization and sustained several facial injuries, including a broken nose as a result of the attack. El Paso police are investigating this incident as an anti-gay hate crime. [PFLAG El Paso](#) responded on their [facebook page](#) calling the El Paso Police Department to recognize that hate crimes exist and the city to protect El Paso's LGBT community.

January 11, 2012: Three unidentified men approached an unnamed man, shouted [homophobic slurs, kicked and punched him](#), and stole his smartphone in **San Francisco, California**. The survivor sustained minor injuries as a result of this attack. Local police are investigating this incident as a hate crime and are asking for the public's assistance in identifying the perpetrators.

January 11, 2012: Eric James Borges, 19, [completed suicide](#) after enduring a lifetime of family rejection, bullying, and violence for being gay in **Visalia, California**. [The Trevor Project](#), for whom Borges used to intern, released a statement expressing deep sadness at Borges' suicide and encouraging those who are struggling in response to his death to reach out for support. Friends and family have organized a memorial service for Borges on January 21<sup>st</sup>, and the [College of the Sequoias](#) – Theatre Arts Department held a memorial for Borges on January 18<sup>th</sup>.

January 17, 2012: Dog walkers discovered a [human head wrapped in a plastic bag](#) near a popular hiking trail in **Hollywood, California**. Investigators later released that the victim has been identified as Harvey Medellin and that [he identified as gay](#). Local law enforcement are currently conducting a homicide investigation in response to this death.

January 18, 2012: State Representative Richard Floyd of **Chattanooga, Tennessee**, stated in reference to transgender people that, "if a man tried to enter a dressing room while his wife or daughters were trying on clothes, he would "just try to [stomp a mudhole in him and then stomp him dry](#)." Representative Floyd was speaking about a bill he is sponsoring that would require transgender people to use public bathrooms and dressing rooms that correspond with their birth sex and not their gender identity. The [Transgender Law Center](#) released a statement condemning Representative Floyd's comments as inciting violence against transgender people.

January 20, 2012: Parents and grandparents of Phillip Parker, 14, found him dead as a result of suicide in **Gordonville, Tennessee**. Parker's parents believe that constant physical and emotional bullying because he was gay caused him to take his life. The [Tennessee Equality Project](#) held a candlelight vigil on January 26<sup>th</sup> in honor of Parker, and has been working locally with Tennessee schools to advocate for anti-bullying policies.

January 29, 2012: Rafael Morelos, 14, [completed suicide by hanging himself](#) in **Cashmere, Washington**. Morelos' friends and family have since stated that Morelos, who identified as gay, endured anti-gay bullying and violence from other classmates. The Cashmere School District issued a [statement](#) saying they were deeply saddened by the loss of Morelos. Family and friends held a vigil to commemorate Morelos' life. The Chelan County Sheriff's Office reportedly concluded their investigation of Morelos' death as a suicide.

January 31, 2012: An unknown person left an anonymous note in a women's restroom of [Montclair State University](#) that reads, "[Fags will die on 2/7](#)" in **Montclair, New Jersey**. Montclair State University police are investigating two similar incidents where a note was found under the door of the campus LGBT Center and a message was written in marker on the wall outside the LGBT Center. Montclair State University President Susan Cole sent an e-mail to the student body calling these incidents, "grossly unacceptable in our community and a clear violation of university policies, as well as the basic tenets of human decency." Montclair State University students will wear purple and hold a peaceful rally in response to these incidents on Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>.

According to NCAVP's [report](#) *Hate Violence Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and HIV-Affected Communities in the United States in 2010*, there was a 13% increase in reports of anti-LGBTQH violence between 2009 and 2010. Additionally, NCAVP's 2010 [report](#) *Intimate Partner Violence in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and HIV Communities* documented 38.1% increase in reports of LGBTQH intimate partner violence between 2009 and 2010. NCAVP believes that together communities can prevent and end violence impacting LGBTQH people and calls on community members, anti-violence organizations, and public officials to join efforts to end violence within and against LGBTQH communities.

## **ACTION STEPS**

**Prevent:** NCAVP encourages communities to create programs, campaigns, and curricula to prevent anti-LGBTQH harassment and violence in order to promote safety. NCAVP is available to provide support and resources to communities for their violence prevention efforts.

**Respond:** NCAVP recommends that funders increase support for LGBTQH survivors of violence by funding LGBTQ inclusive services, and banning barriers to service and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

**Report Violence:** NCAVP encourages anyone who has experienced violence to contact a local anti-violence program for support and to document this violence. For help locating an anti-violence program in your area, please [contact us](#) or visit [www.ncavp.org](http://www.ncavp.org).

**Get Involved:** Join NCAVP in our efforts to prevent and respond to LGBTQH violence. To learn more about our national advocacy, receive technical assistance or support, or locate an anti-violence program in your area, [contact us](#).

## **Contact Information for Responding Organizations**

### **National Black Justice Coalition**

Phone: 202-319-1552

[www.nbjc.org](http://www.nbjc.org)

### **PFLAG EI Paso**

Phone: 915-209-2667

[www.pflagelpaso.org](http://www.pflagelpaso.org)

### **Tennessee Equality Project**

Phone: 615-669-8057

[www.tnep.org](http://www.tnep.org)

### **Transgender Law Center**

Phone: 415-865-0176

[www.transgenderlawcenter.org](http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org)

### **The Trevor Project**

Lifeline: 866-488-7386

[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

*NCAVP is providing all information available regarding these reports and is not responsible for the complete accuracy of the specific details pertinent to allegations, police investigations, and criminal trials. Initial reports of these incidents come from media reports of LGBTQH violence and not direct service provision from NCAVP member programs. NCAVP has reached out to local organizations in these areas and is offering assistance to support their anti-violence efforts.*

*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 local member programs, affiliate organizations and individuals who create systemic and social change. NCAVP is a program of the [New York City Anti-Violence Project](#).*

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