



For Immediate Release

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**NYC AVP reports increase in severity of anti LGBT violence in latest
Hate Violence Report *
Murders at highest level since 1999
Recent incidents of hate violence during Pride weekend reflect trend
in increased severity of violence in New York City
Community calls for increased education and prevention efforts.**

**National Coalition Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) 2008 Annual Hate Violence Report
can be accessed at www.avp.org*

New York – July 1, 2009. Violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people increased 2% from 2007 to 2008, continuing a trend of a 24% increase in 2007, according to the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP)'s 2008 Hate Violence Report. Bias-related murders were at their highest rate since 1999 with 29 known anti-LGBT murders occurring in 2008. While New York City saw a 12% decrease in all violent incidents there was a 67% increase in murders, according to the New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP). NYC reports of sexual assault jumped 171%.

These trends appear to continue in 2009 as several reported hate crimes occurred over Pride weekend. One victim, Joseph Holladay, was brutally assaulted on the Upper East Side early Saturday morning on June 27, 2009 during Pride weekend. Mr. Holladay was staying at a friend's apartment and, while outside, he reports that several young men attacked him. Mr. Holladay was brutally beaten by these attackers until he lost consciousness. His attackers used anti-gay epithets during the beating. Mr. Holladay was rushed to New York Presbyterian Hospital where he was treated for a deep gash in his head which appears to have been made by a blunt object.

Mr. Holladay is working with AVP and fully cooperating with the NYPD and the authorities who are interviewing witnesses. AVP is also working with the New York Police Department and the Hate Crimes Task Force and will expect the NYPD to prioritize the investigation of this hate crime.

A press conference was held today at the offices of the New York City Anti-Violence Project. Speakers included New York State Assembly Members Deborah Glick, Dick Gottfried and Micah Kellner and New York City Council Member Jessica Lappin. Also present were representatives from the offices of New York State Senator Tom Duane and New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn. (Comments from elected officials below.) Personal testimony was given by three survivors of hate violence.

“Sadly, these latest incidents of hate violence come as no surprise. They are a part of a disturbing trend that must be turned around,” said Sharon Stapel, Executive Director of the New York City Anti-Violence Project. “This year nationally we have seen the highest number of bias-related murders in nearly a decade, with 17% of those murders occurring in NYC. In New York, we have also seen a disturbing increase in sexual assault and weapons used in the commission of hate violence, such as the hate violence that Mr. Holladay experienced. While we’re pleased to see a reduction in the number of victims of violence, this report confirms a trend of increasing severity of violence against the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. It has to stop.”

Ivana Chapcakova, an AVP counselor who worked for five years with families of homicide victims, stated “Hate violence affects not only the individual victims and their friends and family, but it also has a ripple effect on whole communities of people. Hate crimes send a message of fear to targeted communities. AVP is here to support victims of this violence and to stand up against hate crimes with and for the LGBT communities.”

Stapel continued: “The United States is a more dangerous place for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people than it has been in nearly a decade. The federal and state governments must commit time, attention and resources to this issue and work much harder to prevent this violence.”

AVP provides direct services to victims of hate violence and works with the community to raise awareness about the issue and prevent future incidents of violence. AVP also works with the New York Police Department’s Hate Crimes Task Force, which investigates all potential hate crimes in New York City. AVP also provides training and education to multiple state and city agencies, schools and community-based organizations as well as to first responders such as the NYPD and hospitals.

AVP is a member of the National Coalition of Anti Violence Programs (NCAVP), a coalition of over 35 local anti-violence programs across the U.S. which releases an annual report on anti-LGBT hate violence. The 2008 annual Hate Violence Report examines data compiled from 2,424 LGBT people who experienced hate violence in regions across the country including Chicago, IL; Colorado; Columbus, OH; Houston, TX; Kansas City, MO; Los Angeles, CA; Michigan; Milwaukee, WI; Minnesota; New York, NY; Pennsylvania; Rochester, NY; and San Francisco, CA.

NCAVP’s annual Hate Violence Report is the most comprehensive report on violence against LGBT individuals in the United States and is used as a resource by community activists, legislators, academics and the media. Each year, the FBI publishes its own report on hate crimes, which includes anti-LGB incidents, but it consistently contains information on far fewer cases than the NCAVP publication because it relies solely on law enforcement reports of such crimes rather than victim service organization data. NCAVP member organizations are found in 20 states throughout the country and many are the single resource in their entire state. More than half of the country is without a local anti-violence program.

NCAVP makes several key recommendations in the 2008 report, including the need to support increased public awareness, education, documentation, and prevention efforts to end bias motivated violence. NCAVP calls upon all elected officials and community leaders to show their commitment to ending violence against LGBT people with resources, support and a willingness to speak out against this violence.

Comments from Elected Officials:

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand: "It is time for Congress to take a strong stance against all hate crimes, which target an individual based on who they are," Senator Gillibrand said. "I'm proud to be an original co-sponsor for the *Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act*, which would give law enforcement the tools they need to find, prosecute and bring to justice anyone who commits a hate-motivated crime, and provide critical protection to keep New York communities safe."

Carolyn Maloney, U.S. Congresswoman: "The New York City Anti-Violence Project has performed a valuable public service in helping to produce this report, which documents the deplorable increase in bias-related violence in the U.S. As AVP has shown, while the overall incidence of anti-gay violence in New York has declined, the severity of attacks, such as the one that occurred on Manhattan's Upper East Side last weekend, is increasing. Every story of someone who is attacked simply for being who they are is both tragic and a cause for outrage. We join today to send the important message that we will not tolerate these acts of violence and that we will continue to ensure that local law enforcement agencies have the necessary resources to investigate and prosecute hate crimes."

Thomas K. Duane, NY State Senator: "Hate and violence have no place in New York City or anywhere. I want to thank AVP for its work on the 2008 Hate Violence Report, and I pledge to work with advocates, community leaders and my partners in government to reduce and reverse the disturbing trends it highlights. Certainly, the apparently anti-gay bias attack on Joseph Holladay this past weekend is a glaring reminder that hate violence statistics aren't just numbers, they represent individuals and entire communities whose sense of security has been violated by targeted violence. Incidents such as this are why I fought so hard to pass New York State's Hate Crimes Law and why we must continue to work toward reducing ignorance, hatred and bigotry in our society."

Liz Krueger, New York State Senator: "The vicious attack that took place earlier this week on the Upper East Side is a reminder that bias-motivated violence remains a serious problem in all our communities. The Anti-Violence Project report shows that we still have a long way to go in the fight against hate crimes."

Micah Z. Kellner, New York State Assembly Member: "As a member of the LGBT community and as a New Yorker, I am outraged by the horrific assault on Joseph Holladay. I could not believe that, on a day when New York was celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall

uprising, an attack like this could take place so close to my own home. This incident demonstrates the urgency of the NCAVP's report, and the importance of continuing our work towards a better New York in which such violence no longer occurs."

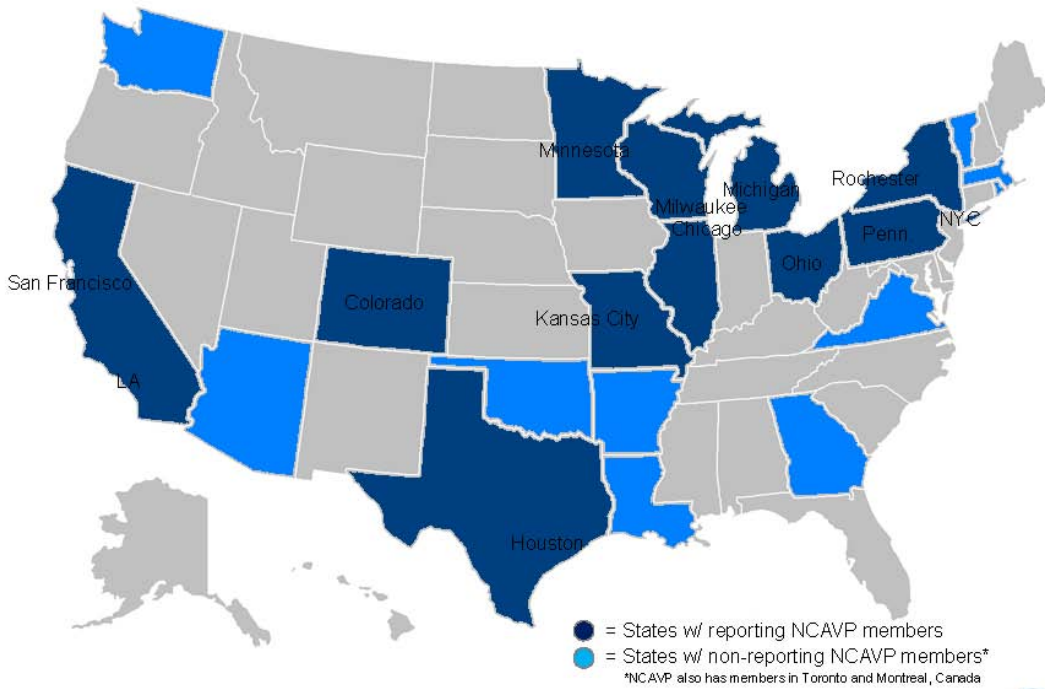
Richard Gottfried, New York State Assembly Member: "A lot has changed in the 40 years since Stonewall, but obviously bigotry and the violence that goes with it have not gone away."

Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer: "While the gay rights movement has made tremendous progress in its fight for equality and recognition, there is still an issue with safety for LGBT New Yorkers: affording them the same protections from harassment and violence as any other community in this city is of utmost importance."

Christine Quinn, New York City Council Speaker: "I am outraged by this hateful attack on Joseph Holladay. My office is working with the NYPD, the District Attorney's Office, elected officials and the Anti-Violence Project to ensure that those who committed this crime are brought to justice."

Jessica Lappin, New York City Council Member: "The men who committed this crime are cowards and bigots. We are here today to say that New York won't allow that kind of behavior to go unchecked. We are here today to say that New York supports the pride that was on display on Sunday along 5th Avenue, not the hate of the beating on East 85th Street."

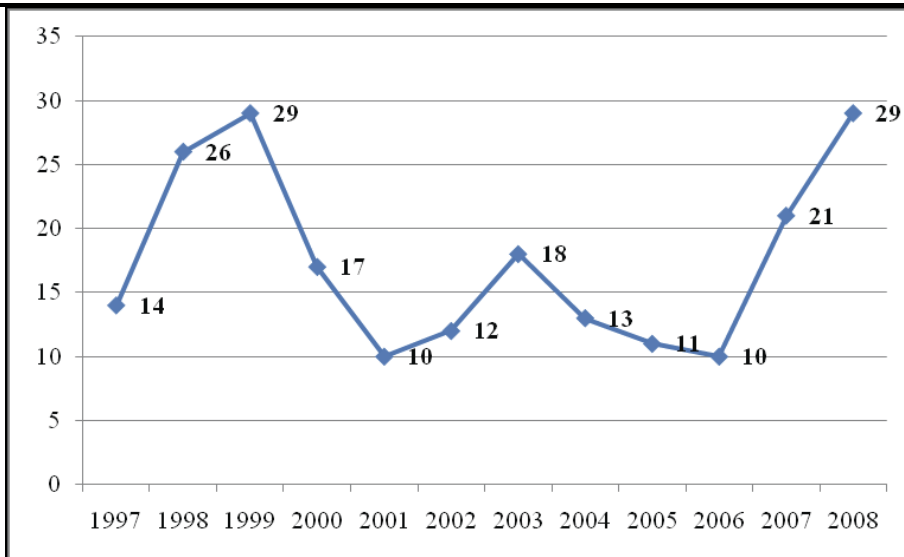
Go to www.avp.org for statements from Kim Fountain, Deputy Director, New York City Anti-Violence Project and testimony from survivors of hate violence Geo Vaughn and Joseph Holladay.



State-by-state distribution of NCAVP members and the 2008 Hate Violence Report



Anti-LGBT Murders since 1997



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. AVP is a member of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP).

The Anti-Violence Project's Safe Dating and Internet Safe Dating Tips, as well as NCAVP's annual reports on hate violence and domestic violence, can be accessed online at www.avp.org or by calling 212-714-1184.

The Anti-Violence Project provides free and confidential assistance to LGBTQH victims and survivors of violence through its 24-hour bilingual hotline: 212-714-1114.