



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Bushwick Hate Crime Suspects Arrested; AVP Warns of Increase in Hate Violence**

#### **For Immediate Release**

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#### **February 27, 2009**

New York - The New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP) has learned that two suspects in the murder of hate crime victim Jose Sucuzhanay, killed in Bushwick Brooklyn in December 2008, have now been arrested. The suspects are, Hakim Scott, 25, arraigned yesterday on charges of second-degree murder as a hate crime and Keith Phoenix, 28, arrested this morning in connection with the murder. AVP commends the New York Police Department's Hate Crimes Task Force and the Kings County District Attorney's Office for working so diligently on this bias-motivated murder. There will be a press conference at 12:15 p.m. today with additional information.

Mr. Sucuzhanay was brutally beaten at 3:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 7, 2008 at the intersection of Bushwick Avenue and Kossuth Place in Bushwick while walking arm and arm with his brother Romel Sucuzhanay. He died on Friday, December 12, 2008, five days after the attack by men yelling anti-gay and anti-Hispanic epithets.

"We commend the NYPD and the DA's office for acting swiftly to bring some measure of justice and comfort to Mr. Sucuzhanay's family," said Sharon Stapel, Executive Director of the New York City Anti-Violence Project, "and at the same time we mourn for other individuals and families who have been victim to anti-LGBT hate violence this year. We have seen an increase in both the number and severity of violence against the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities in recent months and this trend does not appear to be abating. We urge anyone who needs support in the wake of hate violence incidents to contact us at our free and confidential 24 hour bilingual hotline: 212.714.1141. AVP continues to work to end violence against the LGBT communities in partnership with all of our allies in New York City and across the country."

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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.

In 2007, the Anti-Violence Project served over 2,000 victims of violence. The Anti-Violence Project's Safe Dating and Internet Safe Dating Tips, as well as the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Program's annual reports on hate violence and domestic violence can be accessed online at [www.avp.org](http://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: 212-714-1141.**