



May 27, 2011

For Immediate Release:

**Virginia Anti-Violence Project condemns attack against transgender woman and urges community solidarity**

The Virginia Anti-Violence Project deplores the brutal attack against a transgender woman in Fredericksburg, Virginia that occurred on May 21, 2011. "This attack on a member of the transgender community underscores the need for greater awareness of and advocacy for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) Virginians. Ignorance and anger cannot be permitted to negate any person's human right to safety and security," states Ashley Marshall, Chair of Virginia Anti-Violence Project's Board of Directors.

In response to this attack, the Virginia Anti-Violence Project (VAVP) offers support to transgender and other community members and organizations to assist in processing this violence and responding in a constructive manner. VAVP offers support to victims and survivors of anti-LGBTQ violence, including those experiencing alarm, fear, threat, and other harms because of this and other hate-motivated violence; and works to prevent hate-motivated and all violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer individuals, families, households, and communities. Ted Heck, Treasurer for VAVP notes, "Violence like this, directed at someone because of their transgender status, is a painful attack on all people whose identity is different from the mainstream. It spreads fear throughout the community, and especially within Virginia's transgender communities. VAVP stands ready to work with anyone who wants to address anti-LGBTQ violence in Virginia and to help build safe communities."

As it works with many allies in communities throughout the Commonwealth, VAVP reminds the public, and public officials, that Virginia's statute providing enhanced penalties for hate-motivated crimes does not include crimes motivated by the victim's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender. VAVP also notes that Virginia's statute protecting the human rights of Virginians does not include sexual orientation or gender identity. VAVP encourages all Virginians to help end injustices as we seek to end violence.

The Virginia Anti-Violence Project works to address and end violence, with a specific focus on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer communities across Virginia. VAVP is an organization of volunteers, active since 2006. The website can be found at <http://www.virginiaavp.org/>.

Board of Directors, Virginia Anti-Violence Project

For inquiry, please contact:  
Ashley Marshall  
(804) 925-8287  
[info@virginiaavp.org](mailto:info@virginiaavp.org)