April 27, 2015

AVP learns of an anti-gay hate violence related shooting in Jamaica, Queens

AVP has learned of an anti-gay hate violence related shooting that occurred on Wednesday, April 22nd, at the SBS Hillside Inn, a local bar in Jamaica, Queens. According to local media reports, an ex-Marine named Jonathan Efraim, 30, was talking to a 72 year old patron, who has been identified elsewhere in the press as a bar regular named Raymond, who is openly gay. Following an argument about “sexuality,” and threats on Raymond’s life that were stated to the bartender and other patrons, Efraim opened fire in the bar. No one was injured in the shooting, and Raymond was pulled to safety by one of the bartenders. Efraim then exchanged fire with responding police officers and was killed during the course of that gunfight.

According to the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs’ (NCAVP) most recent report on hate violence to which AVP contributed local data, reports of hate violence increased 26% in New York City against LGBTQ and HIV-affected people, continuing a four-year trend in increases.

AVP has reached out to Make the Road New York, New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito’s office, the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit, the office of City Councilmember I. Deneek Miller, the office of Public Advocate Letitia James, the Queens District Attorney’s Office, the NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force, the LGBT Liaison to the Police Commissioner, and the NYPD Community Affairs Unit.

TAKE ACTION WITH AVP

In response, AVP will be engaging in outreach in the neighborhood in which the incident occurred in the weeks ahead. We will post outreach details as soon as they have been confirmed on our Facebook page and on AVP’s events calendar. AVP’s Hate Violence Community Action Committee, a community and survivor-led working group that addresses hate violence, police violence, pick-up violence, and discrimination against LGBTQ and HIV-affected communities, meets monthly at AVP, to get involved contact LaLa Zannell at lzannell@avp.org.

REPORTING VIOLENCE HELPS END VIOLENCE

AVP encourages you to report violence you experience or witness to our free and confidential 24-hour bilingual (English/Spanish) hotline at 212-714-1141 where you can speak with a trained counselor and seek support, or you can report violence anonymously online, or to ask for a counselor to reach out to you.

Find out more about AVP at our website, www.avp.org, and get regular updates on our ongoing work on Facebook.com/antiviolence or Twitter @antiviolence, and get involved and make a difference.