

Sample Media Advisory

MEDIA ADVISORY

For Friday, December 2, 2005

Contact: Simon Aronoff, (202) 903-0112, saronoff@nctequality.org

## Vigil to Honor Murder Victim \_\_\_\_\_, Local Transgender Woman

(Washington, DC) – Family and friends of \_\_\_\_\_, joined by members of the local transgender community, will gather for a candlelight vigil at the site of her murder. Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, a 24-year old transgender woman was murdered early this morning on the 2000 block of Main Street.

Transgender women are harassed, attacked and murdered with horrifying frequency in Springfield. Nationally, it is estimated that one transgender woman is murdered each month in a hate crime.

Police are still investigating Ms. \_\_\_\_\_'s murder. A second victim injured in the attack was treated and released earlier today.

What: Vigil to honor slain transgender woman \_\_\_\_\_

Where: 2012 Main Street  
Springfield

When: Friday, December 2, 2005, at 6:00 PM

Speakers: Maria Hernandez, Springfield Transgender Coalition  
Mara Keisling, National Center for Transgender Equality

Editors: For resources on how to accurately and fairly portray transgender people in the media, please visit Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation's resources at [http://www.glaad.org/media/resource\\_kit\\_detail.php?id=3061](http://www.glaad.org/media/resource_kit_detail.php?id=3061)

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Sample Press Release

PRESS RELEASE

For Friday, December 2, 2005

Media Contacts:

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Transgender Law Center

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Justice for Gwen Delayed, Not Denied

Coalition of Eight Local, State and National LGBT Groups

Frustrated by Mistrial But Optimistic

(San Francisco, CA) — Twenty months after the brutal slaying of Gwen Araujo, a transgender teenager from Newark, the jury deadlocked on whether her attackers were guilty of first or second degree murder. According to the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, none of the jurors were willing to settle for the lesser offense of manslaughter—despite efforts by defense attorneys in the case to argue that Gwen's killers were somehow justified because she did not disclose her transgender identity to them. The prosecutor already has stated that he will re-try the three defendants: Michael Magidson, Jose Merel, and Jason Cazares, for murder.

"Because the defense team tried to make this a trial about Gwen's gender identity instead of the defendants' conduct, a lot of us were anxious about this verdict," said Christopher Daley, Co-Director of the Transgender Law Center. "Even though I am disappointed by the delay in achieving justice for Gwen, I am heartened that these jurors refused to let these young men escape responsibility for their horrific choices."

Representatives from Community United Against Violence, Equality California, Gay-Straight Alliance Network, The Horizons Foundation, National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, San Francisco LGBT Community Center, and the Transgender Law Center thank the Alameda County District Attorney's office for their diligent efforts in prosecuting Gwen's murderers and their determination to not rest until justice is done.

"We are relieved that the prosecutor is committed to retrying these defendants," said Tina D'Elia, Hate Violence Prevention Program Director at Community United Against Violence. "This is the first prosecution of a hate crime against a transgender person under California's hate crime statute," D'Elia added. "This case confirms the need for such a law. I am sure that the jury's refusal to buy into the so-called 'transgender panic' defense will offer some comfort to Gwen's family because the jury recognized Gwen's humanity and stayed focused on the facts."

This case also highlights the importance of protecting transgender youth. "One of the most profound lessons that must be learned from Gwen's murder is that hate crimes are preventable and education is the key to prevention," said Carolyn Lamb, Executive Director of the Gay-Straight Alliance Network. Students, parents, teachers, administrators and advocates need to continue to push California school districts to implement effective transgender inclusive anti-bias curriculum at all age levels."

People interested in supporting efforts to eliminate anti-transgender bias from Bay Area public schools are encouraged to make financial contributions to the Gwen Araujo Memorial Fund by visiting [www.horizonsfoundation.org](http://www.horizonsfoundation.org) or calling Julie Dori at (415) 398-2333, ext. 103

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Tina D'Elia, Program Director

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