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Trans
People of Color
Coalition

A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

FATAL VIOLENCE
AGAINST
TRANSGENDER
PEOPLE IN
AMERICA 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 LETTER

Chad Griffin, President, Human Rights Campaign

Kylar W. Broadus, Executive Director, Trans People of Color Coalition (TPOCC)

5 STORIES

- 6 Monica Loera
- 7 Jasmine Sierra
- 8 Maya Young
- 9 Demarkis Stansberry
- 10 Kedarie Johnson
- 11 Quartney Davia Dawsonn-Yochum
- 12 Shante Thompson
- 13 Keyonna Blakeney
- 14 Reecey Walker
- 15 Mercedes Successful
- 16 Amos Beede
- 17 Goddess Diamond
- 18 Deeniquia Dodds
- 19 Dee Whigham
- 20 Erykah Tijerina
- 21 Rae'Lynn Thomas
- 22 T.T. Saffore
- 23 Crystal Edmonds
- 24 Jazz Alford
- 25 Brandi Bledsoe
- 26 Noony Norwood

27 OF NOTE: OTHER DEATHS

29 WHO IS TRANSGENDER

30 THE STATISTICS BEHIND THE FACES

31 WHAT FUELS ANTI-TRANSGENDER VIOLENCE

33 TAKE ACTION! WHAT CAN YOU DO?

35 A GLOBAL CRISIS

JOIN US IN TAKING A STAND AGAINST HATE



At a time when visibility for transgender people is on the rise, all too often in small towns and big cities members of our community continue to face discrimination, harassment, and even violence simply because of who they are.

Despite the enormous progress we've made, the undercurrents of transphobia, homophobia, sexism and racism are impeding this important progress. As a result, hate violence against transgender people, particularly against transgender women of color, remains disturbingly common. We saw this hate manifest on June 12, when 49 LGBTQ people and allies were senselessly murdered at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida. And we've seen this same hate manifested in the horrific murders of at least 21 transgender people this year alone. These victims, already marginalized by society, rarely get national media attention. Reports of fatal violence against transgender people are



routinely silenced, made invisible, underreported and undercounted.

This violence is driven by an atmosphere of animus, fear and ignorance, often targeting transgender people in particular. Earlier this year, North Carolina lawmakers passed legislation known as H.B. 2, which attacked transgender residents and visitors, making it difficult and dangerous for transgender people to use public facilities. This draconian law has fostered anti-transgender aggression not only throughout North Carolina, but in other states as well. In Texas, for example, anti-equality lawmakers are threatening to pass similar legislation. And plans for other discriminatory efforts are underway in states and municipalities across the country. In addition, the extreme and divisive rhetoric of the recent presidential campaign stoked fear and bigotry—compounding a pattern where transgender women of color are singled out for discrimination, violence and even death.

The Human Rights Campaign and the Trans People of Color Coalition remain hopeful, and are more committed than ever to addressing these life and death issues.

This report documents the stories of the transgender people whose lives were taken this year in often brutal and unimaginable acts of violence. But it also details critical public policy recommendations that can curb and even prevent fatal violence against transgender people, as well as the broader LGBTQ community. Equally important are suggestions on how individuals—no matter who you are—can play a role in turning the tide on this epidemic of hate violence.

Together, we have come far in such a short period of time. But there is still so much to do before equality is a reality for all. Please join us in taking a stand against hate.



Chad Griffin
President
Human Rights Campaign



Kylar W. Broadus
Executive Director
Trans People of Color Coalition



THEIR STORIES: TWENTY-ONE COURAGEOUS LIVES. TWENTY-ONE SENSELESS DEATHS.

AT LEAST 21 TRANSGENDER PEOPLE HAVE BEEN MURDERED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF 2016. ALMOST 95 PERCENT OF THEM WERE PEOPLE OF COLOR, AND 85 PERCENT WERE WOMEN.

We say “at least” because data collection is often inaccurate and unreliable when it comes to violent and fatal crimes against transgender people. Victims are often misgendered by police and the news media, which compounds the confusion and uncertainty surrounding each case.

So when it is documented that in 2015 at least 21 transgender people (nearly all transgender women of color) were the victims of homicide; and in 2014 there were at least 13—the fact is, we do not really know for sure. 2013 was the first year the federal government began tracking crimes motivated by anti-transgender bias. That year, at least 19 transgender people were the victims of fatal violence.

These atrocious crimes occurred in cities and suburbs, in rural communities and major metropolitan areas. Victims were killed with guns, knives, blunt instruments and bare hands—by lovers, acquaintances, family members, strangers and even groups. While the details of every one of these cases differ, fatal violence disproportionately affects transgender women of color. Transphobia, homophobia, sexism, racism and poverty heighten the vulnerability of transgender people.

These are the stories of the 21 transgender people that we know of who were the victims of fatal violence in 2016. The stories of their deaths are often gruesome and always heartbreaking. But the stories of their lives are courageous, inspiring and often amazing. Each one of them went through extraordinary lengths to be their authentic selves. And in large measure, each was killed for being just who they really were.



MONICA LOERA

“Beautiful, vivacious and funny” are just a few words people used to describe Monica Loera, 43, a Latina transgender woman from North Austin, Texas, who was shot and killed on January 22 at the doorstep of her home. A big Madonna fan, who loved to cook, friends also described Loera as someone who “extended warmth to people.” Jon Casey Rowell, an acquaintance of Loera’s has been charged with her murder.

MONICA LOERA

JASMINE SIERRA



JASMINE SIERRA

On January 22, Jasmine Sierra, 52, a Latina transgender woman, was found dead in her hometown of Bakersfield, California. Although her body showed signs of trauma, a cause of death has yet to be determined and no suspects have been identified. Though Sierra was misgendered in early police and media reports, her family and friends rushed to correct the record online, where one friend described her as “lovely and generous.”



MAYA YOUNG

Maya Young, 25, a Black transgender woman from Frankford, Pennsylvania, was stabbed to death on February 28. She was nicknamed “Twix” by one friend, because of a distinctive birthmark: one side of her face was light brown and the other dark. “She looked like chocolate and caramel,” her friend remarked. “And she was sweet, like candy.” Two people have been charged in the crime.

MAYA
YOUNG

DEMARKIS STANSBERRY



DEMARKIS STANSBERRY

Demarkis Stansberry, 30, a Black transgender man from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was shot in the head and killed on February 28. Stansberry was engaged to be married and worked two jobs. He loved his dog and rap music, which he often performed. An acquaintance, Nicholas Mathews has been charged with negligent homicide.



KEDARIE JOHNSON

Kedarie Johnson, 16, a Black gender fluid youth beloved by fellow students at Burlington High School in Burlington, Iowa, was shot to death in an alley on March 2. He was an avid dancer and singer who loved to listen to music, hang out with friends and surf the internet. Johnson “had this beautiful smile,” his guidance counselor remembered. The killing is still under investigation and no one has been arrested.

KEDARIE JOHNSON

QUARTNEY DAVIA DAWSONN- Yochum



QUARTNEY DAVIA DAWSONN-YOCHUM

While walking her dogs, Prince and Paris, outside her Los Angeles, California, apartment, Quartney Davia Dawsonn-Yochum, 32, a transgender woman, was shot in the head and killed on March 23. Her former boyfriend was arrested for the crime. “She was loved by everyone,” Dawsonn-Yochum’s apartment manager told local news media. Friends continue to post remembrances, photographs and messages on her Facebook page.



SHANTE THOMPSON

Shante Thompson, 34, a Black transgender woman from Houston, Texas, along with a friend walking with her, were swarmed by a group of eight people and beaten with a variety of weapons before both were shot. Her mother said that a group of people in the neighborhood had been bullying Thompson in the past. Twenty-three-year-old Tariq Lackings was arrested and charged with the April 11 capital murder.

SHANTE THOMPSON

KEYONNA BLAKENEY



KEYONNA BLAKENEY

Just days before her birthday, Keyonna Blakeney, 22, a Black transgender woman from Montgomery County, Maryland, was found dead from a suspected homicide in a motel room on April 16. Blakeney was a talented makeup artist who had attended Bowie State University. Two men have been arrested in connection to her death.



REECEY WALKER

Reecey Walker, 32, a Black transgender woman from Wichita, Kansas, who had planned to become a counselor, was stabbed to death on May 1. A 16-year-old boy was arrested and charged with second-degree murder. Walker worked at the front office for the apartment complex where she lived, and where she was found dead. Friends remembered her as a loving, playful spirit who only wanted the best for others. One friend said, “She would have given her last piece of bread to make sure someone else was not hungry.”

REECEY
WALKER

MERCEDES SUCCESSFUL



MERCEDES SUCCESSFUL

A lively and fun-loving member of the local community, Mercedes Successful, 32, a Black transgender woman from Haines City, Florida, was shot and killed in a parking lot on May 15. Police have not identified a suspect. Local press reports initially misgendered her and used her birth name, despite the fact that she was a well-known performer, contestant and make up artist in area clubs and pageants. She represented her birthplace, Jamaica, in the 2014 Gay Caribbean USA Pageant.



AMOS BEEDE

Amos Beede, 38, a transgender man, succumbed to his injuries a week after being attacked on May 22 at a homeless encampment. Four people are facing charges. Beede, from Milton, Vermont, is survived by his wife, Aunnah Guzman. His sister told reporters, "A big part of our heart just got ripped away, and that's something we'll have to live with for the rest of our lives."

AMOS BEEDE

GODDESS DIAMOND



GODDESS DIAMOND

“My baby was kind and loving, and had a big heart,” Goddess Diamond’s grieving mother told the local news media after her daughter was found dead of blunt force trauma in a burned car on June 5 in New Orleans. Diamond, who was just 22, worked for a national retailer, where one of her coworkers described her as “very loved,” and noting that in addition to losing a friend, “we lost an LGBT leader.” No suspects have been identified.



DEENIQUIA DODDS

Deeniquia Dodds, 22—affectionately known as Dee Dee to friends—was shot just a few blocks from her home on Independence Day in the nation’s capital. Dodds, a Black transgender woman, died on July 13 after 10 days on life support. Shareem Hall has been arrested and charged with her murder. According to the woman who raised her, Dodds was “a beautiful person. She loved to make you laugh; loved to make you smile.”

DEENIQUIA DODDS

DEE WHIGHAM



DEE WHIGHAM

A registered nurse at a hospital in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, Dee Whigham, 23, a Black transgender woman, was gruesomely stabbed 119 times and killed in a motel room on July 23 in St. Martin, Mississippi. She had traveled there to attend a rodeo with friends. Her employer described Whigham as “an excellent nurse who was well-loved by her patients,” and her cousin remembered Whigham as a “hard-working, kind-hearted person.” Twenty year-old Dwanya Hickerson has been charged with capital murder.



ERYKAH TIJERINA

Described by her sister as “unapologetic about the person she was” Erykah Tijerina, 36, was found dead in her El Paso, Texas, apartment on August 8. A month later, twenty-one-year-old Anthony Bowden was arrested and charged with her murder. Local media initially misgendered Tijerina and referred to her by the wrong name, but her family quickly corrected those reports. Tijerina’s sister added that the Latina transgender woman was “funny and giving. She’s the one that told me to stay strong.”

ERYKAH TIJERINA



RAE'LYNN THOMAS



RAE'LYNN THOMAS

As her family watched in horror, Rae'Lynn Thomas, 28, a black transgender woman from Columbus, Ohio, was shot, beaten and killed on August 8 by James Allen Byrd, an ex-boyfriend of Thomas's mother who lived in the family home. As she was dying, Thomas begged her helpless mother not to leave her. Thomas's aunt described her as a performer, fashionista and the life of the party.

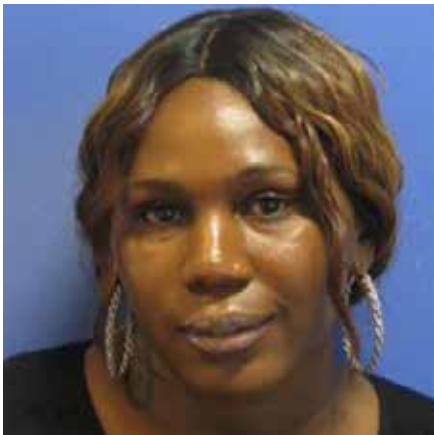


T.T. SAFFORE

T.T. Saffore, a Black transgender woman in her late 20s who had hoped to become a hair stylist, was found stabbed to death, with her throat slit, in a park on September 11. Although she was well-known in the Chicago, Illinois transgender community, no arrests have been made. During a vigil held at the scene of the crime, friends described T.T. as a very happy person who was “laughing all the time. You could be going through a bad day, but once you saw her, she was such a happy, cheerful person, all that changed.”

T.T. SAFFORE

CRYSTAL EDMONDS



CRYSTAL EDMONDS

Crystal Edmonds, 32, a Black transgender woman, was fatally shot on September 16 in her hometown of Baltimore, Maryland. Police have offered a reward for information, but still have no suspects. According to a Baltimore police spokesperson, “The kind of person who can do this, who can shoot someone in the back of the head and leave them for dead on a sidewalk, this type of person will do it again.”



JAZZ ALFORD

Jazz Alford, 30, a Black transgender woman, was found shot to death on September 23 in a Birmingham, Alabama motel room. The man charged with her murder, Denzell Thomas, has been linked to attacks on two other transgender women—one of whom was critically injured. Alford's sister, Toya Milan, who is also transgender, said Alford was a “loving person and we didn't know anybody that would want to hurt her.”

JAZZ ALFORD



BRANDI BLEDSOE



BRANDI BLEDSOE

Nicknamed “Popcorn” by her grandfather, 32-year-old Brandi Bledsoe, a Black transgender woman, was found dead in the driveway of a East Cleveland, Ohio home on October 8. She was shot in the chest and her head was covered with a plastic bag. Family members said that she had “come out of her shell” since her transition two years ago. Shortly before her death, Bledsoe, a burgeoning artist, completed a mural that now hangs in a local community center.



NOONY NORWOOD

On November 5, just days after her 30th birthday, Noony Norwood, a Black transgender woman, was shot less than a mile from her Richmond, Virginia home. She died the next day. “She was very fun-loving, a lot of energy, and loved to dance,” a longtime friend told reporters. Norwood “loved family, to eat and cook and she very much loved being in the community with people.” Local police are looking for a man who may have been nearby at the time of the shooting.

NOONY NORWOOD

OF NOTE: OTHER DEATHS

The 21 stories detailed in this report very likely undercount the number of transgender people murdered in the United States this year. Some victims' deaths may go unreported, and others may not be identified as transgender in the media, sometimes because authorities or journalists refuse to acknowledge their gender.

Five deaths in 2016 are difficult to classify because we simply do not know enough about what happened. They are:



Kayden Clarke, a transgender man from Arizona, was shot and killed by police responding to a call about suicidal behavior on February 4. Clarke had posted a series of videos on YouTube chronicling his experiences with gender transition and autism. He received national attention when he posted a video showing his service dog assisting him during what he described as a “meltdown.”



The body of transgender rights activist **Nino Acox Jackson**, a Black transgender man, was found in a Dallas lake on February 16, but authorities ruled out foul play. Jackson, known for both his community involvement and love of cars, had been missing for almost a month.



Described as a “sweet friend” who planned to pursue a career in nursing, **Veronica Banks Cano**, a Latina transgender woman from San Antonio was found dead in a motel bathtub on February 19. Authorities are not treating her death as a murder.



Skye Mockabee, a Black transgender woman, was found dead in a Cleveland parking lot on July 30. She was originally thought to be a victim of violence, but police now believe her death was an accident. At a vigil held in Mockabee’s memory, her devastated mother said simply, “I just want my baby...”



A parent of two teen-aged children, **Lexxi Sironen**, a transgender woman, designed jewelry, welded sculptures made from found materials and crafted wooden furniture. She was found dead in the Kennebec River on September 6. According to the Waterville, Maine Police Department, the cause and manner of her death is undetermined, and the investigation is closed.

THESE WERE LIVES TAKEN TOO SOON. AND TOO MANY TRANSGENDER PEOPLE SEE THEMSELVES IN THESE STORIES.

For some, and especially for transgender women of color, the threat of violence is constant. It is real. And there are few if any places they feel safe.

This is all the more true where laws instigate and foster violence against transgender people.



Payton McGarry is a 20-year-old transgender male student at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro. But his birth certificate says he is female, and in North Carolina, that means it is illegal for him to use the men's room on campus. Just the idea of using a bathroom at school makes him nervous. "Will someone attack me?," he asks himself almost every morning. And sadly, he will likely ask that question for the rest of his life, even if he moves out of the state.

Seventy percent of transgender people across the country have reported being attacked, harassed or denied access to a bathroom.



Like North Carolina, Mississippi passed a horrific and hateful law sanctioning discrimination against the entire LGBTQ community. It is no wonder that, while she was living in the state, **Blossom Brown**, a Black transgender woman stated publicly: "There is not one day when I don't wake up, get dressed and think that I might be a target."

We know that twenty-one transgender people died violent deaths during the past year. There are many more who faced non-lethal physical violence. And still, countless others live in fear every single day.

WHO IS TRANSGENDER?

In this report, we use the term transgender to describe people whose gender identity is different from what is typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth (i.e., the sex listed on their birth certificate). Many transgender people are women or men, and many others have a different gender identity, such as non-binary or gender fluid.

THE STATISTICS BEHIND THE FACES

Hate crime laws and accurate reporting of bias-motivated offenses are essential tools to understand and combat anti-transgender violence. Unfortunately, the lack of accurate and reliable data makes it impossible to know exactly how widespread anti-transgender violence really is.

Law enforcement, media outlets, and sometimes even family members often exacerbate this problem by misgendering victims, making it more difficult to gather the most accurate data. Fear of harassment from local police and social service agencies by transgender people, especially transgender women of color, also hinders accurate data collection. News media may further stigmatize victims by highlighting arrest records and using mugshots instead of personal photos when reporting their deaths.

In addition to data and reporting challenges, existing data on the size of the transgender population in the United States is limited, which complicates detailed analysis of anti-transgender violence. However, it is generally estimated that transgender women face 4.3 times the risk of becoming homicide

victims than the general population of all women.

We do know this: one life lost is one too many. Since 2013, when these data were first collected:

- At least 74 transgender people were victims of fatal violence; and more than half (42) were killed by guns.
- More than 90 percent of transgender fatal violence victims were people of color (three quarters were African American).
- Nearly 9 in 10 transgender fatal violence victims were transgender women; 76 percent of victims were under the age of 35 at the time of death, with an average age of 30.
- At least 2 victims were killed by intimate partners, and at least six were killed with more than one person involved in the assault.
- Although anti-transgender violence happens across the country and in almost every state, among those reported, a plurality of victims (35 percent) were killed in the Southeast, followed by the Midwest (24 percent).

74 TRANSGENDER VICTIMS OF FATAL VIOLENCE

93 PERCENT WERE TRANSGENDER PEOPLE OF COLOR

9 in 10 WERE TRANS-GENDER WOMEN

75 PERCENT WERE UNDER THE AGE OF 35

2+ VICTIMS WERE KILLED BY INTIMATE PARTNERS

33 PERCENT WERE KILLED IN THE SOUTHEAST

WHAT FUELS ANTI-TRANSGENDER VIOLENCE?

There are a number of factors that impact transgender people and make them particularly vulnerable to deadly violence.

First, there is the current climate of hate that normalizes and fosters discrimination and violence against the LGBTQ community. And violence, like the tragic murder of 49 LGBTQ people and allies at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida, may embolden more violence.

Legislation like North Carolina's attack on the rights and dignity of the transgender community devalues the worth of transgender people. Transphobia is further compounded by racism and sexism. The rhetoric normalized during the recent presidential campaign, as well as the easy accessibility to guns, can have deadly consequences—as this report graphically shows.

Public policy and systemic issues are also major factors. Many intersect and overlap, creating more opportunities and more severe violence against transgender people, with an even greater impact on transgender women of color. The lack of, or the inability to access basic needs, like employment, transportation, stable housing and other essential services too

often pushes transgender people, especially transgender women of color, into situations that leave them vulnerable to violence. It is a perfect storm, with transgender people caught in the middle. For example, the inability to access stable employment can lead transgender people to housing insecurity and lack of healthcare, which may in turn cause or further exacerbate mental and physical health problems. Economic strain may push some into underground economies like sex work, where they are further victimized, sometimes even by law enforcement.

Specifically, anti-transgender fatal violence is fueled by:

- **Intolerant Law Enforcement:**

The current justice system is one of the most significant barriers to ending anti-transgender violence in the United States. Most transgender people avoid interaction with law enforcement because they fear harassment, intimidation or incarceration—even when they themselves are the victim of a crime. Among transgender people who had interacted with police, 22 percent reported bias-based harassment from law enforcement, with transgender people of color reporting

higher rates. Nearly half of all transgender people have felt uncomfortable turning to police for help.

- **A Cycle of Unemployment, Job Discrimination, Poverty and Survival Sex Work:**

In 2011, 34 percent of black and 28 percent of Latinx transgender and gender nonconforming people reported a household income of less than \$10,000 per year. Transgender people are nearly four times as likely to be living in extreme poverty, with exponentially higher poverty rates for transgender people of color. Transgender people have double the national unemployment rate, with transgender people of color facing unemployment rates up to four times higher than the general population. Among the employed, 90 percent of transgender people experienced harassment in the workplace, and more than 25 percent reported having lost a job because they were transgender or gender nonconforming. In the face of unemployment (and lack of benefits like health care), transgender people are often compelled to engage

78% OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO DESCRIBED THEMSELVES AS TRANSGENDER OR GENDER NON-CONFORMING REPORTED HARASSMENT WHILE IN GRADES K-12.

in underground and illegal sex work to survive. These dangerous situations put transgender people, usually transgender women of color, at a significantly higher risk of police harassment, sexual assault and fatal violence.

- **Exclusion from Healthcare and Social Services:** An overwhelming majority of transgender and gender nonconforming people experienced discrimination by medical providers. Too many transgender people face a medical establishment not sufficiently knowledgeable in transgender health care, and many transgender people are uninsured. As many as one in four adult, transgender women in the US is living with HIV. Forty-one percent of Black and 27 percent of Latinx transgender and gender nonconforming people have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. Among those who tried to use homeless shelters, 29 percent of transgender people, including 40 percent of Black transgender people, have been denied access altogether. Many are evicted if staff learn they are transgender, and a plurality

are forced out as a result of harassment, further enhancing their vulnerability to violence.

- **Disadvantaging Our Youth:** Harassment, violence and discrimination faced by transgender, gender fluid and gender nonconforming youth creates real and significant barriers to education and employment. Only 43 percent of gender-expansive youth report having a family member they could turn to for support. And 78 percent of young people who described themselves as transgender or gender non-conforming reported harassment while in grades K-12. For 15 percent of these youths, the harassment was so severe that it forced them to leave school.
- **The Stigma of Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Assault:** For anyone, sexual violence and trauma can lead not only to injuries and health problems, but also to depression and other mental health issues that can make survivors vulnerable to revictimization. This problem is often exacerbated for transgender people, since they too often face discrimination when seeking help from shelters, law

enforcement and other service providers. For transgender people who experience intimate partner violence (current or former spouse, boyfriend/girlfriend, dating partner, ongoing sexual partner), these issues are equally acute. At least two of the 21 victims of anti-transgender homicide in 2016 were killed by intimate partners, and that number may be much higher since suspects and motives for a number of cases remain unknown.

- **Denying Identity:** Identification documents are critical for almost every aspect of life, from daily transportation to air travel, housing to healthcare, and education to employment. For too many transgender people, obtaining accurate identity documents can often be a nightmare. Thirty-three percent of transgender people who have already transitioned report not being able to update any of their identity documents to match their affirmed gender. And of those who reported having to present documents that did not match their gender identity, almost 45 percent experienced harassment, were asked to leave or were assaulted.

TAKE ACTION! WHAT CAN YOU DO?

The safety of transgender people and our communities depends on our ability to not only end anti-transgender hatred, but also to achieve policy solutions that help transgender people achieve equality, opportunity and respect.

There are many deep roots to this complex problem. And although we do not know all of the solutions, many of them are at our fingertips. We must work together with a greater sense of urgency to make them a reality.

Now is the time to do this! Over the last eight years, the administration of President Barack Obama has provided unprecedented support to the transgender community, and has created an environment where so many advances could be made for transgender people. We have a unique opportunity to build on this legacy, to do more, and to create a truly inclusive community, nation and world.

First and foremost, **everybody has a role to play**. Working together, we have extraordinary power. Last year, our community and allies beat back more than 200 hateful and discriminatory anti-LGBTQ legislative proposal

in 41 states across the nation. That is an unparalleled record of achievement. But the fight is not over. There is always more work to be done. The new anti-transgender law in North Carolina, and the new anti-LGBTQ law in Mississippi are proof of that.

As individuals, we must:

- **Educate yourself, your families, friends and colleagues about the violence and discrimination that transgender people face.** We must commit to change hearts and minds, and to challenge transphobia wherever we see it. When we allow those around us to treat transgender people as less worthy of love, acceptance and support, we are complicit in a system that continues to punish and devalue people simply for being themselves.
- **Count yourself on the side of justice** and oppose hateful measures against transgender people in your community and state. Join us in the fight for equality and against discrimination.

Register and vote. Be informed about ballot initiatives. Attend and participate in community meetings and debates. Join coalitions and caucuses working for equality. Support candidates that support the rights and dignity of every person. Run for office. Volunteer and serve on boards and commissions working to abolish discrimination and build a more inclusive community. And be visible in your support of the transgender community.

- **Get to know transgender people, if you don't already.** There has been a significant uptick in the number of Americans who say they personally know or work with someone who is transgender. We want that trend to continue: personally knowing someone who is transgender makes someone much more likely to view transgender people favorably and support critical laws and protections for transgender people.

And as a community, to stem and eventually eradicate anti-transgender violence, we must:

THERE ARE MANY DEEP ROOTS TO THIS COMPLEX PROBLEM. AND ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT KNOW ALL OF THE SOLUTIONS, MANY OF THEM ARE AT OUR FINGERTIPS. WE MUST WORK TOGETHER WITH A GREATER SENSE OF URGENCY TO MAKE THEM A REALITY.

- **Enhance Law Enforcement Response and Training**

by encouraging local law enforcement agencies to initiate policies that govern interactions with transgender and gender-nonconforming people. Police officers in every community must be trained to correctly identify bias-motivated crimes based on gender identity or sexual orientation, as well as ones that contain overlapping and intersecting bias motivations. And attorneys general in every state must ensure the full and swift investigation of all open cases of homicides against transgender victims.

- **Improve Data Collection and Reporting.**

Local law enforcement leaders must make data reporting a priority, and make certain that all crimes where there is evidence of prejudice are reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

- **Make Schools More Welcoming and Safe.**

The U.S. Department of Education must formalize explicit non-

discrimination guidance stating that Title IX (the federal law that prohibits discrimination in education based on sex) protects transgender and gender nonconforming students. Individually, we can partner with local school district leaders, educators, parent groups, education advocates and youth-serving professionals to create welcoming and safe classrooms for all students, and make cultural competency training tools easily accessible and available to teachers so that they can create safe and welcoming environments in their individual classrooms.

- **Create Safer Housing Opportunities and Stronger Housing Protections.**

We must hold the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Justice accountable for enforcing existing rules that prohibit discrimination against transgender people for all services, drop-in centers and shelters they fund. Transgender

cultural competency training is also critical for housing and service providers. The U.S. Department of Justice must also ensure that programs and services that receive federal funding under the Violence Against Women Act are available to transgender people.

- **Expand Healthcare Coverage for Transgender People**

by prohibiting discrimination against transgender patients in private insurance and Medicaid. All public employees should have the opportunity to receive transgender-inclusive healthcare. Health plan exclusions on necessary transition-related care should be eliminated, and medical provider networks must have both the medical expertise and cultural competency to care for and treat transgender clients. Health care professionals must increase their skills to provide welcoming, appropriate and culturally competent care. And in order to ensure a foundation of transgender competence

for the next generation of healthcare providers, medical schools must implement the Association of American Medical Colleges' curricula to address healthcare disparities facing transgender people.

- **Develop Better Employment Opportunities.** States and municipal governments must pass non-discrimination protections in employment that include gender identity and sexual orientation. Workplaces

must expand talent recruitment efforts to better include transgender individuals, and cultural competency training should be made available at every level of the workplace.

- **Pass Non-Discrimination Protections** such as the Equality Act, which would update our nation's civil rights laws to give transgender people significant legal recourse if they experience discrimination in matters of employment,

housing, public spaces and services, federally funded programs, credit, and education. We must also pass these non-discrimination protections at the state and local level.

- **Adopt Common-Sense Gun Violence Prevention Measures**, including limiting access to assault-style rifles, expanding background checks, and limiting the ability of those with a history of domestic abuse to access guns.

A GLOBAL CRISIS



Hundreds of transgender people are killed around the world each year. And, just as it is in the United States, countless hate-motivated murders of transgender people go unreported by communities, families, governments and the press. In August 2016, the

mutilated and burned body of 23-year-old Turkish transgender activist **Hande Kader** (above) was found in Istanbul. Her kidnapping and brutal murder sparked outrage in Turkey, the country with the highest number of transgender-related acts of fatal violence in Europe.

Transgender people the world over face daunting legal challenges. They are often unable to obtain official documents that match their gender identity, change their sex or names. In some countries, they are forced to undergo involuntary medical procedures such as forced sterilization. Many are denied freedom of movement and other freedoms.

Nevertheless, gradual progress is being made. In 2015, five countries on three continents—Bolivia, Ireland, Malta, Thailand and Vietnam—passed groundbreaking laws to protect transgender people. The Irish legislation allows transgender people to change their gender without legal or medical intervention or certification, and Thailand became the first Southeast Asian country to provide legal protection for its transgender population.



A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

FATAL VIOLENCE AGAINST TRANSGENDER
PEOPLE IN AMERICA 2016