

COMMUNITY ALERT



July 9, 2010

AVP condemns hate violence assault on Staten Island, encourages reporting of hate violence incidents

AVP is outraged by the bias attack on Luis Vieira, 47, and his partner, Richard Vieira, 39, that occurred at a White Castle in the Stapleton neighborhood of Staten Island at about 2:30 am on Wednesday. The victims allege that they passed a group of about 40 youths on Bay Street and that three members of this group entered the White Castle shortly after they did and approached their table using hate language in a verbal exchange with the victims. The youths walked away, but moments later, Luis was hit in the back of the head. He and his partner rushed out to the parking lot but saw the larger group of youths gathered there. Luis returned inside to ask a restaurant employee to call 911 when he realized that his partner, Richard, was not with him. Luis went back outside to find Richard badly beaten and bleeding from his head in the parking lot. Richard Vieira was taken by ambulance to Richmond University Medical Center in West Brighton, Staten Island where he received stitches. He has since been released.

Luis has stated that he believes he was singled out by the group because he was wearing a rainbow arm band and points out that none of the other patrons in the White Castle were harassed or harmed. Following the assault, Luis Vieira made calls to various law enforcement agencies and the NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force is investigating this assault as a hate crime.

“Hate language is a form of hate violence, and as in the case of this brutal assault on Luis and Richard Vieira, we see how fluidly hate language can escalate into physical violence,” said Sharon Stapel, Executive Director of the New York City Anti-Violence Project. AVP will be following up on this incident and working with the NYPD and elected officials as needed.

AVP encourages you to report any anti-LGBTQ bias, including hate speech and physical violence, to our **24-hour bilingual (English/Spanish) hotline at 212-714-1141** where you can speak with a trained counselor and seek the support you need.

In addition, AVP has also introduced [a new secure online form for reporting anti-LGBTQ bias incidents](#) that you have experienced or witnessed. AVP provides individual counseling, support groups, advocacy and referrals to LGBTQ survivors of hate violence. Please call **our 24-hour bilingual (English/Spanish) hotline at 212-714-1141** for more information.

More information about the New York City Anti-Violence Project can be found at our [website](#) and [Facebook page](#). Additional safety tips are also available on our [website](#).

Please forward this e-mail to your friends and urge them to stay safe.