

Voices of Victims and Survivors

*The 2010 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,
Transgender, Queer and HIV-
Affected*

Intimate Partner Violence Narratives

A REPORT
FROM THE
NATIONAL
COALITION
OF
ANTI-
VIOLENCE
PROGRAMS

*This report was written by the
National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs
A program of the New York City Anti-Violence Project
240 West 35th St., Suite 200
New York, NY 10001
www.ncavp.org*

Contributing Authors:

Jessie Dessus, *New York City Anti-Violence Project*
Alison Fishera, *New York City Anti-Violence Project*
Justin Rosado, *New York City Anti-Violence Project*



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This report published with support from the Arcus Foundation.

The findings and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Arcus Foundation.

Introduction

In 2010, the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) saw a substantial increase of LGBTQH survivors reporting incidents of intimate partner violence (IPV). LGBTQH IPV survivors reported 5,052 incidents to NCAVP in 2010, an increase of nearly 38.1% from 2009 (3,658). In addition, NCAVP member programs documented six LGBTQH IPV murders/homicides in 2010. These statistics speak to the need for policymakers, advocates, and community members to take action to eliminate LGBTQH intimate partner violence.

In the 2010 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and HIV-Affected Intimate Partner Violence report, NCAVP provides an analysis of survivor demographics and incident details, and outlines key recommendations to challenge and ultimately end IPV within LGBTQH communities. These recommendations call for public awareness of intimate partner violence not only within LGBTQH communities, but also for LGBTQH and mainstream service providers. This supplemental report brings to light the severity of IPV within LGBTQH communities, in hopes of raising awareness, and increasing the ability for LGBTQH community members, and allies, to properly identify IPV.

The first section of this report highlights the narratives of six known LGBTQH IPV related murders/homicides in 2010. NCAVP is not responsible for the complete accuracy of these murder/homicide narratives and specific details pertinent to allegations, police investigations, and criminal trials. NCAVP wrote these narratives using information from media outlets, family/friends, and local NCAVP members. The second section contains narratives of LGBTQH IPV survivors. These are composite narratives drawn from multiple survivors experiences designed to illustrate the varied experiences of IPV survivors. The names and specific information from the incidents have been changed, to protect the survivors.

Intimate Partner Violence Murders and Homicides

Bennett Bradley¹, 59: on or near January 1, 2010 — Los Angeles, CA

On Saturday, January 2, 2010, around 6 p.m., Bennett Bradley was found dead in his apartment in the Wilshire neighborhood (also known as Koreatown) of Los Angeles, California. Bradley was a beloved director and producer at the Fountain Theatre, and was in the midst of directing Ifa Bayeza's *The Ballad of Emmett Till*, scheduled to open in February. When Bradley missed Saturday's rehearsal, the production's stage manager drove to his apartment to check in on him, and that's when he discovered that Bradley had been stabbed to death. Artistic director Stephen Sachs also arrived later, after police had declared it a crime scene.

Preliminary police reports suggested that Bradley had been the victim of a robbery-homicide, but evidence indicated that Jose Fructuoso may have been involved in Bradley's death. Though the police did not initially comment on Fructuoso and Bradley's relationship, later in the week police disclosed that they had been lovers for several years. According to reports, Fructuoso confessed to the murder and police arrested Fructuoso the following Monday.

Fountain Theatre staff and friends gathered at the theater on both Sunday and Monday, after the death of Bradley, to mourn and to decide how to move forward with Bradley's production. They decided to continue the production because it had been so important to him. The theater also hosted a memorial service on January 23, 2010, initiated a fundraiser for Bradley's funeral expenses, and established a website in his memory.

Lakesha Ross², 19: January 1, 2010 — Kansas City, KS

On January 1, 2010 at 7:55 a.m., police officials named Lakesha Ross (as spelled in her obituary, though many news reports also spell her name "Lakeasha") the first homicide victim of that year in Kansas City, Kansas. 19-year-old Ross was found dead in a basement apartment on the 2000 block of South Mill Street. Police were called to the scene after neighbors heard gun shots. NCAVP could not identify any further information about Ross' death within the various news reports.

Within days of Ross' death, Kansas City police arrested 19-year-old Tynisha Story of Kansas City, Missouri (also spelled Tanisha in some reports). Police charged Story with 1st degree murder for shooting Ross. No report mentions or even speculates how Ross and Story were related. None of the friends or family of Ross or Story were interviewed by the media. On December 21, 2010, Story (then age 20) was found guilty by a Wyanadotte County jury and sentenced to life in prison with no opportunity for parole for 25 years.

Henry Scott IV³, 28: February 25, 2010 — Kansas City, MO

Around 2 a.m. on February 25, 2010, firefighters were called to East 44th Street and Wayne Avenue in Kansas City, Missouri to extinguish the flames that engulfed the home of 28-year-old Henry Scott IV. Firefighters found Scott's body in one of the bedrooms. After identifying multiple ignition points, investigators

determined that the fire had been set intentionally. Reports explained that Scott's death was the 14th homicide in Kansas City since the start of the year.

For nearly two weeks police could not find a suspect. On March 9, 2010 Michelle Goodwin, a friend of Scott, donated \$1,000 to double the reward offered by police to find the person who committed the arson/homicide.

On October 21, 2010, the Kansas City police charged Birmingham White with 1st degree murder and armed criminal action. Investigators had followed a trail of evidence linking White to Scott's death. Media reports of White's arrest mentioned that White had been accused of murder in 2009, against "the man he called his best friend." Those murder charges were dropped as "the evidence changed," according to prosecutor Jim Kanatzar.

Scott's phone records show that before Scott's death he had been in contact with someone called "Wood," whose number belonged to a cell phone purchased by White's cousin. White's cousin explained that "Wood" was White's nickname, and that White frequently borrowed his cell phone and car. When investigators searched the cousin's vehicle, they found blood-stained jeans in the trunk. DNA testing identified both Scott and White's blood on the jeans.

Local hospital records also indicated that White had sought care for a stab wound shortly after the incident at Scott's house. White told hospital staff that he was stabbed by his girlfriend but couldn't give her name or address. Officials also released that Scott had not died as the result of the fire alone. He had also suffered "multiple sharp force injuries." The reports do not make any claim as to Scott's relation to White, except that White's cousin said that they'd recently begun hanging out frequently.

Annamarie Rintala⁴, 37: March 29th, 2010 – Granby, MA

At approximately 7:25 PM on March 29, 2010 in Granby, Massachusetts, police arrived at 18 Barton Street and found Annamarie Rintala, 37, dead on the floor of her basement. Cara Rintala, 43, wife of Annamarie Rintala, reported that when she arrived home she found her spouse's body in their basement. Immediately thereafter, news reports state that Cara Rintala gathered their three-year old adopted daughter Brianna and the family dog, rushed over to a neighbor's house, handed them over and stated, "Call 911!"

An autopsy report concluded that Annamarie died due to strangulation in combination with blunt force trauma to the head as a contributing factor. In April 2010, the assistant district attorney made a statement asserting that there was, "no reason to believe it was a random incident." Police announced that an investigation was well underway, but refused to announce any suspects.

According to reports in October 2008, Cara Rintala was previously charged with domestic assault. Annamarie Rintala claimed that Cara Rintala struck her in the back of the head with a closed fist, though charges were soon dropped. In 2009, Cara Rintala filed for divorce citing "irretrievable breakdown," which was also withdrawn shortly thereafter. A representative from NCAVP member The Network/La Red stated, "We likely think it is domestic violence related based on what the district attorney's office is saying, based on the fact that there is a previous history of domestic violence in the relationship."

Six months after Annamarie's Rintala's death, Cara Rintala sold the home and moved to Rhode Island. In June 2011, Prudential Insurance Company filed a civil action suit to settle a death benefit claim filed by Cara Rintala. According to the report, Prudential was at a loss as to whether or not they were legally bound to distribute the \$512,000 death benefit over to Cara Rintala, since she was listed as a suspect in the case. Authorities would not comment on Cara Rintala's possible involvement, but stated that the investigation was ongoing.

Nineteen months after Annamarie Rintala's death, Cara Rintala was charged with murder. Authorities said Cara Rintala, 45, was arrested on a warrant in Narragansett, R.I., where she had been living with her parents and 4 year old daughter Brianna.

Cara Rintala's lawyer, David Hoose of Northampton, said in an interview that Cara Rintala "absolutely denies" killing her wife. He said the police investigation of the case was flawed from the start and stated, "They focused the investigation, as they always do, on the domestic relationship, which we contend was a mistake." He declined to elaborate on any alternative theories about who could have killed Annamarie Rintala.

Cara Rintala was held without bail, and is expected to appear in the Washington County Courthouse in South Kingstown, R.I. If she waives extradition, she could be returned to Massachusetts to be arraigned in Hampshire Superior Court.

Lorraine Wachsman⁵, 62: August 9th, 2010 – Bridgewater, MA

On August 9, 2010 Lorraine T. Wachsman, 62, was in her Bridgewater, MA apartment waiting for Eunice Fields to arrive for a meeting. According to news reports Wachsman volunteered as a mentor for a local Alcoholics Anonymous group, to which Fields belonged. The two women met through AA over 15 years ago. Fields, 54, had requested an appointment with Wachsman to discuss counseling. At approximately 12 pm, when Wachsman opened the door, Fields plunged a serrated kitchen knife several times into Wachsman's neck and chest.

Sometime later, Fields was sitting in her car smoking a cigarette and drinking a cup of coffee in the parking lot of the Brockton, MA police department. News reports state that an officer noticed her and approached the car and Fields complained of chest pain. During the discussion, the officer noticed blood on Fields' arm and inquired about it. Ms. Fields responded by stating she had just 'hurt' someone. Police arrived at Wachsman's apartment and discovered her body laying just a few feet from her front door.

Local news accounts speculated that Field's had murdered Wachsman due to the fact that Wachsman had come between her and a third party. Reports framed the tragedy as a possible love triangle gone sour, but the district attorney's office soon dispelled those claims. Authorities disclosed that the third party was in fact Field's ex-girlfriend, Renee Williams. Nevertheless, the district attorney asserted that Williams and Wachsman were not intimately involved and that Wachsman was Williams' and Fields AA counselor. According to media reports, Williams had recently ended her ten-year relationship with Fields. The D.A.'s office stated that the break-up between the two was related to an intervention, but would not release details on the matter. News articles also stated that, after the break-up, Fields moved to Tennessee to begin a new life, but returned to Massachusetts and was living with Williams as friends.

Before Fields left for her appointment with Wachsman that day, she wrote Renee a note. The note stated that Wachsman was going to get what was coming to her for "...taking away the love of my life." Before she left to meet Wachsman, Fields told a friend, "I feel a little stressed and I am going to release some of the stress." Her friend assumed Fields was going to an AA meeting. Instead, she was on her way to kill Wachsman.

At her arraignment, Fields was charged with first degree murder. Fields entered a plea of not guilty despite having confessed to police on the day of the murder. Fields is currently awaiting trial.

Rosalind Ross⁶, 30: September 15th, 2010 – Milwaukee, WI

On September 15, 2010, around 10 pm, video surveillance outside of a Milwaukee, WI Popeye's restaurant caught Rosalind 'Roz' Ross, 30, and Malika Willoughby, 27, in a domestic dispute that ended in Ross's death. The video showed them arguing inside the vehicle, which then quickly escalated to the two slapping and hitting one another. The fight broke out shortly after Ross received a phone call from Belinda Huddleston, another woman she was seeing. During the call, Ross made plans to meet up with the woman in 30 minutes, all while Willoughby sat in the passenger seat listening.

After some minutes of fighting, cameras show Willoughby exiting the passenger seat and walking around the car to the back seat behind where Ross sat. Willoughby opened the back door and began digging around in Ross' backpack. Media outlets reported that Willoughby pulled out the gun she had bought for Ross to use as protection. Willoughby shot Ross in the face, and walked away. News reports state that a few minutes later, Willoughby walked back and pulled Ross' body from the car.

After the shooting, police arrested Willoughby and charged her with first-degree intentional homicide. Willoughby entered a plea of not guilty. Willoughby insisted that Ross' death was an accident and that she meant to eject the bullet magazine from the gun and thought she had done so prior to pulling the trigger. Willoughby stated she only meant to scare Ross, not to kill her. After some time, the charges were lessened to reckless homicide and on August 25, 2011, Willoughby pled guilty. She is scheduled to make her final appearance for sentencing in November 2011.

Intimate Partner Violence Narratives

Narratives provided by Colorado Anti-Violence Program (CAVP) - COLORADO

Sarah, 34, Lesbian, Female, White – Denver, Colorado

Sarah had moved to Denver from another state, bringing her partner and her daughter along. Sarah had come from an abusive home, but never knew how to identify it as abuse, this carried over into her relationship. Her partner would sometimes get physically abusive, but just like with her family, Sarah didn't know it was abuse. During a pride event, Sarah stopped by a CAVP booth. After speaking with CAVP staff, she began to realize, she was in an abusive relationship. After attending support groups at CAVP, Sarah felt confident enough to make steps to increase her safety. She wanted her partner to attend anger management classes and classes about domestic violence, but her partner refused. Sarah then moved out with her daughter. After several months, Sarah's partner decided to start receiving help and Sarah moved back in. She now feels their relationship is safer and that she has more control over her life.

Natalia, Age Unknown, Sexual Orientation Unknown, Transgender Female, Race Unknown – Colorado

Natalia had previously worked to exit her abusive relationship by obtaining an order of protection against her abuser. Her ex-partner arrived at her home with two of his friends. They proceeded to break into her home, break down the door, and physically attack Natalia. They stole her purse and iPod and left. Natalia called the police and was taken to the hospital for injuries. The hospital staff referred her to CAVP and she has since become a client. Her ex-partner is currently homeless, which is making it difficult for the police to find him.

Narratives provided by Community United Against Violence (CUAV) - CALIFORNIA

Monica, 25, Bisexual, Female, African American – San Francisco, California

Monica came into CUAV after experiencing verbal and emotional abuse within her relationship. She came in to CUAV for support after a particular incident when her partner physically assaulted her. During the incident, Monica had gone to her kitchen, grabbed a knife for self-defense, and called the police for help. When the police came, they arrested both Monica and her partner, and once at the police station, the police told Monica's partner that they had to keep one person arrested and it would be the partner if both the partner and Monica stuck with Monica's story of events. The partner decided to change their story so that Monica would remain arrested.

Monica stated that she was worried about getting arrested again through some of the partner's lies. CUAV safety planned and role played what the participant could do in different scenarios (at the club, on the street, with friends). Counselors at CUAV supported the participant to make a confidential move. In the end, Monica felt more confident and was able to move confidentially – where no one knew her new address. She felt more comfortable about running into her ex-partner and didn't feel guilty about what happened.

Albert, Mid-40's, Heterosexual, Transgender Male, Latino - San Jose, California

Albert came to CUAV because they had to run away to another city due to escalating physical violence with their partner. They came in looking for culturally relevant support in Spanish within the queer community. They were also looking for U-Visa support.

CUAV provided Albert with peer counseling and advocacy, coordinated in conjunction with two other agencies. Through receiving culturally relevant, queer-specific services around their experiences of domestic violence, the participant felt supported and empowered to come out as transgender and began transitioning. CUAV counselors worked as a mediator with the other agencies to help communicate their transition.

Jane, Mid-30's, Lesbian, Female, African American – Oakland, California

Jane came in looking for emotional support, as well as assistance in exiting her relationship. She also wanted support seeking immigration asylum. She was enduring intense emotional, physical, and financial abuse from her partner, which led to a suicide attempt. She felt she had so few options that she was coping with substances and lost custody of her child as a consequence.

Jane ran away from her partner and was focusing on staying sober. CUAV supported her to have a safety plan and reduce her feelings of guilt around losing her child and abusing substances. CUAV also provided supporting documents for her asylum process. In the end, Jane moved to more stable housing, got asylum granted, and started a process to attempt to regain custody of her child.

Stephanie, 25, Queer, Transgender Female, Latina – San Francisco, California

Stephanie experienced financial, physical, and emotional abuse with her partner. The violence escalated to the point where her partner attempted to stab her with a knife. Stephanie ran away and, while living on the streets, ran into him several times. Stephanie came into CUAV very scared, looking for support in trying to find housing and work.

CUAV helped Stephanie find shelter and also provided her two nights at a hotel before she was able to transition into a shelter. CUAV also connected her with other queer organizations. During the time that CUAV provided support, she also felt supported enough to transition her gender identity.

Narrative Provided by Equality Michigan - Michigan

Karen, Age Unknown, Lesbian, Female, White - Michigan

Karen called Equality Michigan using a cell phone from a parking lot while being chased by her partner. Karen had moved to Michigan from the southern U.S. to join her partner, who is from Michigan. Although very little is known about Karen's story because she called while being actively pursued in an emergency situation, Karen clearly explained that her partner had been increasingly emotionally, economically, and physically abusive as the relationship progressed. Because there are only two shelters that are known to be LGBTQ affirming, we assisted Karen in getting to the county line where the closest shelter operates. The shelter employees were then able to pick Karen up and take her to the shelter, where Karen stayed until her ex-girlfriend was able to pay for a ticket to bring her back to the southern state where Karen was originally from. In the meantime, Karen's abusive partner was actively searching for her, and was expressing threats to Karen's life to third parties. Karen is no longer in Michigan, and has moved out of the state to escape her abusive relationship. Karen was systematically isolated and would not contact the police, partially out of fear of how

she would be treated as a lesbian. Karen's plight was even more difficult due to the shortage of LGBTQ affirming shelters with available space. Thankfully, Karen lived close enough to an available, affirming shelter to receive the help she needed.

Narrative provided by Kansas City Anti-Violence Project (KCAVP) – MISSOURI

James, 44, Gay, Male, Race Unknown - Kansas City, MO

James, who is HIV+, contacted KCAVP seeking emergency housing. James had been in a relationship with his partner for 7 years, and in the last three years his partner had become increasingly abusive, after developing a methamphetamine (Meth) addiction. His partner would often come home, after days away and proceed to scream at James, calling him trash and telling him that he hoped he would die. He would also physically assault James and steal his HIV medications, using his HIV status to control him, and the relationship. James had experienced isolation within his relationship because his partner would not let him have friends outside the relationship. He also limited James ability to leave the relationship by stealing his disability checks, which made James financially dependent on him.

KCAVP staff met with James and was able to provide short-term emergency shelter, clothing, and food. Staff provided James with a cell phone for additional safety. Staff also coordinated with another agency to obtain a voucher for James to get into long term housing. Once we were able to assist in getting James into stable housing, KCAVP provided James with access to free therapy to begin working through his feelings associated with his abusive relationship.

Narrative provided by STOP Partner Abuse/Domestic Violence Program, L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center - California

Jonathon, 42, Gay, Male, Latino – Los Angeles, California

Jonathon is a 42 year old gay Latino male who was abused physically, sexually, and psychologically by his partner of 13 years. He initially requested mental health services to deal with symptoms of depression and anxiety. Jonathon was unaware that he was experiencing intimate partner violence and indicated that he had always believed that all relationships were similar, despite the sexual orientation of the partners, because his parents fought constantly with one another, as did all of his siblings with their spouses.

Jonathon was immediately provided with crisis intervention counseling and agreed to go into shelter. Despite efforts of domestic violence program staff to assist the client with this placement, three domestic violence shelters in the L.A. area who indicate that they are "LGBT affirmative" were unhelpful and refused assistance to him while being unable to indicate their reasoning for this. Finally, after consistent and strong advocacy efforts on behalf of the client by our program's administrative staff, Jonathon obtained hotel vouchers for a limited period of time from one shelter. No additional services were offered by the shelter so Jonathon is currently receiving adjunctive services from the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center' STOP Domestic Violence Program and is reporting that his depression and anxiety have significantly lessened and that, for the first time in years, he has hope for the future.

Narrative Provided by the Montrose Counseling Center – Texas

Bob, 34, Gay, Male, White – Houston, Texas

Bob, a 34 year old white male, residing in Houston Texas came to the Montrose Counseling Center, fleeing an IPV relationship. He met with our anti-violence specialist who supported him by finding a shelter placement, to avoid returning to his abusive partner. He was given bus and food vouchers to keep him stable. He completed a safety plan at the first session to help ensure his safety. Within the next few days he was able to find an apartment that Montrose Counseling Center was able to pay for and was taken to the Furniture Bank to get furniture as well as household goods. He continued working with his case-manager and found employment. Through a different grant at Montrose, he was able to get his GED classes paid for which he completed. He also started attending individual counseling to work on his issues surrounding domestic abuse. His case-manager assisted him in getting a protective order and filing charges with the police department.

Narrative Provided by the NYC Anti-Violence Project – New York

Amy, 25, Sexual Orientation Unknown, Transgender Female, Latina – New York City, New York

Amy came to the NYC Anti-Violence project in search of emotional and legal support for the intimate partner abuse she was facing. Amy is a 25-year-old, self-identified transgender Latina woman who was also looking for services in Spanish. Amy reported to AVP that she had met her partner on the internet when she was living on the west coast. Their relationship evolved after exchanging information on a dating website and eventually led to Amy's partner visiting her. After about a year of a long distance relationship, Amy moved to NYC to be with her partner.

After moving to NYC, Amy soon realized that her partner had lied to her about having his own apartment and that he was renting a room with other men. Amy did not have any friends or family in NYC, and she was in love with her partner, so she decided to stay. Soon after moving in, Amy's partner began to verbally abuse her and began calling her names and telling her that she wasn't a "real woman." In addition to the verbal abuse from her partner, Amy was experiencing verbal threats and sexual harassment from her partner's roommates.

The name calling, threats, and harassment escalated over time until it was an everyday occurrence. One evening when Amy wanted to attend a trans-Latina support group at the local LGBTQ Community Center, Amy's partner became physically aggressive and struck her, and told her that if she tried to hang out with those "faggots" again that he would kill her. Amy became increasingly afraid of her partner, especially because she knew there was a gun hidden in the house.

In one of the more severe incidents of physical violence, Amy's partner punched her in the face and pulled out a handful of her hair, as Amy was leaving for work. Over the course of her relationship, Amy's abusive partner increasingly isolated her from the outside world, refusing to allow her to work or spend time with friends. During the last incident of physical violence, Amy reported to AVP that she didn't know where she "found the strength," but she fought back. Her partner made threats to her that if she left he was going to kill her and pulled out his gun. Amy ran out of the building and went to a homeless shelter that a friend had told her about. Amy did not feel safe at the shelter, reporting that staff was using transphobic language. Amy decided to leave the shelter and slept on the subway that evening. Amy met another woman on the train that night who told her about NYC Anti-Violence Project (AVP).

Amy came in to the AVP office during walk-in hours the next day and worked with a counselor/advocate to plan for her safety and to find confidential domestic violence shelter. Amy was afraid to file for an Order of Protection for fear of retaliation from her partner and after consultation with an attorney from AVP's Domestic Violence Legal Clinic, she decided against it. Amy advocated for herself with a shelter service provider after doing a housing assessment with AVP and was placed in housing in a safe borough the same day. Amy continued to work though her trauma and violence experienced at the hands of her abusive partner, and maintained a relationship with AVP through supportive counseling as part of her journey towards safety, independence, and healing.

Narrative Provided by SafeSpace at the R U 1 2? Community Center - VERMONT

Deb Jones, 50, Lesbian, Female, White – Essex Junction, Vermont

Deb is a physician who has suffered physical as well as emotional abuse from her partner over the past 20 years. She was a successful doctor. However, because of this long term abuse, she is no longer able to hold down a job. Deb was unable to concentrate at work due to the trauma she was experiencing and the stress of wondering when her partner would call her or show up at work making demands of her. Deb eventually lost her job.

Deb's partner sabotaged her attempts to find employment by ruining her interview clothes and controlling their money. Deb and her partner adopted an infant a year before they separated. They are not married nor have they a civil union. They own a house together, but Deb was forced out by her partner. Deb never called the police or sought medical attention for several reasons – she felt that she would not be believed because she is substantially larger than her partner, she felt people wouldn't believe a woman could be abusive to another woman, and she did not want her colleagues at the hospital to know what was going on in her relationship. Additionally, she did not want to leave the home without their child. She was concerned about the child's safety if she was not there.

Once she was able to leave the home and set up in another location, she called SafeSpace for emotional support, as well as a legal referral. SafeSpace provided individual and group support for Deb, provided referrals for a therapist and a lawyer, advocated for her with her lawyer to substantiate the abuse, and developed a strategy for achieving Deb's goals with regards to parent/child contact as well as division of property. SafeSpace also provided support in family court during the contested parent/child contact order. SafeSpace was able to obtain a \$50 gas card for her, as well as free admission to the children's science museum. Deb regularly came to SafeSpace for free access to a computer and free printing.

Narrative Provided by the Lodge/Victim Response, Inc. (VRI) – FLORIDA

Clara, 19, Sexual Orientation Unknown, Transgender Female, Latina – Miami, Florida

Clara contacted our shelter in 2010, seeking safety and refuge from her partner. She had fled to Miami from another state to escape her abusive partner. Clara expressed difficulty in finding shelter in any other domestic violence programs. She reported that she was living on the streets and because of her appearance, was vulnerable to ridicule and assault.

Advocates worked with Clara, and researched programs specific to her needs and identity, and located a housing program in another state for LGBT youth. VRI secured her a space in that shelter program and assisted her in relocating. Not long after, her abusive partner found her and convinced her to move in with him. The abuse began again. Clara reported emotional and physical abuse.

Clara reached out again to VRI because she knew that she was supported and assisted without prejudice and discrimination and was placed in a shelter. She remained in the shelter for approximately one month, in which time she was referred to Pridelines¹, for support and counseling services.

Narrative Provided by the Network/La Red – Massachusetts

Sheila, 50, Lesbian, Female, Multi-Racial – Boston, Massachusetts

In 2010, The Network/La Red worked with Sheila, a transgender woman of color who was experiencing harassment and stalking from her abusive ex-partner. Sheila had been with her partner for 7 years. Sheila was in the relationship for 4 years before she started transitioning. She said, “My partner had always been a bit jealous and controlling, but that got worse as I started to transition.” Sheila left her partner in 2010, after a fight in which her partner had strangled her. She called The Network/La Red seeking support around filing for a restraining order. During our initial conversations Sheila disclosed experiencing physical, emotional, sexual and identity abuse as well as harassment and stalking after breaking off the relationship. We helped Sheila connect to a LGBTQ DV attorney who would help her with the restraining order process. At the hearing, Sheila was denied the restraining order. The judge told her that she was too big to be afraid of anyone. Sheila has not been able to get an appeal approved and continues to experience harassment and stalking from her ex-partner.

¹ Pridelines is an organization dedicated to supporting, educating and empowering South Florida’s LGBTQ youth in a safe and diverse environment.

¹ *The narrative for Bennett Bradley was written with information from the following media sources:*

Pelisek, C. (2010) Bennett Bradley, L.A. Homicide No. 2: Theater Director Found Dead Inside His Apartment. From LA Weekly - <http://blogs.laweekly.com/informer/2010/01/bennett-bradley-la-homicide-no.php>

Morris, S. (2010) Bennett Bradley: The Chef of the Fountain Theatre. From LA Weekly - <http://www.laweekly.com/2010-01-07/stage/bennett-bradley-the-chef-of-the-fountain-theatre/>

Romero, D. (2010) Suspect in Theater Director's Death To Be Charged (Updated). From LA Weekly - <http://blogs.laweekly.com/informer/2010/01/murder-charge-director-suspect.php>

Romero, D. (2010) Lover Pleads Not Guilty In Theater Director's Murder. From LA Weekly - <http://blogs.laweekly.com/informer/2010/01/not-guilty-director-murder-cas.php>

² *The narrative for Lakesha Ross was written with information from the following media sources:*

Kendall, J. (2010) Tynisha Story Gets Life in Prison for New Year's Day 2010 Murder. From Pitch.com - <http://www.pitch.com/plog/archives/2011/01/31/tynisha-story-gets-life-in-prison-for-new-years-day-2010-murder>

Kendall, J. (2010) Lakeasha Ross, Killa City Homicide No. 2: Tanisha Story charged with First-Degree Murder <http://www.pitch.com/plog/archives/2010/01/04/lakeasha-ross-kill-city-homicide-no-2-tanisha-story-charged-with-first-degree-murder>

Sloan, N. (2010) KCMO woman sentenced in shooting death of Lakeasha Ross. From kansascitykansan.com - <http://kansascitykansan.com/blogs/nick-sloan/kcmo-woman-sentenced-shooting-death-lakeasha-ross/9579>

³ *The narrative for Henry Scott IV was written with information from the following media sources:*

Kendall, J. (2010) Henry Scott IV Found Dead in Burning House Thursday; Foul Play Suspected. From Pitch.com - <http://www.pitch.com/plog/archives/2010/02/26/henry-scott-iv-found-dead-in-burning-house-thursday-foul-play-suspected>

Plfaum, N. (2010) Birmingham White's Luck Run Out – He's Charged With Murder Again. From Pitch.com - <http://www.pitch.com/plog/archives/2010/10/21/birmingham-whites-luck-done-run-out-hes-charged-with-murder-again>

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⁴ *The narrative for Annamarie Rintala was written with information from the following media sources:*

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