

## **Three Transgender Women of Color Murdered in One Week- LGBT Service Providers and Allies Outraged**

New York LGBT Coalition  
March 3, 2017

To date, seven trans women of color have lost their lives this year. All but one was under 35. Violence towards transgender women of color is an epidemic and one that must be addressed immediately. The New York LGBT coalition would like to express our condolences to the families and friends of Ms. Chyna Gibson of New Orleans, Ms. Ciara McElveen of New Orleans, Ms. Keke Collier of Chicago and Ms. Jaquarrius Holland of Monroe, Louisiana. Ms. Gibson, a well-known performer and part of the House and Ballroom community, was gunned down while visiting her family in New Orleans during Mardi Gras. We also express our condolences to the family and friends of Ciara McElveen. Ms. McElveen was stabbed in New Orleans hours after the murder of Ms. Gibson by a man in an automobile, who fled the scene. Ms. Keke Collier was shot dead in Chicago on February 21, 2017. Ms. Holland was killed on February 19th, 2017. Her homicide is only coming to light now, due to local press mis-gendering the victim.

We must be tireless in raising awareness of the ongoing epidemic of physical violence being perpetrated against transgender women of color, even as we are also engaged in protesting the political assault on the protections for transgender youth by the federal administration and other transgender rights. We call for solidarity with our transgender sisters of color. We call attention to the prejudice and discrimination many transgender women, especially those of color, experience on a daily basis, and we especially call on our allies to raise awareness by standing in solidarity with us. We seek to begin a national discussion about concrete actions we can take to protect our sisters most basic of all human rights: the right to exist.

**A rally will be held at Jackie Robinson park in Harlem on March 26, 2017 from 1pm-5pm.** We seek to raise awareness of this epidemic, making our elected officials and community members aware of this crisis while seeking to educate and build allies. We are committed to finding solutions in:

- 1 Law—The need for further legal protections for transgender women to keep them safe from violence and discrimination.
- 2 Housing—Addressing homelessness and the cofactors that exist that lead to transgender women facing a lack of safe, affordable housing.
- 3 Job training—Preparing transgender women of color for employment by offering free skills-building workshops/courses.
- 4 Education—Making education a reality for those who wish to attend school free from harassment and bullying.
- 5 Social Media—A nationwide campaign to educate and raise awareness about transgender communities of color.
- 6 Funding—A recognition that securing funding is essential in order to move our agenda forward. It is essential to put funding dollars behind these goals if we are to succeed.

We sign this letter in solidarity with and for our transgender sisters of color. Our goal is to show that they are not alone in this fight. We will mourn for the lives lost, but fight like hell for the living.

Destination Tomorrow  
Bronx Trans Collective (BTC)  
Trans PAC  
Community Kinship Life (CK Life)  
New York Transgender Advocacy Group (NYTAG)  
Translatina Network  
The NYC Equality Coalition  
Harlem Pride  
Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund  
Ali Forney Center  
Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club  
Immigration Equality  
Make the Road NY (MRNY)  
PFLAG NYC  
NYC's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center  
NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer  
Public Advocate Letitia James  
NYS Senator Squadron  
NYS Senator Brad Hoylman  
Assembly Member Richard Gottfried  
Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick  
Council Member Corey Johnson  
Council Member Ritchie Torres  
Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer  
Council Member Daniel Dromm  
Council Member James Vacca  
Council Member Carlos Menchaca  
Council Member Rosie Mendez  
Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer  
Lambda Independent Democrats of Brooklyn  
Coalition for a District Alternative (CoDA)  
Human Rights Campaign, GNY  
Hetrick-Martin Institute  
Transgender Liberation Project  
Equality New York  
The LGBT Bar Association of Greater New York (LeGaL)  
Stonewall Democratic Club of NYC (SDNYC)  
GLAAD  
GMHC  
Black Lesbian Conference 2018  
Black Trans Advocacy - NY

Circle of Voices, Inc  
Depressed Black Gay Men  
Gatekeepers  
Global Network of Black Pride  
LGBT Faith Leaders of African Descent  
NYC Black Pride  
NYC Pride & Power  
LGBT Faith Leaders of African Descent  
Rivers of Living Water Ministries  
Under Our Umbrella  
Gay & Lesbian Independent Democrats  
Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club of Queens  
GLSEN New York City  
The New York City Anti-Violence Project (AVP)