NEWS RELEASE

International Transgender Day of Remembrance

(November 15, 2018. Oakville, Ontario) International Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDoR), is observed annually on November 20th to memorialize those who have been murdered as a result of transphobia and to draw attention to the continued violence endured by the transgender community.

Ontario unanimously passed the Trans Day of Remembrance Act on December 12, 2017, officially recognizing TDoR and requiring the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to hold a moment of silence every year on November 20th.

Statistics released by the National Coalition of Anti-violence (USA) say that less than half of the victims of LGBTQ2 hate crimes report their incidents of violence to police. Of those who do, 80% expressed that the law enforcement officials they interacted with were either indifferent or aggressive.

It is clear that the relationship between the LGBTQ2 community and police has consistently been tense and Serving with Pride (SWP) believe that the largest reason for this strained relationship is due to a lack of understanding on the part of police, corrections and criminal justice personnel.

Brian Mitchell, Co-chair of Serving with Pride explains. “In our experience, we have found that the vast majority of police and law enforcement personnel want “to do the right thing”, but they are worried that they will unknowingly insult or offend an LGBTQ2 person they might come in contact with.”

He goes on to say “The gap is in their confidence to know how to treat the LGBTQ2 community with respect, compassion and understanding.”
SWP has been working to raise awareness through its 1-day workshop for Ontario police, corrections and criminal justice services as well as by providing education to each and every recruit at the Ontario Police College.

Jean Turner, Co-chair of Serving with Pride expands, “Through our teaching we have also found that we invariably spend a great deal of time talking about the unique needs of the transgender community. As a result we will be developing a new workshop which delves even further into the concerns of Trans folks and how law enforcement can best serve them.”

Serving with Pride encourages all police, corrections and criminal justice services to take a moment on November 20th to not only remember the victims of transphobia but to think about how you can help change the statistics.

Watch the SWP website (www.servingwithpride.ca) for the launch of the new workshop and have a Serving with Pride education day at your service.

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