



07/12/2024

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Joint Statement from Speak Out Against Hate (SOAH) and Sussex Pride Regarding a Recent Incident of Hate-Violence in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware

Rehoboth Beach, DE – August 19, 2023 – Speak Out Against Hate (SOAH) and Sussex Pride stand in solidarity today following a troubling incident of hate-based violence that occurred on August 17th in Rehoboth Beach. Details of this incident are available on the Rehoboth Beach Police Department Facebook Page: (facebook.com/rehobothbeachpolice)

We express our heartfelt support to the three women who were directly affected by this heinous act and commend the Rehoboth Police Department for their swift response and their commitment to applying the hate crime statute in this case.

Hate has a profound impact on communities, and this incident serves as a stark reminder of the work that lies ahead in combating intolerance and violence. We recognize the importance of acknowledging the role that hate plays in our society, as it not only affects the victims but also reverberates throughout our communities.

It is heartbreaking to see how young many of the suspects in this crime are. It is our profound hope that these young people learn and grow from this incident. Both Sussex Pride and Speak Out Against Hate (SOAH) do this work because we believe such change is possible, and we support the use of restorative justice whenever possible.

Data from the Leadership Council on Civil Rights Education Fund has shown a clear correlation between presidential campaign cycles and a rise in reported hate crimes. We are witnessing this disturbing trend, and it is crucial now more than ever for our community members to remain vigilant.

If you or someone you know has experienced hate bias or violence, we urge you to report it. For more information on how to report hate incidents, please visit: sussexpride.org/posts/reporthat. You can also reach out to The Delaware Anti-Violence Project, a program of Sussex Pride, for any questions or support. The

Delaware Anti-Violence Project is dedicated to reducing violence against LGBTQ individuals and supporting LGBTQ survivors in our state. For additional resources, please visit: sussexpride.org/antiviolence to learn more.

We applaud Delaware's important step forward with the hiring of its first Victim Service Specialist, Jen Kutney (she/they), in the Division of Civil Rights and Public Trust. Jen will be instrumental in working with survivors of hate and bias crimes and will collaborate closely with organizations like Sussex Pride and SOAH on awareness and education initiatives.

Together, let us work towards a future where everyone can live without fear of hate.

SOAH will hold their next public meeting on September 12th, at the Lewes Public Library at 5:00 PM. Information can be found at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/soah-community-meeting-sept-12-2024-tickets-986909371497>

The Delaware Anti-Violence Project, a program of Sussex Pride, will hold their next public meeting on September 10th at 2:00 PM at the offices of What is Your Voice. Information can be found at:

<https://sussexpride.org/events/davp/>

SPEAK OUT AGAINST HATE (SOAH)

Speak Out Against Hate has been formed for the express purpose of confronting and countering the rising tide of hate, wherever and whenever it exists in a direct, focused and ongoing manner. (www.soah-de.org)

SUSSEX PRIDE

Sussex Pride works to celebrate, strengthen, and support the LGBTQ+ community in Sussex County and the state of Delaware, working through a social justice lens. We focus on arts & culture, health & wellness, social and support groups, and advocacy for our community. (www.sussexpride.org)

DELAWARE ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT

Delaware Anti-Violence Project, a program of Sussex Pride, works to address violence against the LGBTQ+ community. The Delaware Anti-Violence Project is a proud member of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. (www.sussexpride.org/antiviolence)