

Transformation

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Spring 2001

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Hate-Free Arkansas! Campaign

Dee Dee Green

On June 1, 2000, the Women's Project's Watchcare Network launched a media campaign, Hate-Free Arkansas, commemorating the lives of Arkansans who have been victimized by bias and violence. We wanted to create a visual illustration of the hate violence and bias in Arkansas which has been documented in our annual edition of the Women's Watchcare Log in *Transformation* from 1994 to 1999. Created with the help of Young Artists, Young Aspirations (Ya Ya, Inc.) and media consultant Jane Wholey from New Orleans, the Peace Development Fund in Amherst, Massachusetts, and the Needmor Fund in Longmont, Colorado, the campaign brings attention to the work that the Women's Project has been doing around bias and hate since 1988.

The campaign is a traveling exhibit that includes 268 five feet long banners, each containing an image of hate (i.e. racist and homophobic slurs, a swastika, a burning church) and each a real-life story of an Arkansan who was victimized and/or killed as a result of hate. The campaign also includes a press conference that invites the media to come to hear and meet individuals and organizations that speak out against hate. So far, the exhibit has been viewed in Central (Little Rock) and Northwest Arkansas (Fayetteville). We hope that by educating communities about the incidence of hate across the state, we encourage people to combat the type of violence that targets people based on bias.

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Hate-Free Arkansas Campaign kicks off at MacArthur Park in June 2000.

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The first banner display draped the lawn of McArthur Park last June. Speakers included Little Rock Police Chief Lawrence Johnson; Carolyn Wagner, Vice President, P-FLAG National Board of Directors; Tufara Waller Muhammad, student and Women's Project board member; Cole Wakefield, student and AR-YU Proud member, and members of the Women's Project Staff.

In January 2001, Hate-Free Arkansas traveled to Fayetteville and invited the community to view the powerful banner exhibit. St. Paul's Episcopal Church hosted the display and key community leaders were involved in the event. Speakers included ReShandra Strickland, education and training coordinator for Northwest Arkansas Rape Crisis; Reverend Lowell Grisham, Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Fayetteville; Diana Shiell, director of the Multicultural Center of Northwest Arkansas; Mary Ann Copp, L.S.W. and local human rights activist; and Reverend Linda Cooper-Igwebuike, Pastor of St. James United Methodist Church in Fayetteville.

Challenging attitudes of hate and



Little Rock Police Chief Lawrence Johnson speaks at the Women's Project's June 2000 press conference.

violence is the daily routine of these wonderful community leaders who spoke profoundly about topics ranging from the racial profiling of Latino youth and sexual violence against women to the persecution of religious minorities. We hope that the tour continues to find energetic people who are not afraid to take a stand against hate and violence. The success of the campaign will help the Watchcare Network to recapture the organizing and community involvement that is a part of its history.

The Women's Watchcare Network

was born in 1988 and led by Women's Project founder Suzanne Pharr and later by staff member Kerry Lobel. The Women's Project took a stand against the alarming growth of hate groups in Arkansas. According to Suzanne, we created the Women's Watchcare Network after realizing that while national and regional groups were monitoring the far right, no one in our state was watching the buildup of hate groups here in Arkansas such as the KKK, the Posse Comitatus, and The Covenant, Sword and Arm of the Lord.

We decided to track not only hate groups but also individual acts of biased violence against people of color, lesbians and gay men, religious minorities and women. It was placing women in that group that put us on the map because at that time no one considered women to be targets of biased violence. We used our monitoring efforts to do community organizing by bringing together African Americans, Jews, women, and lesbians and gay men in small communities across the state to talk about the biased violence they and their communities had experienced. Then these groups joined the monitoring effort by gathering information in their communities and working with local people to oppose acts of violence.

The Hate-Free Arkansas campaign hopes to reactivate its organizing component and involve communities across the state in monitoring acts of hate and bias. The campaign has three scheduled stops over the next year including Texarkana, Jonesboro and Monticello. It has received some wonderful coverage from media across the state and country including brief coverage in *USA Today* (January 15, 2001). Ultimately, we hope to have monitoring teams and community organizations in each region of the state building relationships and sharing resources to create a Hate-Free Arkansas!



News photographer covers June 2000 event.

Hate-Free Arkansas

Creating Safety for all Citizens

Melanie Dietzel

Note: This article was originally published in the Ozark Gazette on January 22, 2001.

"You have to be taught before its too late, before you are six or seven or eight to hate all the people your relatives hate. . ."

—Oscar Hammerstein, II

The ability to hate is not an innate characteristic of human beings. As lyricist Hammerstein points out in the musical South Pacific, "You have to be carefully taught." So, can we be untaught? Many believe that it's possible.

DeeDee Green believes it. Vedisia (DeeDee) Green is the Women's Project Watchcare Network Lead Organizer. Begun in 1988 by author/activist Suzanne Pharr, the Watchcare Network seeks to "Increase awareness of bigoted violence committed by individuals and hate groups in Arkansas, affect policy changes necessary to counteract hate, and organize communities to change the climate of intolerance that allows bigotry to thrive."

Green, who has a B.A. in anthropology, began volunteering for the Women's Project during 1995 while a student at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock. Later she was asked to be on the board. Green became a staff member in 1999, and part of her responsibility is working with the Watchcare Network. Green produces the annual log that monitors hate violence in the state. The log is pub-

lished once a year in the Women's Project quarterly, *Transformation*.

Out of the Watchcare Network emerged Hate-Free Arkansas. Green says, "We have a long term vision of Watchcare monitors in every region of the state to record and respond to incidents of violence." Green states that "hate does not begin with the most heinous of physical assaults." Rather, it "begins with an attitude, an attitude of prejudice, prejudice based on nothing more than stereotypes with no basis except for what is not



Staffer Dee Dee Green speaks with reporter at Hate-Free Arkansas event in Fayetteville in January 2001.

known." The dragging death of James Byrd, Jr. in Texas, and the brutal murder of Matthew Shepherd in Wyoming did not occur in a vacuum. The seeds that burst into those savage acts were planted long ago, nurtured in homes filled with racism, fed by adults delivering messages, overt or subtle, that homosexuality is wrong. Those involved in the Hate-Free Arkansas program believe that changing those attitudes can prevent

acts of violence.

In order to seek new attitudes, communities must first recognize that there is a problem. In the state of Arkansas 300 acts of bias violence were recorded between 1996 and 1999. These are only the cases verified by named sources. It's difficult to figure how many more occur that are never reported. Yet, statistics are cold numbers. Being faced with a name, a voice, an image is what grabs attention.

On Saturday, January 13, the Hate-Free Arkansas Banner Display Tour spent a day in Fayetteville. 150 banners were hung on walls and racks in the parish hall of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Each banner depicts an act of bias or bias-based violence committed because of the victim's gender, color, ethnic background, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability. As visitors entered the hall and confronted the maze of banners, it was as though they had stepped into a mortuary. Silently or speaking in hushed tones, they moved from one banner to the next reading the pages of text glued to each one. A Jewish student receives a swastika drawn on a piece of notebook paper, placed in her mailbox. A teen-age boy is beaten because he is gay. A 90-year-old woman and her 70-year-

old daughter are beaten to death in their home.

Small recording devices are attached to some of the banners. If you push a button on one, you will hear a voice: "Every day eight African Americans, three Caucasians, three homosexuals, three Jewish people, and one Hispanic become victims of hate crimes in this country."

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Speaking Against Hate: Women's Project Members Lend Voices to Hate-Free Arkansas

**Tufara Waller Muhammad
Little Rock, June 1, 2000**

In the Greeting Words of Peace, of Islam my religion, I say to you, As Salaam Alaikum, which means Peace be unto you.

My name is Tufara Waller Muhammad and I stand before you today as a Muslim, a member of the African American Community, and citizen of this great state of Arkansas. I am here today to say that something must be done.

With the presentation of Women's Project Watchcare Network Log and banners made by Ya Ya Inc., we bring to your attention multiple in-



Women's Project Board Member, Tufara Waller Muhammad, speaks at Little Rock press conference, June 2000.

stances of biased and bigoted violence which occur daily in our country, our state, our city, and in and on your's and my blocks.

From 1994-99 the Women's Watchcare Network had reported 171 instances of sexist murders of women in Arkansas, women who are victimized because of their gender. These are not just women: these crimes were committed, and are being committed against mothers, sisters, aunts, daughters, grandmothers and maybe even your sorority members. If not your family members, then someone's family members. These are the same kind of women you see in the grocery store, when you go to pick your children up from school, and maybe even when you go get your tags for your car. The reality is this: these are real people; there are families and faces which go along with every one of these banners. Something must be done because biased violence is wrong!

From 1994-99 the Women's Watchcare Network has reported three cases of biased violence committed against individuals because of their religious beliefs. Is this just? The First Amendment of the Constitution of this country says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the practice or free exercise thereof..." Was our country not founded on an individual's right to practice their

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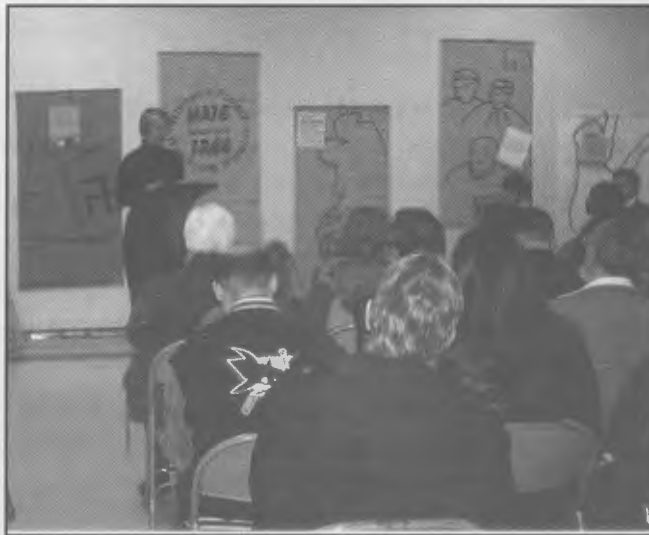
own personal religion? This nation's foreparents traveled and founded the United States of America so that individuals could have the right to practice their own religion. Do we live in a just society when people aren't allowed to live in peace because of the way they pray or the manner in which they speak to the Creator? Think about it! Biased and bigoted violence is wrong.

From 1994-99 the Women's Watchcare Network has reported 49 cases of biased violence committed against persons with disabilities. As a person who works everyday with 12 adult individuals with mental and physical disabilities, I say to you that something must be done! Persons with disabilities have the right to live in this country and to function to the height of their ability in peace. Think about it! Biased and bigoted violence is wrong.

I could get up here before you today and list all the many times that I have been affected personally by biased and bigoted violence. I could get up here and list all the people, all the families that I have known who have suffered as a result of biased violence. But I won't. I won't because the bottom line is each and every citizen of this community, this city, and this world is affected, whether it be directly or indirectly, by biased and bigoted violence. Take time and walk through the aisles of these banners, look at the banners; read the banners. I dare you! I dare you to think about it.

I want you to take into consideration that for every instance of violence that has been reported in the Women's Watchcare Log there are persons who were afraid to report, who didn't know who to tell or just didn't believe that anyone cared. Do we live in a just society when citizens are slain, beaten, battered, shot, shot at, threatened, intimidated, abused, harassed, assaulted, terrorized and not to mention crucified, just because some folks think that they are different? I think not.

These crimes aren't just committed against me and people who look like me. Biased violence affects your sons, your daughters, your friends, your neighbors and maybe even you. As a member of what the media and this society calls Generation X, I say that something must be done. We



Women's Project member Mary Ann Copp speaks at Fayetteville press conference, January 2001.

must take a stand. You must take a stand. If not for yourself, for your children, your families and this country. As my mentor Mrs. LiHa B. Preyer would say, that means you, you and you too! Let us use our collective power as citizens of this democracy to come together and do something other than meet and eat. Contact your congresspersons, your senators, your pastors, your Imam, and your Rabbis and educate them on what's happening. We must make hate crime legislation a reality in our state. Think about it! Biased and bigoted violence is wrong!

To paraphrase Fannie Lou Hammer, the Mississippi Civil Rights Activist and Freedom Fighter, "It doesn't matter whether you are from Morehouse, or No House; or whether you have a GED, a Ph.D. or no D, we are all in this bag together.

I thank you for your time and your attention and I leave you as I came before you in the greeting words of

grace of Islam my religion, As Salaam Alaikum.

**Mary Ann Copp,
Fayetteville
January 13, 2001**

I'm here today because of a promise to my parents. During World War II, my Japanese-American family was placed in an internment camp in Jerome, Arkansas. They made two points very clear to me.

One, since they had regained a sense of personal

safety and justice for me, I was expected to work for the safety of others until all felt safe. Two, that I would have to exercise democracy or it will grow weak, like muscles or faith. They believed that everyday folks, like you and me, could recreate a vision of safety for everyone.

**I would have
to exercise
democracy or it
will grow weak,
like muscles or
faith.**

However, in recent years, my sense of safety and justice is in question. I wonder if, like me, you watched the daily news in disbelief that footage of hate-motivated violence actually took away our shared vision of schools and churches as places where we always felt safe. I am still haunted by images of Jewish chil-

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dren, holding hands, fleeing, of the danger of high school students with guns, and of a Christian youth service interrupted by gunfire. That is the unique power of a bias-motivated crime ... it targets some individuals but it sends a message of fear to everyone in that community. When a church is burned down, every churchgoer wonders if their church is at risk.

For me, those haunting images beg the question: What can I do? Admittedly, alone, in front of my TV, it was difficult to muster a hopeful response. But today the Women's Project is sharing some very hopeful ideas. Put simply, Hate-Free Arkansas suggests three actions: educate,

bear witness, create change.

Educate yourself and others: Read the banners on display to understand that bias-motivated violence does happen in Arkansas. Learn that young people are the perpetrators and the victims of most hate crimes. Hear the words of Morris Dees, founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center: "Hate comes from the individual who seeks out somebody he can feel better than. Sometimes that causes him to go and do things to those people, hurtful things."

Bear witness: Join a monitoring team to record acts of violence motivated by bigotry or the hatred of another person's gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

Stop the invisibility of hate violence that too often goes unreported.

Work with your community to create change: With knowledge and stories, work with others to send a clear message that the hate of others, for simply being who they are, will not be ignored and allowed to escalate into violence. Make sure Arkansas is no longer one of the seven remaining states that do not have hate crime legislation. Support teaching our youth a healthy respect for our differences.

The Women's Project invites you to participate in making a Hate-Free Arkansas. My parents and I hope you will accept that invitation, especially if someone before you secured your sense of safety. ■

Start a Watchcare Monitoring Team in Your Town and Help...

- Monitor local media outlets for reports of incidents of bias violence in your community.
- Compile and provide local resources for aiding victims and families of bias violence in your community.
- Work with community groups and local law enforcement to educate them about bias violence.
- In the long term, work with other monitoring teams and community organizations across the state in a statewide anti-violence coalition.

Our Mission

Our goal is social change or, as the poet Adrienne Rich writes, "the transformation of the world." We believe this world can be changed to become a place of peace and justice for all women.

We take risks in our work; we take unpopular stands. We work for all women and against all forms of discrimination and oppression. We believe that we cannot work for all women and against sexism unless we also work against racism, classism, ageism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism and homophobia. We see the connection among these oppressions as the context for violence against women in this society.

We are concerned in particular about issues of importance to traditionally underrepresented women: poor women, aged women, women of color, teenage mothers, women with disabilities, lesbians, women in prisons, etc. All are women who experience discrimination and violence against their lives.

We are committed to working multi-culturally, multi-racially, and to making our work and cultural events accessible to low income women. We believe that women will not know equality until they know economic justice.

We believe that a few committed women working in coalition and in consensus with other women can make significant change in the quality of life for all women.

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At 10:00 a.m. a press conference begins. Green along with six others who live in Northwest Arkansas speak about changing the climate of a community to one that does not nurture bias. Mary Ann Copp, social worker and human rights activist, speaks about her Japanese American family. During World War II, while her father served in the army, her mother and other family members were held in internment camps. Copp's promise to her parents was that she would "work for the safety of others until all were safe." Diana Shiell is Director of the Multi-cultural Center of Northwest Arkansas. She talks to the group about the changing demographics of the area, allegations of racial profiling, and harassment of Hispanic children in the schools. Other speakers address issues of rape, domestic violence, and the responsibilities of faith groups.

The Hate-Free Arkansas Banner Tour will travel to three additional regions of the state over the next year, with displays in Texarkana, Jonesboro and Monticello. When Green is asked what she hopes will



Melanie Dietzel, reporter for Ozark Gazette, covers the Women's Project press conference in Fayetteville in January 2001

The Women's Project challenges the state's citizens to help build a Hate-Free Arkansas.

come out of the Banner Tour, she responds, "Its main objective is to bring voice and visibility to the incidents of hate as they occur in the state of Arkansas. Many people are isolated because it's a rural state; they don't think that racism exists in 'our area.' [We want to] make people aware that this is happening in 'our community.' These acts of violence are not against the individual victim, but against every member of the community the victims belong to."

The Women's Project challenges the state's citizens to help build a Hate-Free Arkansas. Mary Ann Copp says that her parents believed that "everyday folks, like you and me, could recreate a vision of safety for everyone." How do we begin? We educate ourselves and others about bias-based acts of harassment or violence. We develop community-level volunteer teams that will work with law enforcement officials to monitor and respond to hate violence. And, we generate public support for hate crime legislation; Arkansas is one of only seven states currently lacking a hate-crime law. One of the most basic and powerful steps we can take to prevent hate crimes is to create an atmosphere in our homes, schools, work places, and faith centers in which diversity is accepted, even celebrated. ■

Transformation...

is published four times every year. In each issue, members receive analysis of contemporary issues, information about Women's Project upcoming events and activities, book reviews, and more. If you are not a Women's Project member and would like to continue receiving the journal, please fill out the membership form below.



Yes, I would like to join the Women's Project.

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone/day

Phone/evening

E-mail

\$25 regular \$100 supporting

\$50 sustaining \$15 low income

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Account No.

Exp. Date

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 Little Rock, AR 72206

Hate Crimes Legislation: What Happened this Legislative Session?

Anne Shelley

Hate crimes targeting people because of their race, their gender, their sexual orientation, their disability status, and their religion happen in towns large and small across the country and across Arkansas. Most have heard of the vicious murder of Matthew Shepard, the 21 year old college student who was beaten, tied to a fence, and left to die in sub-freezing temperatures in Laramie, Wyoming, simply because he was gay. Most people know of James Byrd, Jr., the African-American man who was chained to a truck and dragged to death until he slowly became dismembered, simply because of the color of his skin. And there were many stories on the news regarding the shooting of 8 school children at a Jewish day care center in Los Angeles.

But how many folks have heard of Willie Wagner, a gay white sixteen year old in Fayetteville, Arkansas, who was brutally beaten by a gang of kids yelling anti-gay epithets? How about another Fayetteville resident, David Allen Parker, a transgendered African-American Arkansan who was brutally beaten and killed after being followed home from a gay bar? Or what about the Pruitts, the African-American couple from Newport whose life savings went up in smoke when their business was burned to the ground and "No Nigers" was written on its charred remains? Or the African Methodist

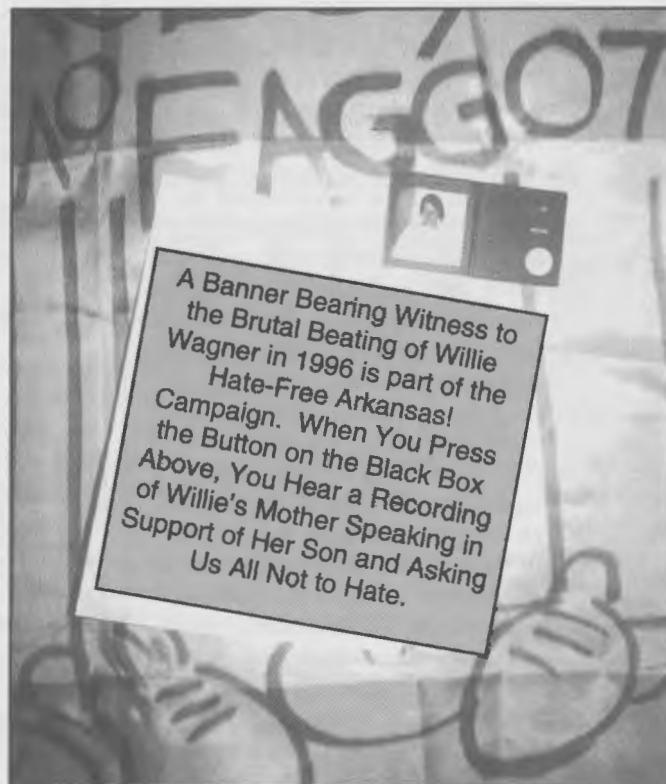
Episcopal Church that was burned to the ground near Monticello?

These are the stories many Arkansans haven't heard because, in spite of the publication of the Women's Project Watchcare Log for the past 13 years, the problem of hate violence remains largely invisible to most Arkansans. Without hate crimes legislation, law enforcement officials have no incentive to report crimes as hate crimes or to keep statistics on the incidents of hate crimes in our state. And as long as folks don't think it's a problem, justice will be denied to the individuals who are targeted. The Watchcare Network's *Hate Free Arkansas Campaign* and Arkansas Equality Network's *Pledge*

Against Hate Campaign, both launched in June of 2000, are designed to increase public awareness about hate violence in our state and educate folks about the need for hate crimes legislation. This push for public awareness helped create a more positive climate for the passage of hate crimes legislation in the 2001 legislative session.

While working this past year on both campaigns, I heard story after story from hate crimes victims in Arkansas who have been the targets of hate violence, simply because of who they are. Many of these folks have gone to the police seeking justice only to find that their pleas have been ignored, because law enforcement officials refused to take the crimes seriously or were unable to prosecute them as hate crimes.

Ultimately hate crimes leave a devastating legacy in the communities where they occur. When someone is the target of a hate crime, the entire community of which they are a member is targeted. These crimes are intended to send a message to an entire community of people that they do not have the right to exist, simply because of who they are. The perpetrators of these crimes commit them with the intent to intimidate an entire group of people.



For most of the 20th century, African-Americans were lynched to keep them from exercising voting rights and from challenging Jim Crow segregation laws. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people are often beaten just for showing affection in public or for "looking queer." Whatever the reason and whoever the target, hate crimes rob entire communities of their humanity and feelings of self-worth; they tell people to live their lives in shame and fear, rather than openly and honestly.

I believe, though, that through a combination of community education efforts and legislative advocacy we can stem hate violence in Arkansas. Through our diligent work to increase community education regarding bias violence, the Watchcare Network and Arkansas Equality Network helped set the stage for the leg-

Ultimately hate crimes leave a devastating legacy on the communities where they occur.

islative advocacy that occurred at the capitol this year. Comprehensive hate crimes legislation came closer to passing in Arkansas this last legislative session than ever before in our state. While we cannot legislate prejudice out of existence, hate crimes legislation is an important step in dealing with the problem of hate crimes. Hate crimes legislation would insure that hate crimes are taken seriously by the criminal justice system and send a message that hate crimes won't be tolerated in the

state of Arkansas.

Arkansas is one of only six states currently without a state law providing for harsher penalties for crimes that target someone just because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or gender. In the recent legislative session, there was a bill in the state legislature, Senate Bill 35, that would have created enhanced penalties for hate crimes committed because of a person's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

In both 1997 and 1999, hate crimes legislation was introduced, only to be killed instantly in the House. This year, the outlook for hate crimes legislation looked more promising. For the first time, we had a state attorney general, Mark Pryor, writing the legislation and taking a key leadership role in speaking out publicly against hate violence and advocating for passage of the bill. And for the first time, we had leading state elected officials, including Speaker of the House Shane Broadway and President Pro Tempore of the Senate Mike Beebe, serving as the bill's lead co-sponsors, with Senator Bill Walker introducing the bill.

Community involvement in passing the legislation was stronger than ever before as well. For the first time, there was a statewide progressive organization advocating for equal rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people that was taking an active and visible role in educating folks about hate crimes legislation (past attempts at passing a hate crimes bill had been met with strong arguments against the inclusion of sexual orientation as a protected



Hate-Free Arkansas banner gives visibility to the problem of church burnings in Arkansas.

category). For the first time, we had the Citizens' First Congress, a progressive lobby coalition representing over 50 grassroots organizations, advocating for the bill's passage. A broad-based coalition of organizations soon joined forces with the Attorney General's office to strategize on the bill's passage and to turn out citizens from across the state to testify at the legislature in favor of the bill. Community Action meetings were held across the state, generating calls, letters and attendance at legislative committee meetings. Over 100 community leaders from across the state signed a letter endorsing Senate Bill 35, including the Police Chief of Little Rock and the Mayor of Hot Springs.

On January 30, after accepting an amendment penned by the ACLU of Arkansas guaranteeing that the bill would not violate the First Amend-

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"I come from an experience where it was okay for me to be attacked and to be assaulted daily, and the most painful part of that was not the person attacking me, it was the bystanders who turned their backs, to whom this was not meaningful," Eckford said in her remarks supporting the bill.

ment rights of perpetrators, the Senate Judiciary Committee, in a vote of four to one, passed Senate Bill 35 out of committee and onto the full Senate floor. Making history on February 5th, the Arkansas State Senate passed hate crimes legislation by a vote of 22 to 13, becoming the first full body of the legislature to pass a hate crimes bill and sending the bill to the House Judiciary Committee for consideration. Historically, however, the House Judiciary Committee had been a deadly foe to such legislation. This session would prove no different.

On February 20th, the House Judiciary Committee met before a standing-room-only audience, comprised mostly of supporters of Senate Bill 35. Attorney General Mark Pryor gave an inspired introduction to the bill that strongly challenged the misinformation campaign in opposition to the bill spearheaded by the Family Council and perpetuated by columns

and political cartoons in the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*. Three hours of debate on the bill followed. Folks testifying for the passage of the hate crimes bill included: Judge Wendell Griffin who, as a Baptist Minister, spoke with both legal and moral authority on the issue; Charles and Sylvialene Pruitt of Newport who tearfully recounted the burning of their business in Newport; and Elizabeth Eckford, one of the Little Rock Nine who broke the racial barrier at Central High in 1957.

"I come from an experience where it was okay for me to be attacked and to be assaulted daily, and the most painful part of that was not the person attacking me, it was the bystanders who turned their backs, to whom this was not meaningful," Eckford said in her remarks supporting the bill.

At the end of the three-hour committee meeting, it was mis-information that won out over truth. Citing beliefs that, "there are no hate crimes in Arkansas," "the bill would punish thought," or "the bill establishes particular groups for elevated status," eleven House Judiciary Committee members voted to kill the bill. Five voted for passage of the bill and four members did not cast a vote. One of the Representatives who abstained told citizen lobbyists that he knew in his heart that the bill was the right thing to do, but he had gotten only calls opposing the bill from his constituents at home.

So, Arkansas continues to be one of only six states without hate crimes legislation. That said, it must also be noted that the climate regarding the importance of hate crimes legislation has forever changed for the better. The momentum started this year for Senate Bill 35 will continue to build into the next legislative session in 2003. The foundation laid by the coalition formed and the educational campaigns started in 2000 will grow

stronger over the next two years.

By 2003, it is my hope that no one will be able to unthinkingly say, "there are no hate crimes in Arkansas." Through efforts like *Hate-Free Arkansas* and *Pledge Against Hate*, the stories of Arkansans like Willie Wagner and the Pruitts will not be ignored, and crimes like those waged against them will be fully punished under a hate crimes bill in Arkansas.

Note: This month, Texas passed hate crimes legislation making Arkansas one of only six states without a hate crimes law instead of one of only seven states as mentioned earlier in this issue.

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2001 The Women's Project



Women's Project

Multi-Cultural Entertainment

Vendors

20th Anniversary T-Shirts

Visit Former Staff & Board Members

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Back Former Staff Members:

Suzanne Pharr, Janet Perkins,

Kerry Lobel, Kelly Mitchell-Clark and Others!

MacArthur Park

June 9, 2001

4 p.m.-8 p.m.

Celebrating 20 Years of Social Justice Work

20th Anniversary Celebration!

Open to the Public!

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www.womens-project.org

Women's Project Watchcare Organizer Job Opportunity

Seeking fulltime Community Organizer to work as lead organizer for Watchcare Network, a project of the Women's Project in Little Rock. The Women's Project is a non-profit, grassroots social justice organization working to eliminate racism and sexism. The Watchcare Network is a broad-based project of public education and community organizing against bias violence in Arkansas. The Watchcare Organizer's duties include: compiling annual anecdotal log of bias violence; coordinating our state-wide Hate-Free Arkansas Campaign; organizing Watchcare community monitoring teams across the state; educating for policy regarding hate crimes and bias violence; conducting anti-violence, anti-racism and anti-homophobia conferences and trainings; and performing general administrative duties. Applicant should be self-motivated, computer literate, have good people skills, reliable transportation and be able to travel. Young women and women of color encouraged to apply. Experience as a community organizer a plus. Spanish-speaking skills a plus.

Mail resume to: Women's Project, 2224 Main St., Little Rock, AR 72206; or fax it to 501-372-0009.

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Little Rock, Arkansas
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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