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## **The South Coast LGBTQ+ Network to Honor Transgender Day of Remembrance with Special Event in New Bedford on November 20**

Evening vigil memorializes Jennifer Laude's death and the murder of 34 transgender individuals in the United States in 2020

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**New Bedford, Mass. (November 17, 2020)** – The South Coast LGBTQ+ Network is hosting a special event to honor the lives of 34 transgender individuals murdered in the United States in 2020, as well as the memory of Jennifer Laude, a Filipina trans woman killed by New Bedford native and U.S. Marine Scott Pemberton in 2014.

The vigil, which will take place on National Transgender Day of Remembrance, begins at 7:00 p.m. on November 20 on the steps of the New Bedford Public Library. The vigil is not open to the public due to COVID-19 restrictions; however, The South Coast LGBTQ+ Network invites everyone to join a livestream of the event on their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/746986885891644>

Traci Welch (she), events committee chairperson for The South Coast LGBTQ+ Network, cites the shocking number of transgender individuals killed in 2020 – at least 34 so far this year, according to the Human Rights Campaign – as the primary motivation behind creating this event. “On Transgender Day of Remembrance, we must honor the memory of these uniquely beautiful people whose lives ended senselessly and tragically,” she said. “Transgender and nonbinary individuals deserve to live without fear of scorn, discrimination, and violence.”

The event has attracted the attention of PJ Raval (he), the internationally acclaimed director/producer of *CALL HER GANDA*, an award-winning documentary about the murder of Jennifer Laude, who says, “Screening *CALL HER GANDA* in New Bedford for Transgender Day of Remembrance is of the utmost significance. Sharing the story of Jennifer Laude in the hometown of the person who took her life offers a rare and an important moment to educate and to heal. It is



encouraging to witness this community acknowledging and confronting the senseless violence committed against the trans community and demonstrating an impassioned commitment to ensuring that Jennifer’s tragic story will never be repeated. In remembering Jennifer, we can understand that each of our actions matter and that we have the ability to produce positive change.”

Raval is making the documentary *CALL HER GANDA* free for everyone to watch on Thursday, November 19, Friday, November 20, and Saturday, November 21.

Mocha Jean Herrup, PhD (they), who is a creator at the New Bedford Film Society, interviewed Raval for *CALL HER GANDA*. They say, “There is beauty, tragedy, and hope in PJ Raval’s stunning documentary about the far-too-short life of Jennifer Laude and the inspiring resistance to transphobia and colonialism that rises up in her name.”

In addition to event host Taylor K. Corbett (she), who is the artistic director at The Glass Horse Project in New Bedford, the November 20 event will feature three keynote speakers:

- Alex West (he/they), staff attorney at South Coast Fair Housing, will discuss legal services for transgender individuals, with a focus on the areas of housing discrimination and employment rights.

- Jeannine Schoos (she), staff attorney at South Coastal Counties Legal Services, will discuss legal protections for transgender individuals who are victims of crime.

- Brian Costa (he), a nurse practitioner at the New Bedford Community Health Center and treasurer for The South Coast LGBTQ+ Network, will discuss the specific healthcare needs of transgender individuals, including hormone therapy and body modification.

For more information, contact Traci Welch, events committee chairperson at The South Coast LGBTQ+ Network, at (774) 208-7037, or email [traci@sclgbtqnetwork.org](mailto:traci@sclgbtqnetwork.org).

The South Coast LGBTQ+ Network is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that exists to create and support a thriving LGBTQ+ community on Massachusetts’ South Coast where members can freely, safely, and joyously celebrate their true selves. For more information, visit [sclgbtqnetwork.org](http://sclgbtqnetwork.org).

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