

MAY 17, 2012 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NOVA SCOTIA RAINBOW ACTION PROJECT - LGBTQ Community Holds
Anti-Homophobia and Transphobia Rally in Grand Parade**

HALIFAX - A rally was held in Grand Parade today in recognition of International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHT). Following the rally, participants formed a human chain down Barrington Street to reclaim downtown Halifax as a safe space for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer (LGBTQ) community.

"To say that the LGBTQ community has had a tough month would be an understatement," said Matt Numer, chair of NSRAP. "But I'm constantly inspired by our ability to gather strength from each other and today's rally was yet another display of that incredible community spirit."

Held annually, the rally featured speeches from local activists, including Krista Snow, Hugo Dann, J.J. Lyon and Jesiah MacDonald.

The theme of this year's rally was "Reclaiming Our Space, Reclaiming Our Rights" and this remained a common thread among speakers in the wake of the April 17 murder of community activist Raymond Taavel.

"When something that horrific occurs, it can invoke a lot of fear in the community and it is tempting to just hide," said Numer. "What we saw in April was a community that did not hide. We stood together and said, 'We deserve to be here, too.' That's a powerful message and one that was echoed at today's rally."

The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is celebrated annually on May 17. This date marks the anniversary of the day that homosexuality was removed from the International Classification of Diseases of the World Health Organization (WHO).

Today's rally was organized by the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project (NSRAP), The Youth Project, the Canadian Federation of Students-Nova Scotia, GSA Network, the Rainbow Refugees Association of Nova Scotia, and Dalhousie Allies program.

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For more information on NSRAP, an organization serving and advocating for the LGBTQ community in Nova Scotia, please visit <http://www.nsrp.ca>.

For more information on IDAHT, please visit <http://www.dayagainsthomophobia.org>.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

A rally was held today in Grand Parade in recognition of the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

In the wake of the April 17 murder of community activist Raymond Taavel, speakers at the rally focused on the theme "Reclaiming Our Space, Reclaiming Our Rights."

Following the rally, members of the community formed a human chain down Barrington Street.

Matthew Numer, chair of the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project, said today's rally was yet another example of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer community's strength and spirit.

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