



## Not In Our Town e-News

*for ordinary people transforming their communities*

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Go straight to the [NIOT blog](#) to read the full text of all of these stories, and to share your experience.

### Candlelight Vigil for Long Island Hate Crime Victim Marcello Lucero Scheduled for Friday Night in Patchogue

It is shocking and disheartening to report yet another killing of a young Latino immigrant by a group of teenagers, who admit they were "looking for a Mexican." 37-year-old Marcello Lucero, who had come to the U.S. 16 years ago from Ecuador, was beaten and stabbed to death by a group of young men in the Long Island town of Patchogue in New York. Seven teenagers have been charged in connection to his murder.

Patchogue is located in Suffolk County, which has passed a series of laws limiting services for undocumented residents and has developed a reputation amongst some for being anti-Latino. Just seven miles up the road from Patchogue is the town of Farmingville, a town whose acrimonious divisions over immigration were documented in the PBS POV film [Farmingville](#) four years ago.

Lisa Votino-Tarrant, a Suffolk County blogger, believes the laws have tainted the atmosphere. "We had a series of local laws pass that were anti-immigrant. And we kept saying, you are creating an atmosphere of hate. I didn't want to be right about this."

Lisa, who grew up two towns away from Patchogue, is part of a group called [Long Island Wins](#), an information and education campaign about the contributions of immigrants that has been covering Marcello's murder and its aftermath.



*A memorial for Marcello Lucero, who was beaten and stabbed to death by a group of young men in the Long Island town of Patchogue in New York. Photo courtesy of Long Island Wins.*

Marcello's friends and family have called for a candlelight vigil, and the Long Island community is responding. Joselo Lucero, Marcello's brother, has been speaking out publicly against his brother's murder and asking local faith-based groups to discuss what has happened during their sermons.

The faith community is responding.

The American Jewish Committee sponsored a community rally on Wednesday at the American Legion Hall. Local AJC Director Carolyn Levy urged Long Islanders to "raise their voices against the hateful words and climate that contributed to Lucero's senseless murder. We cannot go on with our normal lives as long as anyone among us can be singled out for attack simply because of who we are."

Tomorrow night, there will be a candlelight vigil at the Patchogue train station at 7PM. Marcello's funeral will be on the following day at First Congregational Church in Patchogue.

Reverend Thomas Goodhue, Director of the Long Island Council of Churches is urging faith leaders and residents to attend the vigil and the funeral on Saturday (see [full interview on the NIOT blog](#)).

"This is just an opportunity for the community to come together, grieve, and heal," says Lisa. "Out of this, we hope that a much larger group of people can become active and aware of what's happening in this community and how they can make a difference.

"My hope is that everyone realizes we're all in this together. We need to start realizing that the people next to us are just as important as we are." [Talk about it on the NIOT blog.](#)



One of several NHRA signs found in Brattleboro.

## Standing Up, Not Standing By, in Brattleboro, VT

It was the worst kind of nightmare for the mother of a bi-racial high school student. In June, the people of Brattleboro, Vermont learned that a racist youth group called NHRA ("N----- Hating Redneck Association") was active in the local high school. Larry Pratt Jr., a 17-year-old NHRA member, was arrested after waving a weapon at a multi-racial group of students near the high school grounds. Pratt and several other NHRA members were suspended from school and placed in a restorative justice program, but the alarm bells were ringing for parent and musician Barbara Holliday.

"It was the most visible in a long line of incidents, and the potential of violence was evident. Flyers from David Duke's organization started appearing in surrounding neighborhoods. Nooses had been graffitied on road signs. The young people [in the NHRA] had nearly 30 members on their Facebook account and some had tattoos on their knuckles, formalizing their relationship to this racist group..." [read more](#)

## Memories of Billings: A Letter to Brattleboro

*Margaret "Margie" MacDonald, a leader in the Not In Our Town Movement in Billings, Montana, wrote the following letter to people in Brattleboro, Vermont who are uniting in response to incidents of racism and violence.*

I have been reading with a sinking heart about the activities in Brattleboro, and my sympathies go out to the community as it struggles with hate groups cropping up



NIOT Billings

among the youth of the city. Billings was in a very similar state of consternation and dismay back in 1993, when we began to organize the community to confront this phenomenon in ways that were creative, but firm. Here is a review of some of the guiding principles that helped shape the responses, which were later recognized by the Working Group documentary "[Not In Our Town](#)."

*NOT Billings  
community leader,  
and new Montana  
State House  
Representative,  
Margaret  
MacDonald*

**The first principle was that the hate speech - the graffiti, the vandalism, the flyers around town - should not be ignored simply because it came from "kids."** Of course, we did not know exactly where it came from, but many community leaders presumed it was, and also thought the best course would be to pretend it wasn't happening... [read more](#)



*One of several spray-painted swastikas found on Obama campaign signs in Torrance, CA.  
Photo: Brad Graverson, The Daily Breeze.*

## Communities Grapple with Post-Election Intolerance

Last Tuesday, November 4, 2008, the United States elected its first African-American president: Barack Obama. While many people around the world celebrated the historic moment, other responses took the form of ugly race-related incidents, sending a reminder that this election does not mark the end of the fight against intolerance and hate.

In **Torrance, CA**, several Obama supporters found their campaign signs, houses, and cars covered in hate graffiti. One day after the election, GOP precinct delegate Randy Gray carried an American flag on the streets of **Midland, MI** - while wearing his Ku Klux Klan robe and hood. In **Staten Island, NY**, the African-American Political Association is planning a town hall dialogue on intolerance after receiving calls from residents who were the victims of racial slurs after the election. NYPD detectives are also investigating the beating of 17-year-old student Ali Kamara, who reported that four white men shouted "Obama!" and attacked him with a baseball bat... [read more](#)

**Has your community faced intolerance in the aftermath of the election? How have you responded? Share your story [on the NIOT.org blog](#).**

## Taking a Stand Against Racial Profiling in Palo Alto, CA

Remarks made by Palo Alto, CA Police Chief Lynne Johnson have sparked an outcry from residents in Palo Alto and East Palo Alto, leading community members to organize a "March for Change" and a protest against what many have called racial profiling.

Over 200 East Palo Alto and Palo Alto community members marched from city hall to city hall, inspired by and echoing the refrain of "change" seen in president-elect Barack Obama's campaign. The next day, the Palo Alto City Council unanimously passed a resolution reaffirming the city's zero tolerance policy on racial profiling. The resolution, as many on the council stressed, was but a first step towards addressing the ongoing tension between people of color and Palo Alto police, and the council affirmed their commitment to healing the divide between the two communities... [read more](#)



*Palo Alto mayor Larry Klein speaks to a crowd of marchers at a protest against racial profiling. Photo credit: Palo Alto Online.*

The Working Group

PO Box 70232 | Oakland, CA 94612-0232 | Ph: 510.268.9675 Fax: 510.268.3606 [www.theworkinggroup.org](http://www.theworkinggroup.org) |  
[info@theworkinggroup.org](mailto:info@theworkinggroup.org)

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