

## Transgender Human Rights Institute

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Seattle, WA (January 12, 2015) – Allison Woolbert was known as a passionate advocate of and activist for human rights within the bisexual and transgender communities. Her personal project, the Transgender Violence Tracking Portal (TVTP), was a much-needed tool that could have been used to educate people around the world about the risks of violence to the transgender people in every country.

Regrettably, the information about Allison Woolbert's past that recently came to light should have been submitted to the Board of Trustees at the time of her appointment as Executive Director. That information represented a direct risk to the mission of the organization. The board itself erred in that it did not vet her background or that of any other board candidate for potential liability risks.

Our initial decision to retain Allison Woolbert as Executive Director was based on board members' personal interaction with her, on her skills, and trust in her good intentions and passion. That decision was flawed. We acted both in haste and in error to retain her before fully knowing the extent of her past crimes. We erred as a board in that we put our friendship and trust ahead of the trauma felt by victims of sexual assault, and potentially ahead of the rights, reputation, and safety of the very people our organization was intended to serve, the transgender community. Seen in that light, the damage to the reputation and effectiveness of our organization is a small thing.

Allison Woolbert stepped down from her position in the Transgender Human Rights Institute (THRI) rather than be the catalyst for continued damage. She is no longer a part of the THRI in any capacity, including the TVTP, which has been removed from service.

The incalculable loss incurred by the shutdown of the TVTP may be the single greatest fallout from the events of the past week. It was not the choice of the THRI to close down the TVTP; the portal was not the property of the THRI and we did not have operating authority over it. Our organization oversaw its operation in an advisory capacity as a part of our mission; but it, the proprietary software that created it, the data it contained, the equipment that hosted it, and the personnel who maintained and managed it were not our property or employees. It was created, operated and maintained at great personal, financial, and emotional expense by its creator.

The THRI currently has neither the resources to acquire, operate or host the Portal if it were for sale, nor the technical expertise to recreate, manage or operate a similar tool. We recognize the loss that this represents to the community, but understand why its creator might wish to disengage entirely from the community that this tool supported.

The Board of Trustees will be meeting to evaluate the organization's future, its mission and projects in light of the recent events. All assets of the THRI, including financial, intellectual and physical properties, remain the property of the organization.

Donations made to the THRI (a 501(c)3 corporation) will be used to fund its operation.

Board of Trustees,  
Transgender Human Rights Institute

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