

## KOOTENAI COUNTY TASK FORCE ON HUMAN RELATIONS' PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: February 3, 2010

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Coeur d' Alene, Idaho. The Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations Board of Directors released a statement today expressing the deepest concern and outrage over the recent series of hate crimes that have taken place in the Inland Northwest. The organization has decided to spearhead a campaign to assist law enforcement agencies in their investigation of these hate crimes.

The KCTFHR Board has agreed to work with Crime Stoppers of the Pacific Northwest in providing rewards to individuals who provide information that results in solving these hate crimes. The KCTFHR Board has set aside a grand total of \$1,000 to assist Crime Stoppers in encouraging those persons with information to come forward.

“We urge other organizations and individuals to join our campaign by pledging a specific amount of money to assist in finding the perpetrators of these hate crimes,” stated KCTFHR spokesman Tony Stewart. “Any organization or individual pledging funds will not be asked to provide or release those monies to Crime Stoppers until and if an informant’s tip leads to the solution of a hate crime,” said Stewart.

Christie Wood, Coeur d' Alene Police Sergeant and law enforcement’s representative to the KCTFHR Board will serve as the KCTFHR’s liaison with Crime Stoppers. Sergeant Wood is also a member of Crime Stoppers. “We urge any one with information with regard to these hate crimes to contact Crime Stoppers at

1-800-222-tips (8477),” said Sergeant Wood. Information about Crime Stoppers can be viewed at [www.crimestoppersinlandnorthwest.org](http://www.crimestoppersinlandnorthwest.org).

Marshall Mend, a founding board member of the Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations, urged any organization or individual who wishes to set aside funds for this campaign against hate crimes to call the KCTFHR at (208) 765-3932. “We will inform Crime Stoppers of this growing fund and we shall send a message that the people of Coeur d’ Alene, Kootenai County, northern Idaho and the Inland Northwest will never tolerate hate crimes or malicious harassment of our citizens,” said Mend.

“The KCTFHR for 29 years has been available to support victims of malicious harassment and hate crimes with regard to both criminal prosecution as well as civil action,” said Stewart and Mend.