

Robert 'Reebe' Hatcher

May 12, 1984 - June 27, 2006

BY DAWN WOLFE GUTTERMAN

HIGHLAND PARK - A young man with "a lot of faith" was taken from the LGBT community on June 27, when Robert "Reebe" Hatcher died of complications resulting from a heart condition.

Hatcher had been a "Ruth Ellis Center kid" for over three years, said Grace McClelland, executive director of the center for homeless LGBT youth.

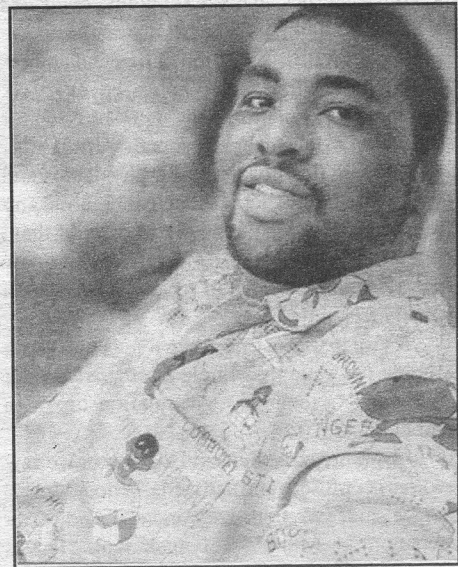
"He was the most lovable kid," McClelland said. "He always had this huge, great smile on his face no matter what was going on in his life. It seemed like part of his mission in his life was

always about taking care of others and making sure they were OK. He had a lot of faith; he believed in God and always knew that things were going to be OK and he tried to impart that upon all of our other kids."

In addition to his huge smile and loving demeanor, McClelland said that Reebe's "fallout" - a dance move - will also be missed.

A funeral for Hatcher was held on July 7; afterwards, more than 100 people attended a reception at Ruth Ellis, McClelland said.

"He was our first Youth of the Month," McClelland said, and, "even though other kids became Youth of the Month, his picture never came down. That's how important he was in all of our lives."



Robert Hatcher. Photo courtesy Ruth Ellis Center.

BTL 7-20-06 p.6