



**Sanford Residents
Worried About
Their City's Future**

— Page 2

**Check Out Our
New & Improved Website
seattlemedium.com**

**Demographic Change
Amplifying Racial
Inequities In America**

— Page 7

The Seattle Medium

A Message From The People... To The People

\$.25

VOLUME 44, NUMBER 29

NOW IN OUR 44TH YEAR

(206) 323-3070

WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 2013

NAACP Petition To DOJ Reaches One Million Signatures

Petition urges the DOJ to file charges against George Zimmerman for the egregious violation of Trayvon Martin's civil rights

The NAACP's petition to the Department of Justice asking for federal charges, including civil rights charges, to be filed against George Zimmerman has reached one million signatures.

This major milestone was reached in just two and a half days. The petition was set up on

Saturday evening shortly after the verdict finding George Zimmerman not guilty in the murder of Trayvon Martin was read.

NAACP Chairperson Roslyn M. Brock was thankful for the support the petition has received. "The support our petition has

received shows the mindset of the American public, who are tired of a system of justice that allows for appalling verdicts like the one we saw on Saturday."

NAACP President Ben Jealous addressed the specifics of the NAACP's request.

"It is clear George

Zimmerman's bias played a major role in the events that led to the death of Trayvon Martin. A cousin called the police days after the murder and said, 'I think he did this because of race.' He had previously called the police dozens of times, disproportionately about young men of color

who he thought were suspect. George Zimmerman himself stated on the night of the attack, 'These punks always get away with this.' The law says you must be able to show that race was a factor and that bodily harm was done. We believe there is enough evidence to satisfy this

standard." People can still sign the petition, which will remain active and open until the Department of Justice completes their case. You can sign the petition by visiting: naacp.org/The-DOJ-Petition Or text "JUSTICE" to 62227.

Young Seattlelites Have Mixed Feelings About Zimmerman Acquittal

By Mariah Beverly
Seattle Medium Intern

Last weekend, George Zimmerman, the man who shot and killed 17-year-old Trayvon Martin, was found not guilty of second-degree murder and manslaughter in a case that has been headlining the news all over the country. There have been many public and formal debates on a list of aspects associated with the case. Some believe it was a hate crime, some believe the judicial system is corrupted and that the "Stand Your Ground" law needs to be reformed, and others believe it was simply another example of how African Americans continue to fight a losing battle for equality in America.

Zimmerman claimed to have spotted Martin walking down the street in Sanford, FL in a suspicious manner, and called the police. The police instructed Zimmerman not to pursue Martin and to stay in his vehicle, and Zimmerman disregarded these instructions. He then followed and approached Martin, who was unarmed, and shot him, after an altercation between the two. Zimmerman's defense was that he was protected under Florida's "Stand Your Ground" law, which states that if you feel as though your life is in danger you can use deadly force to defend yourself. As a result, the "stand your ground" law is at the center of the controversy surrounding this case.

In rallies all over the country, people carried signs and walked the streets of their communities to support their disdain with the law and its impact on the verdict of the Zimmerman case.

Aunjoli Jean-Pierre, a 22-year-old African American, thinks that if Zimmerman hadn't approached Martin at all the confrontation that led to the death of Trayvon Martin would not have taken place.

"Stand your ground shouldn't even be in question, everyone says Zimmerman was defending himself, but he approached Martin, even when he was told not to," said Pierre. "Who's to say Martin didn't act in self defense? No one."

Another aspect of conversation is the issue of race. Zimmerman is said to have a Latino background, enough to make him a minority. Though this may be true, many African Americans believe that Zimmerman, despite having a mother who is Latino, cherishes

a lifestyle of entitlement bestowed upon him by his father, also known as "White privilege."

Anna Sneed, an 18-year-old African American, believes that any situation where an African American is the victim of a crime committed by a Caucasian person, the African American will be envisioned in a negative spotlight by the society, the media, and sometimes even the African American community. Sneed, like many of her peers, believes that although Martin had a clean record, was a good student, and was unarmed the night of his death, he was still seen as another black kid whose life has little or no value. According to Sneed, that fact in itself allowed Martin to be portrayed as the villain and Zimmerman as a good Samaritan turned victim.

"It's all about privilege," says Sneed. "They're going to bring up every bit of dirt they can on Trayvon, even if there isn't any, to justify this White man taking a Black child's life."

"Zimmerman is living the privileged life, he doesn't have to worry about anyone bringing up his dirt, they wouldn't, and they won't," she added.

There are many, including some African American youth, who believe that the trial was not based on race, but also believe that the final verdict was not fair.

"No one can say what happened that night besides Zimmerman, and being fair, he could support everything he said. It had nothing to do with race; he was protected by the law," said 19-year-old Bakari Hayes.

Although Hayes does not agree with the verdict, he believes taking the life of an innocent child is not acceptable in any situation.

"As a young African American man in America, it hurts to see that my life doesn't have much more worth (than that) in a court room, or even walking down the street in a hoodie," says Hayes, regarding how unsafe he feels walking around his community. "I knew the system was messed up, this only confirmed it for me."

Hayes is one of the many young African American males who were affected emotionally and mentally by this trial. Tre'zhan Blair, 18, says "There had to have been something that he could've done before he shot (Trayvon) Martin, the fact that he

(Cont'd On Page 2)

National Protests Of Zimmerman Verdict Planned For Saturday

By George E. Curry
NNPA Editor-in-Chief

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — Demonstrations are planned for 100 cities this Saturday, July 20, to protest George Zimmerman's acquittal for murder and manslaughter in connection with the fatal shooting of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Fla. and to urge the Justice Department to investigate whether Martin's civil rights were violated.

On Saturday night, an all-female jury acquitted Zimmerman of all charges, freeing him from further criminal prosecution in Florida.

At a rally in front of the Justice Department Tuesday, Rev. Al Sharpton, president of the National Action Network (NAN), announced that "Justice For Trayvon" prayer vigils will take place in front of federal buildings in 100 cities on Saturday to add pressure on the Justice Department to bring a civil case against Zimmerman.

NAN planning a statewide drive in Florida against its "Stand Your Ground" law, a movement that can be spread to 28 other states that have similar laws.

Speaking at the centennial celebration of Delta Sigma Theta sorority in Washington on Monday, Holder said, the Justice Department would "continue to act in a manner that is consistent with the facts and the law."

He said, "We are determined to meet division and confusion with understanding and compassion — and also with truth. We are resolved, as you are, to combat violence involving or directed at young people, to prevent future tragedies and to deal with the underlying attitudes, mistaken beliefs and stereotypes that serve as the basis for these too common incidents. And we will never stop working to ensure that — in every case, in every circumstance, and in every community — justice must be done."

Holder addressed the annual convention of the NAACP Tuesday in Orlando, not far from where Trayvon Martin was killed by Zimmerman as he returned from a nearby convenience store to purchase a bag of Skittles and a can of ice tea.

Benjamin Crump, the lead attorney for the Martin family, said Zimmerman racially profiled Martin because he was an African-American youth dressed in a hoodie-style sweat shirt.

"That's profiling. And there's a big question whether



Supporters of Trayvon Martin around the nation are expressing their outrage. Photo/Duane Fernandez, Sr./The Florida Courier.

that's allowed, and so I think the Justice Department should look at that," he said on CNN's "New Day."

Crump, who has likened Martin's death to those of civil rights icons Medgar Evers and Emmett Till, told reporters that the dead teenager's parents, Tracy Martin and Sybrina Fulton, will weigh their options about whether to file a wrongful death civil lawsuit against Zimmerman. He said Sybrina Fulton was devastated by the verdict.

"She cried, she prayed to God, and then she cried some more," Crump recounted. "She said, 'I will not let this verdict define Trayvon. We will define our son Trayvon's legacy.'"

Shortly after the trial, Tracy Martin tweeted. "God blessed Me & Sybrina with Tray and even in his death I know my baby proud of the FIGHT we along with all of you put up for him GOD BLESS."

Since the verdict, there have been dozens of demonstrations across the country, most of them peaceful. More than 2,000 distraught demonstrators gathered in front of the CNN Center in Atlanta. At a demonstration in front of the Justice Department Monday, Rev. Anthony Evans, president of the National Black Church Initiative said, "We want the Justice Department to assure that other African-American males will not be killed because they ran into a White American who

was afraid of their presence."

In one of the rare demonstrations involving violence, a few protesters hurled flashlight batteries, rocks and chunks of concrete toward police in Los Angeles. Police responded by shooting bean bags at the unruly protesters. Less than a dozen people were arrested at the otherwise peaceful rally.

At emotional rallies around the nation, some protesters carried bags of Skittles, the candy that Trayvon Martin bought just minutes before his death on that rainy night, and others wore hoodies, a garment Martin was wearing when he was killed.

Dominating the airwaves and social media, many are making their voice heard.

A petition by the NAACP on moveon.org requesting a Justice Department investigation into the case has drawn more than 500,000 signatures. Another petition on the site called for a boycott of Florida, similar to the successful one launched against Arizona when it refused to recognize Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday.

"Florida is not a safe place to take your family for vacation as long as Florida law permits a citizen to shoot or kill you for merely looking suspicious, and to do it with impunity," the petition says. "Boycott Florida tourism until this dangerous law is overturned. If the murder of Trayvon Martin isn't enough to get lawmakers' attention, maybe

a loss of revenue to the state would be."

In a statement, National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) Chairman Cloves Campbell, Jr., publisher of the *Arizona Informant*, said:

"Like many Americans, particularly African-Americans, I am deeply disappointed that George Zimmerman has been acquitted of murder and manslaughter charges and is now enjoying his freedom after killing an unarmed, 17-year-old Trayvon Martin whose only 'crime' was walking while Black."

"Because of Zimmerman's unjustified actions, Martin, who was returning from a trip to a local convenience store when he was profiled by Zimmerman, will never get the chance to celebrate another birthday or experience the joy of earning a high school or college diploma or to even be hugged or kissed by his loving parents. His young life was taken away by a neighborhood watch captain who kept a close watch on African-Americans who had as much right as he had to be in that Sanford, Fla. neighborhood."

"Zimmerman ended Trayvon's life, but he will not and cannot terminate our unceasing quest to be respected as human beings. We join with the NAACP and other civil rights groups in requesting the United States Department of Justice to continue its investigation into

(Cont'd. On Page 7)