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New Orleans

# Data

News Weekly

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A Data News Weekly Special Edition



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# Outrage, Protest and Questions of Justice Ensnue as Zimmerman is Acquitted



The verdict of "Not-Guilty" for George Zimmerman in the killing of Trayvon Martin, sparked protests across the country at what many are calling a miscarriage of justice.

**By Edwin Buggage**  
Editor, Data News Weekly

As George Zimmerman stood to have the verdict read regarding his guilt or innocence, people from around the country awaited to see the fate of the neighborhood watch coordinator who pulled the trigger on a rainy night in February of 2012 fatally wounding unarmed

teenager Trayvon Martin. A 17 year old who was returning home from the store in a mixed income gated community in Sanford, Florida. As the verdict of not guilty was read many citizens from a cross section of America gasped in disbelief. Immediately sparking protests across the country at what many are calling a miscarriage of justice. This trial again shows that when race is invoked the cracks in our

judicial system become more evident. In the aftermath of this horrendous decision we must ask ourselves what is the next course of action in our continued search for justice?

While this case has again put race and justice at the forefront of the dialog in our nation. It has also placed us squarely in the middle of a debate that we must have about race, the Criminal Justice System and the changing

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## DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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face and the scope of racism in the 21st Century. In this century the color line that W.E.B. DuBois wrote about in 1903 during the height of lynching in America is now blurred and taken new forms and not as evident as it has been in the past. Racism is no longer cut and dried as it has been throughout most of history with its easy cast of characters and simple right vs. wrong and White vs. Black paradigm. No longer is the face of bigotry Bull Connor, the Ku Klux Klan or former Alabama Governor George Wallace chanting cries of segregation forever or the liberal use of the N-Word by Whites is what defines racism.

No longer are the signs that relegate second-class citizenship to African-Americans posted for the entire world to see. Today the deep waters of racial bias are murkier and less obvious. And today's racial inequality and antipathy is more a question of perceived reality of two groups of people that can see the same thing in completely different ways based on their collective histories. Although the road to fairness and justice is still a destination not reached, it is undeniable that our country's taken quantum leaps in some areas of racial reconciliation. Today we celebrate a nation electing its first African-American President in Barack Obama and also other monumental advances in areas of race and racial relations. But when it comes to the Criminal Justice System and questions of race it has been like climbing Mount Everest and seems like an insurmountable hurdle that we as a nation cannot get over, one that would make the justice system just and fair for all citizens.

### Justice Denied: A History of Injustice

In this case Zimmerman who admittedly shot Martin, immediately claiming it self-defense, and when interrogated by the police his story to them seemed believable. Here is a man who in his flawed prejudicial judgment upon spotting a young man who he deemed suspicious using the criteria of young, Black and with a hood over his head reason enough to call 911. In his twisted mind he believed was up to no good and for a second did not think that this was the son of one of his neighbors. The hood that many castigated the young man was wearing over his head was protecting him from the rain and secondly he was armed not with a gun, but a bag of Skittles and an Arizona tea on his way home. Zimmerman, exercising poor judgment is someone of questionable character whose credibility should have been questioned upon the shooting. He is someone whose state of mind and penchant for wanting to be in law enforcement was well documented. Zimmerman was rejected when attempting to become a police officer in Virginia in 2009 and in 2005 had been charged with resisting arrest with violence. And here he was riding around doing neighborhood watch patrol with a loaded gun. Clearly, it could be determined that his judgment may be a bit off kilter and actions on that questionable.

After this fatal shooting Zimmerman wasn't arrested until pressure was placed on the local authorities to do so some 44 days later. The question we must ask ourselves is why? Why was Zimmerman's story automatically believable? And is it unreasonable to conclude that the unfortunate re-

ality is that we still live in a country where many still believe that African-Americans, particularly males are predisposed to criminal tendencies and that the taking of their lives the legal repercussions are minimal because their lives are devalued by the society.

We can look at cases throughout the history of this nation and race framing in general to look at how the racist attitudes of the large-

er society finds itself affecting police procedures, laws and the judicial process in questioning Black humanity. Whether it's the framers of the Constitution relegating African-Americans 3/5th a person status, or Scott v. Sanford in 1857, the landmark decision by the U.S. Supreme Court where Dred Scott who sued for his freedom and the opinion handing down by Chief Justice Roger B. Taney was that

the framers of the constitution viewed all Blacks as inferior and unfit to associate with Whites in all things social and political and had no rights that Whites were bound to respect. This is an unfortunate narrative that in some regards still continues and is an underlying subtext of things ra-

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# Community Mourns the Death of Innocent 6-year old Girl

By Eric Connerly

The surrounding area near the apartment complex where 6-year-old Ahlittia North was last seen has become the sight of a memorial for the slain youngster. People from across the City are shocked, outraged and shaken by Ahlittia's gruesome murder, delivering stuffed animals, notes, balloons and pictures.

Since the murder people from all over the metro area held memorial for multiple candlelight vigils in Ahlittia's memory.

New Orleans is a City plagued with violence, but even by this City's standards this is a murder that's brought people together to make a collective stand against violence in the City.

Citizens of New Orleans were concerned about her disappearance Saturday and horrified when Ahlittia's body was found in a dumpster early Monday.

In a report by local CBS affiliate WWL-TV sums up the feelings of many in the metro area, "Her life was cut short. Like I say, I have three grand babies of my own, I couldn't go to work today, I was just destroyed," said Sharlene Pierce, who lives in the nearby Woodmere subdivision.

Ahlittia's mother, Lisa North, was inconsolable at an afternoon prayer vigil Tuesday night.

"Why did they have to take my baby?" she cried. "My baby don't mess with nobody."

Many showed up at later vigils to show support for Ahlittia's grieving mother.

While many were grieving there was a break in the case. Sheriff Newell Normand informed the public that the suspect Matthew Flugence, the



Ahlittia North, 6-years old.



Members of the community gather for a vigil to remember Ahlittia North, the 6-year old who was brutally murdered in Jefferson Parrish.

nephew of Ahlittia's stepfather Albert Hill, was arrested Tuesday night while walking near the West Bank Expressway in Westwego. Matthews had babysat the child in the past. At a press conference on Wednesday afternoon, Sheriff Normand told reporters that the suspect had confessed to killing the little girl. Flugence also faces a first-degree murder charge in the death of North, and there is an outstanding warrant on a charge of sexual battery involving an 11-year old Harvey girl.

On the grounds of the apartment complex where 6-year-old Ahlittia North spent her last days, hundreds of people gathered in front of the memorial for multiple candlelight vigils in Ahlittia's memory.

Most in attendance had never met Ahlittia, but were touched by news of her disappearance Saturday and horrified when her body was found in a dumpster early Monday.

"I just pray that God will give her peace and that she be strong and that she'll just hold on and she'll be alright," said Veronica Poole.

"The family sees that everybody's with them, they're not alone. It's hard to be alone at a time like this," said Westwego Councilman Glenn Green, who organized one of Tuesday's vigils.

Jefferson Parish Sheriff Newell Normand said Ahlittia was abducted in her sleep in the early hours of Saturday morning, and then brutally murdered.

After days of searching, detectives found Ahlittia stabbed to death inside a dumpster near her apartment around midnight



Matthew Flugence (20) is in custody and is the prime-suspect in the brutal murder of little Ahlittia North.

Monday. Investigators said there was no obvious sign of sexual assault, but they are still investigating.

The location is seven doors down from the apartment where Ahlittia was staying with her mother, stepfather and two younger siblings, and two buildings away from the apartment where the prime murder suspect, who is now in custody, Matthew Flugence, lived.

"It feels like a nightmare, that's how I feel," said Ahlittia's stepfather, Albert Hill.

Hill said he didn't realize Flugence was suspected in an unrelated sexual battery case, and that he hadn't spoken with his nephew in a week or two.

"If I'd have known that he'd have never been around my family at all, family or no family at all," said Hill.

Hill said he spoke to another nephew, Russell Flugence, on Sunday, and he gave no indication he had information on Ahlittia's death.

And as Ahlittia's grieving family continues to search for solace, so too does the community.

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# Gov. Jindal Calls AT&T's Hiring Of More Than 500 In Louisiana "Great News For Entire State"

*More Than 450 New Jobs Created*

In what Gov. Bobby Jindal calls "great news for the entire state," AT&T announced this week, that it is currently looking to fill more than 500 job openings in Louisiana, including more than 450 new jobs. The positions will be posted as they become available at <http://connect.att.jobs/>.

"By working together, we are making Louisiana one of the best places in the country for businesses to invest, grow, and create jobs," said Gov. Jindal. "These new technology-related jobs are great news for our entire state."

"For almost 40 years, the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI) has worked diligently to improve Louisiana's business climate," said Dan Juneau, president, LABI. "Thanks to Gov. Jindal and the work of those who came before him, we are seeing more and more jobs being created here in our state."

Many of the new positions are the result of AT&T's recently announced Project Velocity IP (Project VIP), a three-year, multi-billion dollar investment plan to expand and enhance its national wireless and wired IP broadband networks. As part of Project VIP, AT&T plans to increase the density of its wireless network by deploying more than 10,000 macro sites, more than 1,000 distributed antenna systems and more than 40,000 small cells. Through Project VIP, AT&T also plans to:

- Expand 4G LTE to cover more than 300 million people by year-end 2014
- Expand and enhance the AT&T wired IP broadband network to cover approximately 75 percent of customer locations in our wired service area by year-end 2015
- Deploy fiber to an additional 1 million business locations by year-end 2015

"For more than 130 years, AT&T and the State of Louisiana have grown together," said Sonia Perez, president, AT&T Louisiana. "We are thankful to Governor Jindal for his work to create an environment in the state where companies are able to invest and create jobs."

While the majority of current openings are network jobs, AT&T also is hiring for mobility retail and call center positions.

AT&T invested more than \$1.2

billion in its Louisiana wireless and wireline networks from 2010 through 2012, with a focus on expanding 4G LTE mobile Internet coverage and enhancing the overall performance of networks.

AT&T is one of the largest employers in America and the nation's largest private employer of full-time union employees. The company has set the standard for building jobs and investment based on a



consumer-focused environment. With highly competitive wages and benefits, AT&T jobs are among the best in the U.S.

Over the past five years, AT&T invested nearly \$98 billion into operations across the U.S., more than any other public company. In a July 2012 report, the Progressive Policy Institute ranked AT&T No. 1 on its list of U.S. "Investment Heroes."

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# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## The AutoCrat Club Evening of Jazz

Photos by Terry B. Jones

The Autocrat Club Circle of Friends Committee hosted a Sunday Early Evening cocktail party and Data was there!



Visit [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com) for more photos from these events

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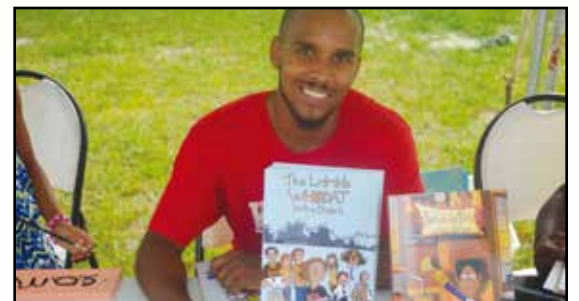
# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## Market on LaSalle Opening Celebration

Commuters traveling down LaSalle Street in recent months have been treated to an unusual sight on the LaSalle commercial corridor. Tulane URBANbuild students have been hard at work creating a series of visually striking 14 foot tall structures that rest on tracks in what was otherwise an empty lot. These moveable pods are Harmony Neighborhood Development's new Market on LaSalle. This innovative space can be rearranged at will to accommodate vendors' needs and host community events.

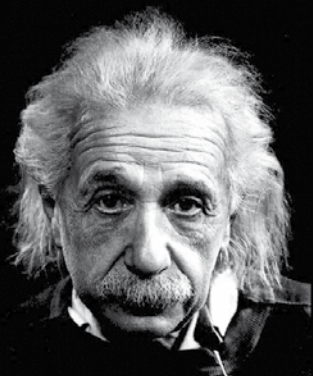
Harmony has designed the Market on LaSalle to begin addressing the tremendous lack of retail amenities available to Central City residents while offering micro-businesses owned by Central City residents and others low-cost, high-traffic retail spaces. Eleven thousand cars pass the Market on LaSalle site every day. As these businesses stabilize and grow with the assistance of Harmony and its partner technical assistance providers, Harmony hopes to entice them to stay in the neighborhood with the permanent neighborhood-scale commercial spaces it is developing on the LaSalle Corridor.

The Market held its Opening Celebration on Saturday, July 13th at 3300 LaSalle. The Opening Celebration featured a brass band and second line and continued with Tereasa B & N'Style on the stage. Vendors included the Ya-Ka-Mein Lady, Sweet Cakes and Candy Emporium, Ma Cheri Boutique, NOLA Clutter Busters and more.



Visit [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com)  
for more photos from  
these events

"In matters of truth and justice, there is no difference between large and small problems, for issues concerning the treatment of people are all the same."  
- Albert Einstein



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# Ready to March for Justice



**Marc Morial**  
President and CEO  
National Urban League

This is a sad moment for our nation. The not guilty verdict in the trial of George Zimmerman has extended the tragedy of Trayvon Martin's death to a travesty and miscarriage of justice. While we must accept the jury's decision under the due process of the

legal system, we want to make it clear that this is far from over. We are focusing on two important aspects of federal law which may have been violated by George Zimmerman and which should be investigated, with the potential to lead to an additional indictment and another trial.

First, the National Urban League and Urban League Movement, along with the NAACP, National Action Network, the Black Women's Roundtable and others, are joining to collectively ask the Department of Justice to pursue a federal criminal civil rights investigation. Our forward efforts will be to encourage the DOJ to proceed in conducting a thorough investigation of whether any fed-

eral laws were violated by George Zimmerman in connection with the death of Trayvon Martin, including the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

From the very beginning of this case, if not for Ben Crump and the local community's call to the civil rights leadership, this matter would have been swept under the rug. Our collective efforts stopped that from occurring last year. Today, we continue to send a strong message of solidarity with Trayvon's parents and with his family. But we also want to send another message - this is not the end.

The Civil Rights Movement in this country historically has been

the hallmark of peaceful protest and expression, and for anyone to suggest otherwise is an effort to discredit the very issues at hand. As part of the civil rights leadership of the 21st century, we encourage people to express themselves with the discipline and responsibility that are consistent with our First Amendment rights and with the traditions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Activists who are concerned that justice has not been met should absolutely continue disciplined and directed advocacy on behalf of justice for this family through elected officials, social media, organized protests and other appropriate means.

As we mark the 50th anniversa-

ry of the historic 1963 March on Washington, we also encourage people of all backgrounds to join us on August 23-24 for another historic effort in Washington, DC - the "Drum Majors for Justice Summit: Redeem the Dream" and the "Civil Rights Continuation March." In light of the outcome of the Trayvon Martin case - and the recent Supreme Court ruling on voting rights - the civil rights continuation effort has a renewed vigor and purpose. The cause and quest for justice and civil rights in the 21st century continue.

There is no victory in this case, but we will fight until the end for justice. This is not over.

Marc H. Morial is President & CEO, National Urban League

## It's Not Over We Must Continue to Demand Justice for Trayvon Martin



**By Benjamin Todd Jealous**  
President & CEO, NAACP

A jury in Sanford, Florida has found George Zimmerman not guilty of murdering Trayvon Martin.

I know I am not alone in my outrage, anger, and heartbreak over this decision. When a teen-

ager's life is taken in cold blood, and there is no accountability for the man who killed him, nothing seems right in the world, but we cannot let these emotions alone rule.

In these most challenging of times, we are called to act. There is work left to be done to achieve justice for Trayvon. The Department of Justice can still address the violation of Trayvon's most fundamental civil right - the right to life, and we are urging them to do so.

Sign our petition to the Department of Justice. Tell them to file civil rights charges against George Zimmerman.

We continue to grieve the loss of Trayvon with his parents, his

family, and all who loved him. Do not forget what brought us to this day.

George Zimmerman was arrested and charged because we would not back down when he was initially released. The Sanford Police Chief was removed from his post because we voiced our disbelief that he would overrule his detectives and block George Zimmerman's arrest.

And, perhaps most importantly, not a single state has passed a "stand your ground" law in 2013 - the first time in eight years - because we refuse to let the memory of Trayvon fade from the hearts and minds of America.

So, now we have a choice: We can be felled by our sorrows over

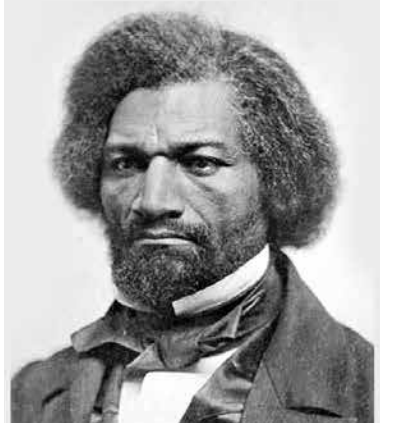
the jury's decision, or we can turn our frustration into action. We can demand the Department of Justice address the travesties of this tragedy. We can take a step forward in our efforts to finally end racial profiling in America once and for all. What will you do, Vincent?

For Trayvon Martin, for his family, and for all parents who suffer the horror of burying a child, sign our petition to the Department of Justice: visit [www.naacp.org](http://www.naacp.org)

Thank you,  
Benjamin Todd Jealous  
President and CEO  
NAACP

"Where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe."

- Frederick Douglass





## Pipeline to the People Are you Outraged?

*Question: In the wake of the George Zimmerman verdict, what is your response?*

By **Corey Anderson**  
Data News Weekly Columnist

We all are keenly aware that George Zimmerman, the Sanford, Florida community watch member, was found not guilty in the case of the death of Trayvon Martin, the 17 year-old who was walking home and, because he was a "suspicious" character, was shot and killed. As a result of this stunning verdict, people all over the nation, have protested and held rallies to express their outrage.

Most of the African-American community is outraged by the idea that an unarmed young Black man, was killed while making his way home from the store, and at the same time, cannot truthfully say that this wasn't coming from the beginning. A jury of Zimmerman's peers, which consisted of 6

women, five out of the six being White), published the verdict of "Not Guilty".

Now, because I stated the races of the jurors, one might venture to say that this case was based upon race. As many times as they have said it wasn't, I do believe race had a big role to play in the murder and courtroom. Would it have been different if Trayvon was of a different ethnicity? Did the prosecution really put forth their best case? Did they ever have a chance of winning with a manslaughter charge? Why don't we get into an uproar and create a federal case when the young kids in the Third Ward of New Orleans are murdered? Anger, resentment, sorrow, despair, and hopelessness are all the emotions that come to mind, but Data Weekly had a question for the public...



**Marion Alejos**

"I was absolutely shocked upon hearing George Zimmerman's not guilty verdict. I felt that Zimmerman's actions at least merited a manslaughter conviction. There were many issues with this trial from the demographics of the jury to the lack of preparation of the prosecution's witnesses. With this verdict I feel the jurors basically justified the stalking and murder of a 17-year-old boy. Trayvon Martin was not given justice. It is my hope that this case serves as a reminder just how much progress and action needs to happen regarding race relations and violence in this country."



**Chess Brown**

"In the wake of the Zimmerman verdict, I can only pray that Trayvon's family allows God to console their hearts. Sometimes the outcomes of situations don't always coincide with our expectations; however, in the end we must remember to keep our trust in God and not man's verdict. God is the ultimate judge."



**Jennifer Brown**

"My heart goes out to the family of Trayvon Martin. My only hope is that Trayvon's family will find closure and peace. They are the ones who have to face the loss of their child. May they look to God for strength."

## Home Style

# Trees and Power

By **MG Calla Victoria**  
Data News Weekly Columnist

Recently I attended a Gardening Club event and the speaker was an Entergy Representative from their Vegetation Management Department. I was perplexed and curious about that title, as I wondered what vegetation is an energy company managing? The Vegetation Management arm of Entergy is the department that oversees the trimming of trees to insure that there are no power outages. Did you know that after weather, trees are the number one cause of power outages? From downed trees to tall branches, trees can wreak on power lines. So be conscious of what kinds of trees you purchase and where you plant them. If you are going to



plant trees on the easement (that little pot of land between the pavement and the curb) which is exactly where the power lines run,

think small trees, something that will not get higher than 8 feet tall. Otherwise the power company is going to have to come in from time to time and whack back the branches, and you might not like their pruning techniques. You see their objective is not beauty, but to clear a path for the power lines. You have seen those big beautiful hundred year old oak trees with a big "v" shaped gash in the top and power lines running through. Many of those trees were planted long before there were power lines, so the power companies try to preserve those magnificent trees while at the same time providing us with the power we need for all of our creature comforts.

Today, Entergy's vegetation management program is one of the most aggressive in the coun-

try. For starters, the utility works with its contractors to maintain a diverse collection of equipment and vehicles that make virtually every tree, distribution line, and transmission line viewable and reachable; even through vast woodlands and swamplands. The equipment includes, but is not limited to, giraffes, buckets, air boats and helicopters. Each Entergy team member specializes in particular equipment to ensure safety and appropriate use.

Entergy trims trees on a five-year cycle, so Entergy is doing its part to keep the power flowing. We also have to do our part by being conscious of where we the plant trees on our property, and to maintain the trees that are there.

Drought is a major contributor to the destruction of trees,

and dead trees become brittle and can fall onto power lines and knock out power for blocks. So when we are experiencing long hot and dry spells don't just water your lawn, bedding plants, and ornamentals; trees are plants too and they need water too. Yes they have very deep roots but if there is no water, there is no water. Trees beautify our homes, provide shade, provide habitation for birds, bear fruit, and can cause a lot of damage if they fall on power lines or our homes. So show the trees a little love and some water in drought situations. Send your gardening questions to me at [sowing@thegardeningdiva.com](mailto:sowing@thegardeningdiva.com)

Remember, never get too busy to stop and smell the beautiful flowers!



"A system  
cannot fail  
those  
who it  
was never  
meant to  
protect."  
- W.E.B.  
DuBois



# Sharpton Announces NAN Justice for Trayvon 100-City Vigil, Saturday, July 20th

Monday, on NBC's Today Show, Rev. Al Sharpton, President of the National Action Network (NAN), announced that NAN is organizing "Justice for Trayvon" vigils in 100 cities across the country on Saturday, July 20th to press the federal government to investigate civil rights charges against George Zimmerman. Hundreds of national preachers, led by Rev. Al Sharpton and NAN will hold prayer vigils and rallies in front of federal buildings calling on the Justice Department to investigate the civil rights violations made against Trayvon Martin. Over two-hundred ministers participated in a conference call on Sunday evening and are pushing congregants to register in various cities.

Rev. Sharpton also discussed the renewed mobilization for the Saturday, August 24th National Action to Reclaim the Dream March on Washington that he and Martin Luther King, King, III, are leading. Fifty years after the 1963 March on Washington, Voting Rights, and the Justice for Trayvon Martin movement are



Rev. Al Sharpton, President of National Action Network (NAN), is pictured above with Sabrina Fulton (l) and Tracy Martin (r) who are the parents of Trayvon Martin. NAN is organizing "Justice for Trayvon" vigils in 100 cities across America on Saturday, July 20, 2013 at federal buildings.

key civil rights rallying issues and NAN is escalating the call for the Department of Justice to investigate whether George Zimmerman committed civil rights violations against Trayvon Martin on February 26, 2012. According to Rev. Sharpton: "Trayvon Martin had the civil right to go home. He

was not doing anything wrong."

On NBC's Meet the Press on Sunday, July 14th, Rev. Al Sharpton discussed going to Sanford, Florida, in 2012, with Trayvon Martin's parents and Attorney Benjamin Crump to meet with the U.S. Attorney, and they asked for civil rights charges to

be pursued at that time. The Department of Justice decided to wait until after the state trial to decide whether to go forward. Rev. Sharpton is now calling on the Justice Department to complete a full investigation and will send a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder that will be signed by himself, Melanie Campbell, (National Coalition on Black Civic Participation), Marc Morial (National Urban League), and Benjamin Todd Jealous (NAACP) to resume the filing of civil rights charges that the family of Trayvon Martin and Rev. Al Sharpton initially met in Florida with a U.S. Attorney about.

The August 24th, 50th Anniversary March on Washington will focus on voting rights and ending state laws like Stand your Ground and Stop and Frisk. It will be the first national march since the acquittal of George Zimmerman. According to Rev. Al Sharpton and NAN, Dr. King's dream has been undermined by both the Supreme Court Voting Rights decision and the acquittal of George Zimmerman

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cial in the judicial process.

In his book "Race, Crime and the Law," Harvard Law Professor Randall Kennedy writes, "Many jurisdictions empowered all Whites to demand proof of a Black person status as slave or free and person that lacking obvious supervision of a White person was deemed suspect." Of course some would say that was hundreds of years ago. But the unfortunate reality is that this is still the rational used by some when viewing Blacks, particularly young males. Jim Crow Justice is alive and well as evidenced by a trial where it was less about George Zimmerman being on trial and more about Trayvon Martin in particular and Black males in general, and proving beyond a reasonable doubt that they are likely to be violent, criminal or menaces to society.

This is a strategy that has been used in cases from the Scottsboro Boys in the 1930's where nine teenage boys were accused of raping a White woman where

there was a mockery of a trial, an all-White-jury seething with feelings of racial contempt and an angry lynch mob who wanted the boys dead before the trial even happened. And whether it is law enforcement or those taking the law into their own hands it seem Black men lives or their rights don't matter because of their race. Fast forward in history we can list the names of victims such as Sean Bell, Patrick Dorismond, Amadou Diallo, Rodney King and Oscar Grant and countless others that do not make the national news that find themselves unjustly accused and executed and their shooters acquitted in criminal trials.

## Stand Your Ground: A License to Kill at Will

Since the Trayvon Martin killing a controversial law called Stand Your Ground (Castle Doctrine) has become part of a nationwide conversation. The law enacted in 2005 in Florida which today is on the books in over two

dozen states is being criticized as a shoot first and ask questions later and creates a scenario where the shooters can use this as a defense and perhaps is creating more problems than it is solving. In a letter to the Attorney General Eric Holder, New York Senator Charles Schumer asked the Obama Administration to investigate Stand Your Ground Laws. In his letter he states, "These laws seem to be encouraging vigilantism by allowing individuals to use deadly force as a first resort. We need to investigate these laws to see if they are causing local law enforcement to let violent crimes go unprosecuted."

According to a CBS Miami report there are some state lawmakers who are reconsidering the Stand Your Ground Law. A study of Florida state data shows that deaths due to self-defense are up 200 percent since the law took effect. Some would argue that it is a successful defense used especially when the shooter is White and the victim is African-American.

The State of Florida according to an investigative report by the Tampa Bay Times, showed that there is a 70% success rate when Stand Your Ground is used as a defense and the number goes up to 73% when the victim is African-American versus using it as a successful defense is 59 percent when the victim is white.

After this verdict there are many Civil Rights groups, lawmakers, and concerned citizens who are taking a look at these laws. And we as a nation of people who with our tax dollars pay for people to enforce the law that we do not take this case or others like it lightly. That we cannot allow citizens to become vigilantes or those with a hero syndrome as what seems was the case with George Zimmerman to take the law into their own hands. And as he and his defense team in this legal loophole created the environment where the all too familiar narrative of the dangerous Black guy, attacks an innocent victim, where a neighborhood is being

overrun by blacks, who bring crime and vice. So it is ok to target them and have no respect for their rights or in this case their lives. This is a sad commentary that today we are still dealing with this all too familiar characterizing of demonizing Black men.

## Where Do We Go From Here?

Where Do We Go From Here is the title of a speech by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and in a book of the same title he speaks of the question of community vs. chaos. This is what we are looking at today. Stand Your Ground Laws are a recipe for disaster and chaos. It's only in looking to repeal these laws that situations like the miscarriage of justice that happened in the Zimmerman trial cannot happen again.

Also it is time for us to look at issues of race in the 21st Century. While those who defend Zimmerman as non-racist and someone

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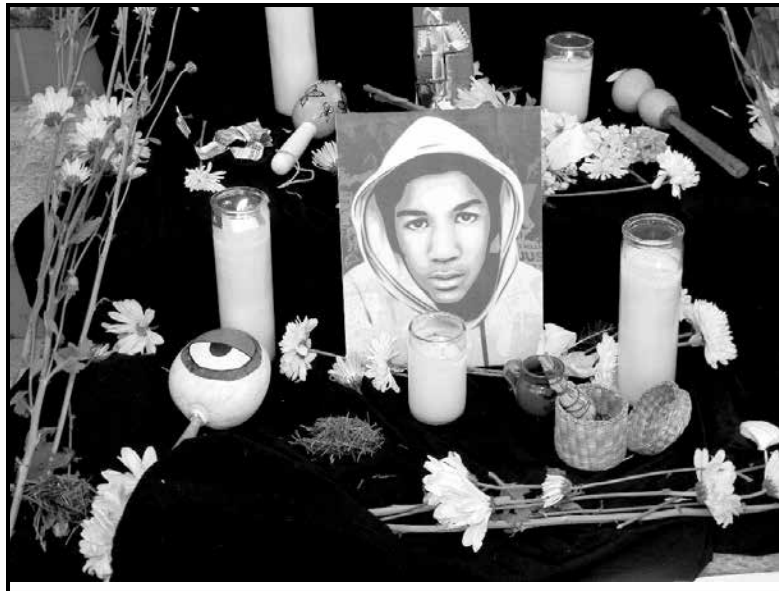


# Latinos Demand Justice For Trayvon Martin In East Los Angeles

**Hundreds of Latinos gathered Sunday afternoon in East Los Angeles to protest George Zimmerman's acquittal on all charges for the killing of unarmed, black teenager Trayvon Martin. The protest over the verdict in the racially charged case was one of several in Los Angeles that ended with the temporary occupation of Freeway 10.**

The organizers belong to a new coalition of activist groups made up of artists and students known as Not One More – an organization that includes other collectives, such as East-side Cafe, El Hormiguero, Tia Chuchas, La Mina and others. Hispanic activists from Occupy L.A. also helped organize the event, which took place in Mariachi Plaza in the heart of “East Los,” the well-known Latino part of the city.

The protesters chanted slogans



A makeshift memorial is laid for Trayvon Martin at a protest rally in East Los Angeles, CA. Latino's organized a large protest, showing solidarity with the Black community and others who disagree with the verdict and feel that justice is yet to be served.

like “Justice for Trayvon,” “Not one more,” “No justice no peace” and “We’re all Trayvon,” before breaking up into smaller groups to ponder how they might help foster the kind of social change that would prevent another Trayvon case from happening.

The protestors demanded that the U.S. Department of Justice sue George Zimmerman for violating Trayvon Martin’s civil

rights. They asked those present to pressure local authorities so that they would, in turn, prompt action at the federal level.

“If we don’t join together to protest this decision, we’re allowing racism to kill our children,” said Elena Popp, a lawyer, activist for housing rights for the poor and former assembly-woman candidate for East Los Angeles. “We have to keep fight-

ing for justice for Trayvon and all our young people.”

Protesters spoke in both English and in Spanish. Several college and high school student protesters from East Los Angeles who spoke primarily English made a marked effort to reach Spanish speakers around them whom had come to visit a weekly music and food fair.

“I’m here because in all our experiences fighting for justice we have that in common; we must unite, we can’t be separate,” actress and author Karen Anzoategui told Voces. “People are hurt, they’re angry, they need love. As an artist I want to give them that love and that’s why I’m here,” she added.

The protestors connected the Trayvon Martin tragedy to historic civil rights events. Others, with signs, pointed to the similar destinies of Trayvon and Emmitt Till, the teenager murdered in Mississippi in 1955 at 14 for talking to a white woman. They compared Martin to Oscar Grant, the young African-American shot to death by metro police in Oakland in 2009.

East Los Angeles has a population of 126,000, over 96 percent of whom are Latino.

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who helped and had many Black friends this does not take away from the feeling of racial animus he had when targeting Trayvon Martin. That in his assessment of what merited his suspicion was he saw a young Black man, it is doubtful that a White skateboard kid would have been pursued with such vigilance and aggression. And further whether Trayvon Martin was wearing a hoodie or a Brooks Brothers suit armed with Ivy League degrees and a long professional pedigree in some instances it does not matter, ask Dr. Henry Louis Gates, the Harvard Professor who was arrested when a neighbor suspected him of breaking in his own house. These are moments that many Black men frustratingly have to face, and after this incident maybe all parents need to have talks with

their young sons and explain to them sometimes that regardless of what you do and/or accomplish sometimes others will judge you unfairly. So we must arm them with the tools to circumvent these occurrences.

In Trayvon’s case he is not here to tell his story so we will never know if he could have done anything different. But what we as a race and a society must do is realize that we cannot let this incident lead us to have any hate in our heart for members of another race. As Martin Luther King Jr., said in his Where Do We Go From Here Speech, “Hate is too big of a burden to bear.” But I would say if we are to hate anything we must hate injustice and unfairness. And know that we must continue our fight for justice. And this

is not the separate responsibility of White, Black, Hispanic, Asian or any particular group. This is a call to all Americans; we have come far in the road to guarantee equality for all of our citizens. But we must continue the work to ensure that in the Judicial System and in Law Enforcement that everyone is treated fairly and with that justice will prevail. This is what we must do at this stage of our journey if we are to live in a civilized society. As a nation moving forward we must trek down a new road in the judicial process and in law enforcement, not the one of Scott v. Sanford or the incident in Sanford, Florida. Today we must begin the work to making this a nation where all citizens have rights that are bound to be respected.



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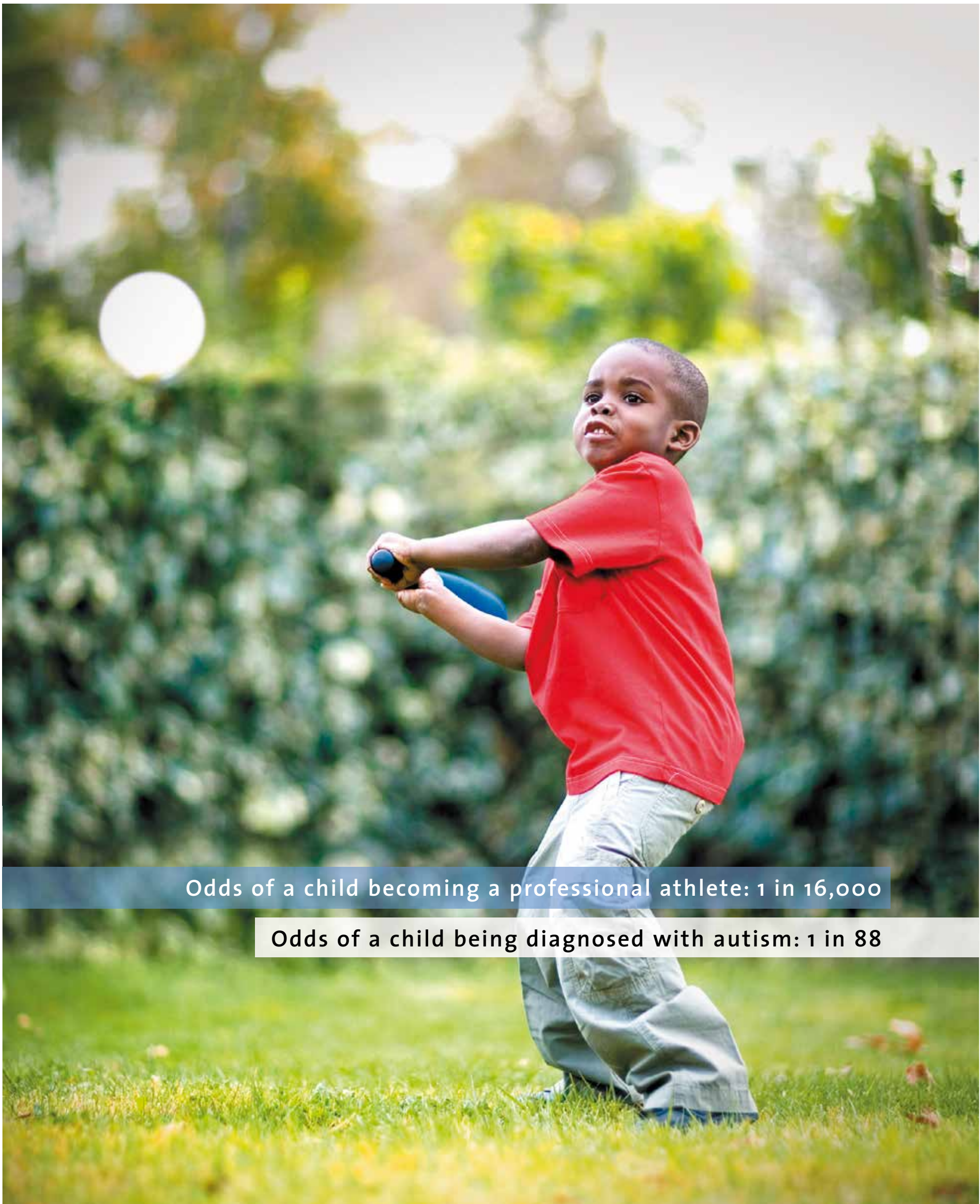
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