



News Tribune staff, Published April 01 2012

## People in hoodies rally in downtown Duluth to honor Trayvon Martin

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A group of people gathers at the Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial on Saturday afternoon in downtown Duluth in support of Trayvon Martin, who was killed last month by a neighborhood watchman in Sanford, Fla. (Michael K. Anderson / for the News Tribune)

The feet of marchers pounded the cracked pavement of Sanford, Fla.'s 13th Street — a road that runs through the heart of one of the oldest black communities in Florida — to reiterate that apathy won't be an option for those moved and outraged by the shooting death of an unarmed black teenager.

Simultaneous demonstrations were held Saturday afternoon in cities around the nation, including one at the Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial in downtown Duluth.

St. Louis County Attorney Mark Rubin and his wife, Nancy, both dressed in hooded sweatshirts, were among those who rallied in memory of slain 17-year-old Trayvon Martin.

Participants were asked to wear hooded sweatshirts as a show of support for Martin, who was dressed in a “hoodie” when he was shot and killed Feb. 26 by George Zimmerman, a neighborhood-watch volunteer. Zimmerman reportedly shot Martin shortly after confronting him in the gated Sanford community.

“I think this case sensitizes us again to the horrors of death, especially when young people of color are victimized,” Rubin told the News Tribune on Sunday. “I believe in and have always worked with our neighbors for a fair, just and safer world. Sometimes our presence and support can help make a difference in our community and bring peace, compassion, understanding and an end to senseless violence and racial prejudice. That’s why we were there.”

Duluth schools Superintendent Bill Gronseth also donned a hoodie and joined in the demonstration.

“I think all of us need to come together as a community and realize that recognizing our differences is the first step to changing attitudes,” he said. “This was a case where unfortunately it appears race was the difference between life and death.”

Gronseth explained his reasons for participation.

“For people to show support for this young man’s family and to do anything we can to prevent something like this from happening again is really important.”

The NAACP organized the Sanford march and rally, bringing together a coalition of national civil-rights organizers, community leaders, clergymen and droves of local residents who chanted for the arrest of Zimmerman.

The Rev. Al Sharpton came to a podium outside Sanford Police Department headquarters amid raucous cheers from many of the roughly 1,000 participants. He said everything is on the table, including nonviolent civil disobedience to push for an arrest.

It’s an “American paradox that we can put a black man in the White House but we can’t walk a black child through a gated area in Sanford, Fla.,” Sharpton said.

Zimmerman, 28, has been in hiding since Martin’s shooting, which sparked international outcry and claims of racial profiling, vigilantism and selective policing.

Zimmerman has not been charged. He has claimed he shot Martin in self-defense.

A special prosecutor has been assigned to the case, and the U.S. Department of Justice has launched an investigation.

“We want an arrest. Shot in the chest,” marchers said Saturday en route to Sanford Police Department headquarters. “I am Trayvon Martin.”

Faces of all shades of humanity dotted the mile-long walk from Crooms Academy of Information Technology to the Sanford Police through Goldsboro, Fla., a community that was once the second all-black city in the state, until its charter was revoked in 1911.

*The Associated Press contributed to this report.*