



**CALIFORNIA STATE
CONFERENCE OF THE
N A A C P**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 8, 2010

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NAACP DENOUNCES VERDICT OF OSCAR GRANT CASE

**OFFICER FOUND OF CHARGE LESS THAN MURDER IN SHOOTING OF
UNARMED 22-YEAR-OLD AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE**

The NAACP opposes the jury's verdict of involuntary manslaughter regarding the 2009 New Year's Eve shooting of a 22 year old young man by BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) police officer in Oakland, CA.

While standing at a metro/BART stop on New Years' Eve 2009, 22-year old Oscar Grant was mercilessly shot in the back by BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) police officer Johannes Mehserle. Despite Grant committing no crime nor carrying a weapon, Mehserle proceeded to shoot Grant in the back as he lay on the floor of the platform.

The disaster was filmed by witnesses on cell phone cameras and later uploaded to YouTube, documenting the severity and the stark reality of police brutality in the United States.

"We are outraged that the jury did not find guilty of murder in a case that is so egregiously excessive and mishandled," said NAACP President and CEO Benjamin Todd Jealous. "The most tragic aspect of this case is that the cost of this police misconduct was a 22-year old father, son, and brother – an unarmed man killed because he allegedly scuffled on a train. The lack of accountability in law enforcement undermines the safety of the community and the integrity of law enforcement."

Police brutality is no new concept in California or in the African American community. The Department of Justice released a survey that says African Americans (4.4%) and Hispanics (2.3%) were more likely than whites (1.2%) to have experienced use of force by police and African Americans counted for 1 out of 10 cases with the police with 1 of 4 of those cases resulting in excessive force.

"The fact that justice was not upheld for the Grant family underscores a serious problem that needs to be addressed concerning the justice system and its devaluation of young

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African American males," said NAACP State Conference of California President Alice Huffman. "

The NAACP is encouraging supporters of the Grant family to remain patient despite the unsatisfactory verdict. The NAACP National leadership and California State Conference have agreed to work diligently to hold law enforcement accountable for their actions, and pursue justice in instances of excessive police force.

"We will continue to work to ensure that justice is served for the Grant family, and these cases of police brutality are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law," said NAACP Oakland Branch President George Holland.

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Founded in 1909, the NAACP - the nation's oldest, largest and most widely-recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization - is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Its more than half-million members and supporters throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, conducting voter mobilization and monitoring equal opportunity in the public and private sectors