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ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA EXPRESSES OUTRAGE OVER THE PHILANDO CASTILE VERDICT



Chicago, IL – June 19, 2017 -- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®, joined other national organizations in expressing outrage over the verdict of Jeronimo Yanez, the St. Anthony, MN police officer acquitted of shooting and killing Philando Castile. In July 2016, 32-year-old Castile was shot and killed by Yanez after having been pulled over for a broken taillight. Castille’s girlfriend streamed the incident on Facebook live.

International President Dorothy Buckhanan Wilson, speaking on behalf of the sorority’s 290,000 members worldwide, called the verdict "distressing not only for Mr. Castile’s loved ones and the people of Minnesota, but for all African-Americans who deserve the right to feel safe by those who have been put in place to serve and protect others.”

Following Yanez’ acquittal, the St. Anthony Police Department announced he would no longer be employed with their department.

“A higher level of accountability must be held for our law enforcement and judicial system,” said Buckhanan Wilson. Our hope is that the St. Anthony community comes together to begin conversations on the training of its officers; its city officials work on educating their community on implicit bias; and ultimately that everyone affected will somehow begin the healing process.”

Over the last two and a half years, Alpha Kappa Alpha members around the country have met with elected officials during the Sorority’s Day at the Capitol events to speak to and urge action on issues of injustice and other matters that disproportionately impact African Americans, women, and minorities. The sorority continues to encourage all communities around the country to contact their legislatures to enact changes in the judicial process including legislation requiring the use of body cams by all officers, the appointment of special prosecutors during police-involved shooting investigations, and incident de-escalation, mental illness and cultural training for all police officers.

The Sorority, with a massive network of members in 1,007 local chapters worldwide extends sympathy and prayers to the family of Philando Castile.

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