

FAMU Students Join Statewide March for Trayvon Martin

Contributed by Kendrah Mincey -- Black College Wire
Saturday, 07 April 2012

Protests keep pressure on for arrest in controversial case

Florida A&M and Florida State students, along with those from other Florida schools, left for "March for the Dream" for Trayvon Martin on Friday, April 6.

The group, named the Dream Defenders, began the three-day march at Stocking Park in Daytona, Fla., at noon to Sanford, Fla., to "preach for equality, an end to corrupt and unjust law enforcement and Trayvon Martin," according to the event's press release. The Dream Defenders consists of thousands of students from FAMU, FSU, Tallahassee Community College, the University of Florida, the University of Central Florida, Florida Memorial University, Bethune-Cookman University and Miami-Dade College.

The group started as a conference call organized by FAMU, FSU and TCC students and alumni, and nurtured the idea of young people working together to defend Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream of racial equality.

"This is our time to make history," said Antonio Hairston, a senior public relations student and a spokesperson for the Dream Defenders. "We are marching not only for Trayvon Martin, but for unity within the races."

FAMU students met at Bragg Memorial Stadium Friday to board buses, completely sponsored by donations, to Sanford. According to www.thedreamdefenders.com, the group was founded "on the idea that students and young people must come together, casting aside petty differences and organizational affiliations, to build a true movement of the people." They consider themselves not an organization, but "an idea that cannot be quelled or silenced."

The weekend's activities include a prayer vigil, speak outs and action planning meetings, with participants marching several miles each day.

"Hopefully this march can make some kind of a difference," said Kenneth Richardson, a fourth-year physical therapy student from Birmingham. "It's great to see us as Americans stand together, despite race, to fight for justice."

Seventeen-year-old Martin was fatally shot by George Zimmerman, 28, Feb. 26, and he has yet to be arrested after claiming self-defense.

Although there have not been any arrests in the case, Martin supporters believe that the lack of action is unacceptable.

"[Zimmerman] needs to be in jail," said Lafayette Adams, a senior advertising student at the University of Florida. "Regardless of the story, he needs to be held responsible."

Supporters can make donations to the Dream Defenders and find more information about the march and the weekend's itinerary at www.thedreamdefenders.com. You can also visit group's Facebook page, facebook.com/dreamdefenders, and Twitter, @MarchForMartin.

Kendrah Mincey writes for The Famuan, the Florida A&M University student newspaper, which originally published this article.

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