



April 19, 2018

Mayor Bryan K. Barnett
City of Rochester Hills, MI
1000 Rochester Hills Dr.
Rochester Hills, MI 48309

Re: NAACP Condemns Implicit Racial Acts of Violence

Dear Mayor Bryan Barnett:

Stephanie Spears Boothe
President

Rev. Frederick B. Moore
1st Vice President

Denise Harvey
2nd Vice President

Dr. Karen Bell
Secretary

Vicki Sparks
Treasurer

Executive Committee

Kimathi Boothe
Brenda Dilworth
Dorothy Flowers
Dr. Monetta Foster
Damien Harvey
Kevin Hillman
Rev. James Keys
Atty. Anthony Lewis
Delores Moore
Atty. H. Wallace Parker
George Pitchford
Yolenda Price
Norman Wright

The Northern Oakland County Branch NAACP and others across the country condemn the recent shooting at a 14-year-old high school student in Rochester Hills, who stopped on his way to school to ask neighbors for help. The wonderful young student, with a bright future ahead of him, has been victimized through racial intimidation of the worst kind. This incident hits close to home, and it serves as yet another headline illustrating the latest acts of injustices against young Blacks across the country. Furthermore, this occurrence highlights deep and implicit racial biases, and how these biases impact our daily lives.

We call on all elected officials and citizens to condemn these racially motivated acts and especially the recent local shooting that occurred in Rochester Hills, Michigan. Those who seek justice and reject racism must speak loudly and clearly against a climate of sanctioned abuse and corruption that shows up in local communities and nationwide.

The intimidation and arrest of two outstanding young black men for “trespassing and disturbance” in a Starbucks is yet another example of the true nature and manifestation of racism and injustice. Although not always captured on video and shared on media, this type of intimidation has been tolerated and is unfortunately a common happening among Blacks in Rochester. There is no way the treatment of this young Rochester high school student should be tolerated in the 21st century.

As the Parkland students demonstrated, critical conversation and discussion is necessary to face the uncertain future of race relations in America. Dr. King, a man whom we all celebrate, once stated “...we must face the honest fact that we still have a long, long way to go before the problem of racial injustice is solved...”; well, let’s be honest, that statement holds as true today as it did over 50 years ago.

Many concerned citizens will pay close attention to the response of the community and all elected officials as this awful incidence unfolds over the coming days. Will we become engaged to confront racism or let it fester as it has? The wide disparities regarding social, political and justice structures dictate that we must work to address racism and racial discrimination without hesitation.

Sincere Regards,

Stephanie Spears-Boothe