



AFTER MARCHING DOWN 13TH AVENUE, CROWD MEMBERS PASSED THE MEGAPHONE AROUND AND EMPHASIZED A NEED FOR CHANGE

COME TOGETHER

Local community pleads for racial justice WORDS AND PHOTOS BY AMY SCHNEIDER

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fter a string of violent shootings across the nation last week, hundreds of people convened on the University of Oregon campus Friday, July 8, to remember black lives lost at the hands of police officers, including Alton Sterling of Louisiana and Philando Castile of Minnesota. At the vigil, leaders also mourned the lives of five police officers killed in Dallas, Texas.

Members of the Eugene/Springfield NAACP, the University of Oregon's Black Student Union and the Black Women of Achievement organized the vigil, while members of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) Springfield-Eugene chapter attended in support.

Addressing a crowd gathered in the Erb Memorial Union amphitheater as rain gently fell, youth pastor Kim McGrew of the Powerhouse Worship Center delivered a moving speech that focused on action and implementing change in the face of great negativity.

"I need you to remain positive," McGrew said. "There's already enough negativity that's going throughout the nation, and they don't need to see it on the UO campus."

McGrew spoke to a solemn, introspective audience as she urged people to act as agents of change. "One thing I want you to be reminded of is that we're a melting pot," McGrew said as she gestured around the amphitheater and encouraged people to look at their neighbors. "Every nationality is right here on the UO campus. You can see the world sitting right here, saying, 'We stand for one. And we stand for all.'"