

LAW & JUSTICE

NAACP Denounces Lenient Sentence:

Against Bay area transit cop

The NAACP is denouncing a two-year sentence handed down against a former Oakland Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) police officer who shot Oscar Grant, an unarmed African American man last New

of police abuse, most of them go unreported or unnoticed because no one is there to record and broadcast them," said Benjamin Todd Jealous, NAACP president and chief executive officer. "In the end, the lack of nationally accepted best practices and standards on the use of force and the lack of law enforcement accountability undermines not

America today, the life of a young father, son, and brother is worth so little, and the officer who took that life can get off with a mere slap on the wrist," said Alice Huffman, President of the California State Conference of the NAACP. "The sentence is a slap in the face not only to the Oakland community, but to justice itself."

Police misconduct is not a new concept in the African American community. A Department of Jus-

tice survey in 2005 showed that African Americans (4.4 percent) and Hispanics (2.3 percent) were more likely than whites (1.2%) to experience use of force by police. African Americans accounted for 1 out of 10 contacts with police, but 1 of 4 instances where excessive force was used.

After the Mehserle verdict in July, a spokesperson for the Department of Justice announced that at the end of the state prosecution,

the DOJ would conduct an independent investigation to determine if the evidence merits federal prosecution.

"The NAACP applauds the DOJ for this decision and we hope that their investigation will finally bring justice for Oscar Grant and his family," said Hilary Shelton, NAACP Washington Bureau Director and Senior Vice President for Advocacy.



Protesters in Oakland, Calif., lie down in the middle of the street; face down with their hands behind their backs, in the same position that Oscar Grant was in when he was shot by an Oakland Bay Area Rapid Transit police officer. The photo was taken during a protest last February.

Year's Eve.

Grant, 22, was shot in the back as he lay handcuffed on the floor of the BART platform. The scene was captured by numerous cell phone cameras and immediately broadcast on the worldwide web.

"Although our communities unfortunately suffer many incidents

only the integrity of law enforcement itself, but the safety of all of our communities. Sadly, we see this to be true in the case of Oscar Grant."

Johannes Mehserle, who could have received anywhere up to a 14-year sentence, received two years - with credit for time served.

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Armed Bank Robbery Arrests

Portland police have made three arrests in connection with the two take-over style bank robberies.

Stanley Noel Ames, 31, Pamela Marie McGowan, 25, and Eric Steven Wilcoxson, 27, are charged in the Sept. 18 robbery of the U.S. Bank on Southeast Woodstock Boulevard and the Oct. 8 robbery of the U.S. Bank on Northeast 42nd Avenue.

In both robberies, two suspects entered the bank wearing theatrical-type masks and fired shots before robbing the bank.

On Nov. 9, the Portland Police

Special Emergency Response Team served a search warrant in the 9200 block of Southeast Mitchell Street, where Ames and McGowan were taken into custody. On Nov. 10, authorities arrested Eric Wilcoxson at his Tigard residence.



Evidence recovered during the search warrants included several semi-automatic handguns and assault rifles, masks and ballistic body armor.

Robbery detectives were assisted in this investigation by several members of the public who provided information to police.

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