

Soul Singing Activism

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Locals called out the names of Kendra James, Keaton Otis, Aaron Campbell and James Chasse, four high profile police-related deaths in the Portland area.

Portland Black PFLAG Chapter members were also at the rally in solidarity with the message of ending police violence, and local urban farmers offered free freshly grown produce for activists to eat and take home to their families.

Don't Shoot Portland activists have been meeting since Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager, was shot and killed by a police officer in Ferguson, Mo., in August last year.

Monáe has publicly stated she will be visiting Black Lives Matter and other black activist protests and rallies across the United States during her current tour.

"When things are going on in the com-



PHOTO BY OLIVIA OLIVIA/
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Victims, survivors, and family of police brutality were invited onstage at Dawson Park Monday to join contemporary soul and pop singer Janelle Monáe for a rendition of her now infamous anthem for police reforms, 'Hell You Talmbout.'

munity, they can count on us to speak up and say something and come to them directly," she told NBC's Today last week.

"We don't come to the rallies as artists, we come as human beings."

She was later cut short on the same net-

work TV show, when she began to publicly condemn police brutality and listing names on the broadcast.

Readers of all ages

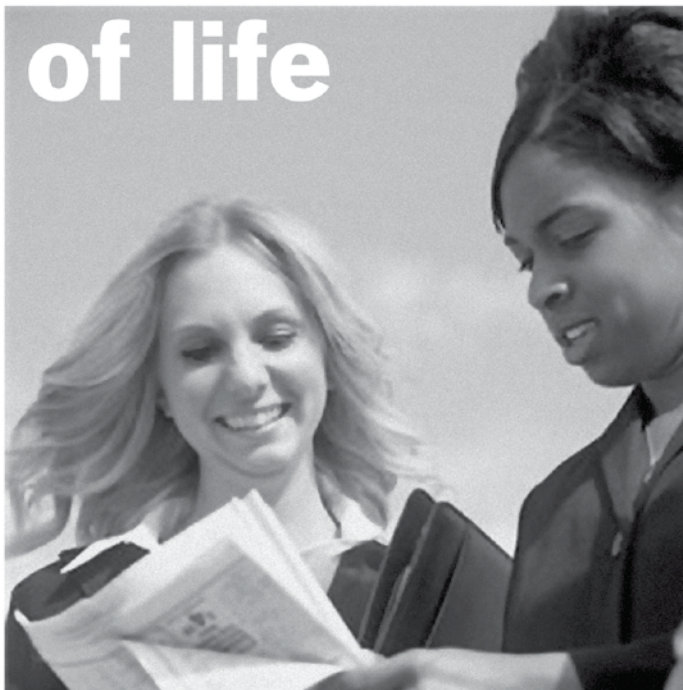
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Say Her Name

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country so far this year, activists across the country and in Portland are calling a state of emergency and asking for support in stopping more needless killing.

A vigil Thursday night at Pioneer Courthouse Square, downtown, focused on remembering the victims. With a rallying cry of "Say Her Name," over 100 people attended the event, which was put together by Greater Portland Trans Unity and Don't Shoot Portland.

The aim was to uplift and honor those lost in a way they deserve – by saying their names, sharing their stories, and discussing the importance of supporting trans women in our communities while they are alive.

"Eighteen trans women have been murdered in America in 2015," explained Alyssa Pagan, a local activist and trans woman who helped organize the vigil. "Most of them are black. We want more people to finally believe that their lives matter. Often times their deaths go uninvestigated and underreported. Even when they are reported on, they are repeatedly misgendered and their character called into question."

This lives and stories of Lamia Beard, Keyshia Blige, Kandis Capri, London Chanel, India Clarke, Taja DeJesus, Tamara Dominguez, Papi Edwards, K.C. Haggard, Mya Hall, Amber Monroe, Yazmin Vash Payne, Penny Proud, Kristina Gomez Reinwald, Shade Schuler, Ty Underwood, Elisha Walker, and Mercedes Williamson were shared, and organizers asked that community members continue to remember their names and the work they did across the country and in their communities.