

Black Allied Law Students Association (BALSA)

On Saturday, August 9, 2014, Michael Brown, an unarmed, eighteen-year-old student, was shot and killed by Police Officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri. In the days, weeks, and months that followed Michael Brown's death, our country witnessed the pain, anger, and frustration, felt by so many, with a system of law enforcement that has replicated these tragedies time and time again. Throughout the country, thousands of people took to the streets and demanded a single outcome: justice. After more than three months of mourning and waiting in hope for an equitable result, Monday night's announcement by the St. Louis County Prosecutor offered no relief from this anguish.

The New York University School of Law's Black Allied Law Students Association strongly condemns the non-indictment of Darren Wilson for his killing of Michael Brown. Despite being confronted with a young man who lost his life and a number of conflicting eyewitness accounts, the Grand Jury did not find probable cause to file any indictment against Darren Wilson. The Grand Jury concluded that Michael Brown's death warranted no further consideration or deliberation.

This decision marks yet another chapter in the long and painful history of violence against Black and Brown people that enjoys no sympathy or any measure of redress in the American criminal justice system. Unsurprisingly, in the months following Michael Brown's death, countless others have suffered the physical and psychological wounds that come from the fist, baton, or bullet. Excessive force is a staple in communities across the country, and the officers who employ it are reflections of policies that condone its systematic use. The work of creating a system of law enforcement and criminal justice that values and respects the lives of all citizens must start in earnest now.

BALSA supports the Michael Brown Family petition for a national requirement for all law enforcement officials to wear body cameras while on duty, as a deterrent for abuses of police power. We also invite all members of our law school community to a forum tomorrow, Tuesday, November 25th at 6 p.m. in Kushner Lounge in Vanderbilt Hall where we will discuss the Grand Jury decision. A group will then walk to join the citywide protests in Union Square at 7:00 p.m. In the interim, we ask that the entire NYU Law community keep Michael Brown's family in their thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,

The Black Allied Law Students Association

<http://www.law.nyu.edu/studentorganizations/balsa>