

Jordan gives \$2M, looks to build trust between blacks, cops

BY STEVE REED
AP SPORTS WRITER

CHARLOTTE (AP) - Michael Jordan finally spoke out on Monday about racial tensions in America in hopes of easing conflicts between blacks and law enforcement.

The NBA great and Charlotte Hornets owner announced he is giving \$1 million to the Institute for Community-Police Relations and another \$1 million to the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. The aim is to help build trust following several shootings around the country.

"As a proud American, a father who lost his own dad in a senseless act of violence, and a black man, I have been deeply troubled by the deaths of African-Americans at the hands of law enforcement and angered by the cowardly and hateful targeting and killing of police officers," Jordan said in a statement. "I grieve with the families who have lost loved ones, as I know their pain all too well."

Jordan's father was killed in 1993 in a botched carjacking in North Carolina. Daniel Green and his friend Larry Demery were convicted of killing 56-year-old James Jordan along U.S. 74 and dumping his body in South Carolina. Both were sentenced to life in prison.

The high-profile Jordan has been notoriously silent over the years when it comes to his opinions on politics or social justice issues, which has drawn some criticism.

But he said Monday he "can no longer stay silent" on the issue.

"I was raised by parents who taught me to love and respect people regardless of their race or background, so I am saddened and frustrated by the divisive rhetoric and racial tensions that seem to be getting worse as of late," Jordan said in the statement. "I know this country is better than that. ... We

"I grieve with the families who have lost loved ones, as I know their pain all too well."

-Michael Jordan

need to find solutions that ensure people of color receive fair and equal treatment AND that police officers - who put their lives on the line every day to protect us all - are respected and supported."

Spike Lee tweeted: "DO NOT SLEEP ON MJ." NBA player Jared Dudley tweeted: "There u go MJ."



Jordan

Jordan won six NBA championships with the Chicago Bulls and became one of the most popular and respected basketball players in the world.

After retiring, he became the majority owner of the Hornets in 2010.

"Over the past three decades I have seen up close the dedication of the law enforcement officers who protect me and my family," Jordan said. "I have the greatest respect for their sacrifice and service. I also recognize that for many people of color, their experiences with law enforcement have been different than mine. I have decided to speak out in the hope that we can come together as Americans, and through peaceful dialogue and education, achieve constructive change."

Jordan said he chose the Institute for Community-Police Relations because its policy and oversight work is focused on building trust and promoting best practices in community policing. He gave to the NAACP Legal Defense

law enforcement.

While Jordan said the contributions alone won't be enough to solve the problem, he added: "I hope the resources will help both organizations make a positive difference. We are privileged to live in the world's greatest country - a country that has provided my family and me the greatest of opportunities."

"The problems we face didn't happen overnight and they won't be solved tomorrow, but if we all work together, we can foster greater understanding, positive change and create a more peaceful world for ourselves, our children, our families and our communities."

Fund, the nation's oldest civil rights law organization, to support its work in support of reforms aimed at building trust and respect between communities and

Have an Opinion?

Let us Know letters@wschronicle.com



TRIPLE SEVEN Hauling Services

Junk Hauling
336-987-2099
www.triple7hauling.com

- Residential and Commercial
- Year-round Bulky item pick up
- Single item pick up
- Truck load pick up
- No job is too small
- Trailer & Truck load
- Trailer loading
- Attics; Basements
- Garages; Sheds
- Pods; Storage Units
- Tenant Abandonment
- Evictions; Foreclosure
- Free removal of old appliances
- Move jobs
- Labor for hire
- Load/unload; pack/unpack; shrink wrapping; furniture transport and rearrangement
- Brush, limb branch and leaf removal

A man's word is still good.

Mon - Fri, 7 AM - 7 PM • Sat, 7 AM - 3 PM

PROUDLY GROWN IN NORTH CAROLINA

LOCAL GOODNESS

CLOSER FRESHER BETTER™

For nearly 60 years, Food Lion has partnered with farms across North Carolina to bring you the freshest, local produce available at an affordable price. We're honored to have partnerships with local farms that enable us to nourish your family as well as connect our community.

FOODLION.COM/LOCAL GOODNESS

Family fears for autistic man's safety after police shooting

MIAMI (AP) - The autistic man who was the intended target of a police bullet is suffering from emotional distress, not eating and traumatized following the shooting of his caretaker.

Arnaldo Rios' mother, Gladys Soto, said during a Saturday news conference that she is worried about the safety of her son, who wandered back to the site of the Monday, July 18 shooting a day later, threw himself on the ground and shouted: "I hate the police, I hate the police." The Miami Herald reported Saturday.

"It's too emotional to see your baby caught up in something like this," Soto said.

Miriam Soto said her brother is suffering from night terrors and is not sleeping or eating.

"He's not the same anymore," Miriam Soto said of her brother.

The four North Miami police officers who aimed rifles at Rios and his black therapist, Charles Kinsey, in the middle of an intersection were responding to a 911 call about a suicidal man with a gun. Rios sat cross-legged. He yelled. He didn't obey commands to lie down with his hands up, as Kinsey was doing, and he fidgeted with a metal object.

One of the officers, Jonathan Aledda, thought the disabled man was about to shoot Kinsey, who was trying to coax Rios back to a nearby group home, the police union has said. The officer fired three shots at Rios because he thought he was a threat, but he missed and accidentally struck Kinsey in the leg.

The metal object turned out to be a toy truck and there was no suicide threat.

Monday's shooting was the latest in a violent month of police shootings, but it also highlights the difficulties officers have in identifying people with autism. The characteristics of autism range from mild quirks or obsessions, to people who can't communicate, yell and occasionally become violent.

The family's attorney Matthew Dietz on Saturday criticized the officers' training in dealing with people with mental illness.

"After they knew that he had autism, what did they do? They threw him on the ground," Dietz said.