

IN SOLIDARITY



Name: Michael Brown, Jr.
Dates: May 20, 1996 – August 9, 2014
Place of death: Ferguson, MO

Michael Brown graduated from an alternative high school program just eight days before his death. At 6'4" and weighing 292 pounds, he was called "Big Mike" or "Mike Mike". Brown was an amateur musician who posted on a music-sharing site. He was two days away from starting a training program at a technical school.

Mr. Brown had no criminal record. In 2017 a surveillance video of an encounter at a liquor store surfaced showing what might have been a petty theft or another questionable interaction between him and the clerk a little before noon on August 9.

The interpretation of this video is incomplete. The Ferguson police were called. Officer Darren Wilson was given the description of the alleged thief, Michael Brown, who was with a friend, Dorian Johnson. Officer Wilson spotted the men. This is where the story becomes confusing. Wilson, at first, told them to get off the street. Then, seeming to have second thoughts, he backed up his vehicle. Michael Brown reached into the vehicle and a struggle ensued. Michael was shot in the hand. He and Johnson fled. Officer Wilson exited his vehicle and chased the pair. Dorian Johnson hid behind a car. At some point, Wilson shot Brown, who was facing him, a total of 6 times. Almost immediately crowds of police and residents of the area congregated.

Between August 9 – 14 protests, some peaceful, some violent and destructive, erupted on the streets of Ferguson, underlying the tension between white city officials and its majority Afro-American citizens. This incident was investigated by a grand jury that took 25 days to examine over 5,000 pages of witness testimony. No indictment was issued. On November 29, 2015, Darren Wilson resigned from the Ferguson police department with no severance. His lawyer said the Wilson, citing security concerns, "will never be a police officer again". In 2017, the Brown family received \$1.5 million from the city in a wrongful death suit. On June 2, 2020, Ella Jones became the first African American and woman to be elected mayor of Ferguson.

June 4, 2020