

# Commemorating 25 years since the Frederick Finley Protest: A call to continue the fight for justice

DETROIT, MI, UNITED STATES, June 27, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On June 22, 2000, [Frederick Finley](#)—a 32-year-old Black father—was brutally killed by security guards outside Lord & Taylor at Fairlane Mall in Dearborn, Michigan. Accused of nothing himself, Finley was trying to protect his 11-year-old stepdaughter when he was placed in a fatal chokehold over an alleged \$4 bracelet.

Thirteen days later, on July 5, 2000, over 15,000 people filled the Fairlane Mall parking lot to demand justice. The rally, organized by local civil rights leaders including Rev. Horace Sheffield, Heaster Wheeler, and Rev. Wendell

Anthony, was one of the largest protests in recent Michigan history and a defining moment in the struggle against racial profiling, over-policing, and economic injustice.

Marking 25 years later, we remember Frederick Finley—and we remember the movement his death ignited.

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*Rev. Horace Sheffield III*

“Instead of honoring life, decency, and equity, policing and America continue to be a bad check: insufficient funds,” said Rev. Horace Sheffield III, chief executive officer of DABO Detroit. “Since Trayvon Martin, more than 500 Black men have been shot or killed by rogue police men, not worthy of the title ‘officer.’ Fred Finley should be alive. The police chief in Dearborn lied, and so did others. And yet, 25

years later, we are still fighting for what should’ve been ours all along.”



Frederick Finley - Fairlane Protest - By Rev. Horace Sheffield III

The killing of Frederick Finley exposed deep racial and systemic inequities that still plague our communities. It showed us that even in places meant for shopping and leisure, Black life can be threatened, and justice can be delayed.

"The fight didn't end in the parking lot of Lord & Taylor. It began there," said Rev. Wendell Anthony, president of the Detroit Branch [NAACP](#). "Justice is not a moment—it's a movement. And until the lives of Black people are protected everywhere—from retail parking lots to public schools to police stops—we are not finished."

"The unfinished civil rights agenda of our time includes economics, education, and policing," added Heaster Wheeler, former executive director of the Michigan NAACP. "That day in Dearborn was not just a protest. It was a declaration. We don't stop until we win."

As we mark this somber anniversary, we call on our community, our leaders, and our nation to recommit to the fight for justice, not just in memory of Frederick Finley, but for every life at risk when systems fail to value our humanity.

About the [Detroit Association of Black Organizations](#)

Established in 1979, the Detroit Association of Black Organizations (DABO) has been a champion for greater unity and opportunities in Detroit's African American community. Through an expansive network of over 130 organizations, DABO strives to create meaningful resources aimed at improving quality-of-life initiatives around the city. For more information on how this organization is inspiring progress through connection and collaboration visit [www.dabodetroitinc.com](http://www.dabodetroitinc.com).

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