

Lisette Garcia

From: Carswell, Amy (Advocacy) <AMY2@miamidade.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2012 2:50 PM
To: Battles, Thomas (CRS)
Subject: RE: DOJ 'peacemakers' helped Sanford stay cool amid rising tensions

That's why we make the big bucks.

From: Battles, Thomas (CRS) [mailto:Thomas.Battles@usdoj.gov]
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2012 2:44 PM
To: Carswell, Amy (Advocacy); Duprey de Robles, Mildred I. (CRS)
Subject: RE: DOJ 'peacemakers' helped Sanford stay cool amid rising tensions

Thank you Partner. You did lots of stuff behind the scene to make Miami a success. We will continue to work together.

Tommy

From: Carswell, Amy (Advocacy) [mailto:AMY2@miamidade.gov]
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2012 2:28 PM
To: Battles, Thomas (CRS); Duprey de Robles, Mildred I. (CRS)
Subject: FW: DOJ 'peacemakers' helped Sanford stay cool amid rising tensions

FYI

From: Carswell, Amy (Advocacy)
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2012 2:27 PM
Subject: FW: DOJ 'peacemakers' helped Sanford stay cool amid rising tensions

FYI: Congratulations to our partners, Thomas Battles, Regional Director, and Mildred De Robles, Miami-Dade Coordinator and their co-workers at the U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service for their outstanding and ongoing efforts to reduce tensions and build bridges of understanding and respect in Sanford, Florida

From: Oscar J Braynon [mailto:braynon@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2012 2:19 PM
To: Carswell, Amy (Advocacy)
Subject: DOJ 'peacemakers' helped Sanford stay cool amid rising tensions

DOJ 'peacemakers' helped Sanford stay cool amid rising tensions

10:52 p.m. EST, April 15, 2012 |
By Arelis R. Hernández, Orlando Sentinel

When racial tensions flared in Sanford, a league of secretive peacemakers reached out to the city's spiritual and civic leaders to help cool heated emotions after 17-year-old [Trayvon Martin](#) was shot and killed in February. When civil-rights organizers wanted to demonstrate, these federal workers taught them how to peacefully manage crowds.

Obtained via FOIA by Judicial Watch, Inc.

They even arranged a police escort for college students to ensure safe passage for their 40-mile march from Daytona Beach to Sanford to demand justice.

As national figures and sign-waving protesters grabbed the spotlight after Trayvon's death, federal workers from a little-known branch of the Department of Justice labored away behind the scenes, quietly brokering deals between the city officials and residents to help prevent violence and lay the groundwork for peace.

Even though last week's arrest of suspected shooter [George Zimmerman](#) calmed some tensions, the Community Relations Service will remain in Sanford for an unspecified period of time. "As long as we're needed," the agency's acting director said.

The Community Relations Service offers few details about its work.

City officials, local leaders and residents say these peacekeepers have played a key role in easing tensions during some of the most heated moments after Trayvon's shooting.

"They were there for us," said the Rev. Valarie Houston, pastor of Allen Chapel AME Church, a focal point for the community after the unarmed teen's death. She met the peacekeepers there for the first time during a March 20 town-hall meeting. "We felt protected," she said.

Houston said the conciliators told her they act as the "eyes and ears of the community" and provided guidance about keeping their message about nonviolence clear.

At every rally, community meeting and march, since the shooting, conciliators were there.

In their Navy blue windbreakers, polo shirts and dark sunglasses, they look like federal agents.

Their caps are embroidered with the Justice Department's seal. They watch and listen silently. But they say little publicly.

When reporters try to chat them up, they remain stoic, saying simply they cannot talk to the media.

The peacekeepers have a specific mandate outlined in the 1964 Civil Rights Act to go into conflict zones within American communities that perceive discrimination or feel wronged because of their particular race, color or national origin.

"We are unique in that we don't investigate or prosecute but foster communication between communities," said acting Community Relations Service director Becky Monroe. "The real goal is to build local capacity to deal with these issues."

They negotiate, ameliorate and communicate "under strict confidentiality," Monroe said.

City officials said when battle lines were drawn and dialogue broke down, they called in the conciliators.

"They work behind the scenes and in the trenches to make contact with the various organizations that are represented," Sanford's Community Development coordinator Andrew Thomas said. "They make the connections others in the community can't."

They helped set up a meeting between the local [NAACP](#) and elected officials that led to the temporary resignation of police Chief Bill Lee, said Turner Clayton, Seminole County chapter president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. .

"People are more relaxed and satisfied when they know they have someone from the outside, like the DOJ who have no ties to the community to try and relax the emotions," Clayton said.

Obtained via FOIA by Judicial Watch, Inc.

Clayton said they don't talk much or offer suggestions. But sometimes they offer crucial guidance.

Thomas Battles, the Southern regional director for Community Relations Service, arranged a Thursday meeting between Special Prosecutor Angela Corey and a group of Sanford ministers, where Corey answered questions and shared her testimony of faith.

The visit came one day after Corey announced her office charged Zimmerman with second-degree murder. He is being held at Seminole County Jail and has a bond hearing scheduled for Friday.

The Rev. Derrick Gay said the meeting with Corey motivated his fellow clergymen to declare they will help heal their city.

"[Battles] said we were key to the reconciliation process for Sanford," he said. "He talked to us about the power we have to change things and bring healing."

There are numerous comments (25+) attached to actual article

OB1