

## **Mothers Demand: End Police Killing of Youth of Color**

On February 3, more than a dozen grieving mothers from cities throughout the nation including Chicago, Los Angeles, Sacramento, and Minneapolis, gathered together at Augsburg College in Minneapolis for the Take a Knee Nation conference to say that they can't keep burying their children—they want the police killing of youth of color to stop. They spoke of the loss of their sons and at least one daughter who ranged in age from 16 and 17 to young adulthood; a few were in their thirties. These mothers' children were killed during a routine traffic stop, mistaken for a terrorist solely because of a name, waiting for a bus after work, dancing at a party, in the back running away from police, surrendering with hands in the air, mentally ill and waiting to be taken to a hospital. They were killed by one officer or multiple police. They were killed with pistols, automatic rifles, or military-grade weapons. One mother said that her son was shot 21 times. In every case, mother after mother said there was no reason to purposely shoot her child to cause death. Perpetrators received impunity, and often the victims were blamed for their own deaths.

The conference asserted that police killings are only part of unjust institutional systems. Some of the mothers planned to brave the freezing cold to continue to draw attention to the issue, joining others who would stand and take a knee—outside the gates of the sports palace, the U.S. Bank Stadium arena, the next day during the Super Bowl.

*Reported by Mary Beaudoin who attended the Take a Knee Nation conference plenary and the panel featuring the bereaved mothers.*