



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATEWIDE RALLIES TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, HONOR RECENT HOMICIDE VICTIM

Saint Paul, MN – On Wednesday, March 27, advocates, survivors, and community leaders will participate in rallies across the state to honor victims of relationship violence and call for an end to domestic violence. A rally will be held in St. Paul in the Rotunda of the Minnesota State Capitol, where the names of the 2018 and 2019 victims of domestic violence homicide will be read and memorialized. Mark Franklin Jr., the sixth confirmed domestic violence homicide victim this year, will be included in the memorial reading.

On March 15, Mark Franklin Jr., 21, was shot and killed by his cousin's boyfriend, Theotis Thomas, 19, in St. Paul. Prior to the shooting, Mark witnessed Thomas choke his girlfriend, and intervened to break up the assault. Thomas then threatened to return with a gun and shoot everyone before he left the home. A short time later, Thomas returned and fired two shots at Mark, one of which struck him in the face and killed him. Another minor cousin of Mark witnessed the shooting, and several small children were in the home at the time, including Thomas' infant child. Mark had recently moved back to Minnesota from Iowa, to be with his mother after she was shot by her husband. Theotis Thomas was ineligible to possess a firearm due to a second-degree assault conviction when he was a juvenile. He has been charged with second-degree murder of Mark Franklin Jr.

“Domestic violence is not an isolated event that only impacts the individuals in the relationship,” said Liz Richards, executive director of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women. “While Mark Franklin Jr., moved to Minnesota to help his mother recover from a domestic violence shooting, he tragically lost his life trying to protect another family member in a similar situation. We invite everyone to attend our rallies at the Capitol and around the state, to Mark and put an end to domestic violence.”

Members of the public are invited to attend a rally in their community. A full list of events can be found on the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women's website at www.mcbw.org.

If you are a victim experiencing abuse, contact Day One at 866-223-1111 to connect with services.

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