



HONORARY MEMBER
Julian Bond

FOUNDING MEMBERS

State Senator Gwendolyn Britt
Montgomery County Democratic
Central Committee Chair
Karen Britto
Delegate Alfred "Al" Carr
Montgomery County School
Board Member Judy Docca
Montgomery County Council
Member Valerie Erwin
Delegate Tawanna Gaines
Bladensburg Town Council
Member Walter George
Baltimore City Council
Member Bill Henry
Montgomery County
Executive Isiah "Ike" Leggett
Delegate Josephine
Peña-Melnyk
Delegate Craig Rice
Bowie City Council
Member Isaac Truth

STEERING COMMITTEE

Rev. Larry Brumfield
Darrell Carrington
Rion Dennis
Natasha Lewis
Fred Mason III
Odeana Neal
Lisa Swaby-Rowe

**See our website for a full
listing of MBFA members**

The Maryland Black Family Alliance is a coalition of Black families and leaders. We are people of many faiths. We stand for fairness, justice and equality for all families.

Elbridge James, Director
**Lea Gilmore, Outreach
Director**
**MARYLAND BLACK
FAMILY ALLIANCE**
PO BOX 10952
Rockville * MD * 20859
www.MBFA.org

**PROSECUTORS SAY TEENAGER MURDERED FOR BEING
GAY: MARYLAND BLACK FAMILY ALLIANCE EXPRESSES
SADNESS AND CALLS FOR UNDERSTANDING**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 20, 2008

CONTACT:

Elbridge James, Director, MBFA, 301-213-9657, Elbridge@mbfa.org
Lea Gilmore, Outreach Director, MBFA, 443-824-0272,
Lea@mbfa.org

Rockville, Md. – Yesterday, the *Baltimore Sun* reported the tragic story of the alleged murder of a Woodlawn teenager at the hands of his alleged fellow gang members who thought he was gay. The Maryland Black Family Alliance today issues a call to action and compassion to all Marylanders to stand strong against fear, ignorance, and intolerance.

Elbridge James, the Director of the Maryland Black Family Alliance and civil rights activist, expressed dismay that the defendants are alleged to have committed this heinous crime so their gang was not perceived as weak because they had a gay member. Said James: "The loss of any young Black man to senseless violence is tragic. We have to stand together and embrace all of the members of our community. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Parrish family as they continue to deal with the loss of Steven as this story becomes public."

From her Baltimore County home, MBFA Founding Member and Outreach Director Lea Gilmore said: "We are shocked and saddened by this senseless tragedy; a tragedy bred by intolerance and a lack of true understanding. This is why we as members of the Maryland Black Family Alliance must continue to diligently and vocally stand up for our sisters and brothers regardless of their sexual orientation. This tragedy glaringly spotlights the need for understanding about who we are as human beings and who we are to each other."

###

The Maryland Black Family Alliance seeks to foster dialogue within the African American community on principles of fairness and support for all black families. We promote a clear distinction between what civil marriage means legally and what spiritual marriage means from a religious perspective. Most importantly, the Maryland Black Family Alliance promotes the general welfare of all black families by encouraging the principles of legal fairness to empower straight allies to support their LGBT family members and neighbors. Learn more at: <http://www.mbfa.org/>