

STATEMENT OF THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF
DANQUIRS FRANKLIN

Danquirs Franklin should be alive today. As those who knew him well, we were disappointed by the District Attorney's assessment of the circumstances of his death, and utterly dismayed at the way in which Danquirs Franklin has been portrayed.

The investigation never uncovered the betrayal that so upset Danquirs that day. And the public does not understand that when the police arrived, the situation had already calmed, several witnesses had seen Danquirs put the gun away, and his hands were clasped in prayer with the store manager whom he had just tearfully embraced before police arrived.

The police then shot Danquirs *because* he followed their repeated instructions to reach into his pocket to retrieve the gun and drop it to the ground. He was shot for doing what he was told to do.

The public needs to understand some facts lost in the coverage of the shooting and of the District Attorney's decision last week not to charge the officer.

1. Danquirs Was a Hard-Working and Devoted Father of Three Children

Danquirs worked in the same job for a decade and had three children with their mother and was raising them in a home that he kept for them and the mother. He took his life-responsibilities seriously and was considerate of and helpful to others – at work and at home. The mother of his children worked at that Burger King, and he frequently took the children there and knew the manager and other employees.

2. He Was Upset Over an Awful Betrayal

The mother of his three children had left him recently for an affair with a co-worker. Danquirs was so despondent at her actions that he had sought inpatient medical care.

The mother of his children could not provide for them, so he arranged that she stay at his home with the children while he worked at night, and then she would leave when he returned home from work.

On the day of the shooting, Danquirs learned from one of his children that the co-worker/lover had come to the house with the mother while Danquirs was at work and was sleeping with her in Danquirs' bed. Learning of that betrayal is what set him off; he went

to find the co-worker at the Burger King. Many can understand the anger at learning that a boyfriend was sleeping in his bed with the woman he loved and the mother of his children. But that story has not been told. The mother kept it from investigators.

3. He Never Fired the Gun

The District Attorney showed pictures of Danquirs brandishing a pistol in his anger. That clearly frightened everyone and he would have been charged for doing it; but Danquirs never fired the gun, even when he had clear aim at the boyfriend. Danquirs never hurt anyone in his life.

When the man who had been in his bed ran from the Burger King, witnesses saw Danquirs put the gun away and change his demeanor. He walked over to the car of the store manager who had just arrived and they embraced. Danquirs cried as they hugged and then knelt by the side of the car, his hands clasped in prayer with the manager, who is also a minister. The mother of his children walked up close to them as they prayed. She had seen Danquirs put away the gun and knew she was not threatened.

4. He Was Shot for Following the Command to Drop the Gun

The police then arrived and drew their weapons on Danquirs and ordered the mother to move away. The audio from the body camera makes clear that both officers repeatedly told Danquirs to “drop the weapon.” They did not order him to show or raise his hands.

A command to show his hands would have allowed the police to see that he was not holding the gun and that they could safely control him.

Instead he was told repeatedly to “drop the weapon.” The only way he could do that was to reach into his pocket and take it out. He did so slowly. The still photo in the DA’s released report shows he was holding the gun by the tips of his index finger and thumb, and the barrel was pointed toward him. But as soon as the gun was visible, he was shot.

Danquirs was shot and killed for doing exactly as he was told. That fact is lost in the DA’s report, which expressly did not address whether the officers followed police procedures in the way they handled the encounter. We believe they did not.

Danquirs was a loving and loyal father, distraught at the worst kind of betrayal, and is dead because he followed a police command to “drop the weapon.” Whether the officer should have been charged is the District Attorney’s decision. But Danquirs should be alive today.