

JUSTICE FOR PEDIE

"I just want flat out justice . . . If the facts are that the cop did what I think he did, well, we don't need cops like that."

– Rick Perez, Pedie's father

The Perez family is still grieving over the death of their son, Richard "Pedie" Perez, who was shot and killed by Richmond Police Officer Wallace Jensen during the early hours of September 14, 2014, outside a liquor store in Richmond's rough Iron Triangle district. "Kids out here are getting shot up all the time just by drive-bys and stuff," said Rick Perez. But no one expected that Pedie would be killed by the very police who are sworn to protect the public,



Richard 'Pedie' Perez

Within hours of the killing, Police Chief Chris Magnus released an official report saying that Perez was "aggressive" and reaching for the officer's gun. "The suspect grabbed and held on to one of the officer's hands, while using his other hand to simultaneously go for the officer's gun." However, police and eyewitnesses give conflicting accounts, so that what actually happened that fateful night is still unclear, months after Chief Magnus promised "the greatest degree of transparency possible involving this critical incident."

What is clear is that 24 year old Pedie Perez, described as Latino but his family identifies as White, is dead, shot by police but guilty only of intoxication and resisting a police officer. "The killing of an unarmed man by a Bay Area police officer last week deserves equal attention to other controversial examples of cops using deadly force," the victim's father said, referring to the massive protests in Ferguson and around the country.

"It's a unique time in our country," said Attorney John Burris, who represented the families of Oscar Grant and many other grieving families, and is now representing the Perez family in a federal wrongful death lawsuit. "The object is to turn that into something positive." "Have no doubt [Perez] was resisting [arrest], but he was not

threatening," Burris said. "That's no justification for shooting anyone. Period."

An unidentified woman who was with Perez just moments before the incident agreed with Burris: **"That boy don't hurt nobody. He might have been drunk or whatever, but there's no use for that police officer to even have a gun pulled on that boy."** Another witness said that: "From this point on I don't think nobody is going to look at cops the same way."

Richmond is not Ferguson. A decade ago, Richmond was little more than a company town run by Chevron and known as the most dangerous city in California. In 2006, Richmond hired a liberal, openly gay Police Chief, Chris Magnus, from Fargo, ND. Described as the antithesis to the rugged cop archetype, Chief Magnus has dramatically reduced crime rates in Richmond with his community-based, crime-fighting model. As a result, Pedie Perez is the first person killed by Richmond police since 2007, but police from other jurisdictions have killed six people in Richmond during this period.

At the same time, Richmond has seen a political transformation led by the Richmond Progressive Alliance, so that the New York Times wrote in 2013, "This small, blue-collar city best known for its Chevron refinery has become the unlikely vanguard for anticorporate, left-wing activism in recent years, having seized the mantle from places like Berkeley, just south of here, or San Francisco, across the Bay."

All of this can bring little comfort to the Perez family unless there is justice for their only child. **We believe that the people of Richmond want to stop police violence and support the national movement inspired by the killings in Ferguson, MO and Staten Island, NY.** But even the most enlightened police force will not prosecute one of its own unless the people demand it. That's why the Oscar Grant Committee is holding a Rally outside the Richmond City Council meeting on Tuesday, March 17, 2015. Join us in the struggle to achieve justice for Pedie Perez.

JUSTICE FOR PEDIE RALLY
TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2015 • 5–6:30 PM
440 CIVIC CENTER PLAZA, RICHMOND, CA

The Oscar Grant Committee
Against Police Brutality and State Repression



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