



The National Association for Ethnic Studies

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAES Calls for Continued McMillian Case Review

April 30, 2013 - On February 27, 2013, the body of Marco McMillian, an openly gay Black mayoral candidate in Clarksdale, Mississippi, was found dead. McMillian was a champion for justice and the Coahoma County Sheriff's office in Mississippi has identified a suspect, who is in custody and charged with McMillian's murder.

To date, however, the cause of death is undetermined. As a national organization committed to the advocacy of issues related to race and ethnicity, the McMillian case represents a sociopolitical opportunity. As an increasing number of elected officials of color seek to run for public office, we seek to encourage a continued diversity of candidates.

In that vein, NAES encourages all vested parties to continue to investigate McMillian's death while a candidate for public office. In an effort to encourage people of all backgrounds to seek public office, we advocate for a swift and just conclusion to the ongoing investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death. Incidents such as this are not merely the actions of one "bad apple" or "lone wolf;" rather, they reflect a broader pattern in which anti-gay/anti-other rhetoric and policy at the highest levels of society fuel and amplify the attitudes and actions of their public consumers.

This year's NAES conference theme: "We Are All Ethnic Studies" is now even most appropriate given McMillian's horrific death. We were proud to host a theme that gathered activists, scholars, and higher education professional together at Colorado State University on April 12-13th and that also honors the many diverse advocates for national and international dimensions of difference, diversity and ethnicity.

The National Association for Ethnic Studies was founded in 1972. It provides an interdisciplinary forum for scholars and activists concerned with the national and international dimensions of ethnicity.

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