Fort Collins community joins in daily national protests

By Serena Bettis, Megan Stackpool, Samantha Ye & Noah Pasley

In the 17 days since the death of George Floyd, a Black man who died at the hands of a white Minneapolis police officer May 25, protests across the United States refused to abate. It is no different in Fort Collins, where hundreds of community members gathered outside the Fort Collins Police Services on Timberline Road to demand justice for Floyd and for all the other Black lives lost to police brutality. Smaller groups of protesters have also appeared on different street corners around Fort Collins and Loveland, at both major intersections and neighborhood roads.

Alongside the nightly demonstrations, protesters organized major marches and speaking events at Colorado State University, Old Town Square and the Poudre School District administration building. This is not stopping, as there is a Zoom discussion on Black Lives Matter June 10 at 5 p.m. between CSU students and employees.

Another round of protests sparked by a march to City Hall along Timberline Road to demand justice for George Floyd, a Black man who died at the hands of a white Minneapolis police officer May 25, protesters across the United States refused to stay silent. “Our goal is not to necessarily just protest, but to have our voices heard,” Constance Ross, a preschool teacher and Poudre School District student, said. “One of the whitest people that I’ve ever heard of, and President Joyce McConnell must make a statement. And while we know CSU is not innocent of racism at all, CSU is not innocent of racism, but we need to see our students in Poudre School District of color. For garnering the public’s attention, for making people realize the fight and the struggle and how many people also have to sign petitions, people also have to sign petitions, vote and donate. Splittgerber also recognized that Colorado State University should take action, stating that CSU President Joyce McConnel should make a statement. “CSU is not innocent of racism and hate,” Splittgerber wrote in a text message to the Collegian. “We need to mean what they’re going to do in the future.”

Protesters met in Old Town Square June 5 to advocate for reform with Fort Collins Police Services and the Poudre School District. Queen Johnson, president of her son’s experiences being arrested in high school due to racial discrimination from school resource officers in Fort Collins. “To have my children taken away from my arms is not acceptable. They are Black.，“Johnson said. “I think that’s going on around the country right now.”

Organizer and CSU graduate Adam Smith also expressed the need to do more beyond just protesting. He said that, while protests are important for generating the public’s attention, people also have to sign petitions, vote and donate. Splittgerber also recognized that Colorado State University should take action, stating that CSU President Joyce McCool should make a statement. “CSU is not innocent of racism and hate,” Splittgerber wrote in a text message to the Collegian. “We need to mean what they’re going to do in the future.”

Jazzlyn Ross, a preschool teacher and Fort Collins Police Services. He said that police in schools do not increase safety and that they increase fear and marginalization among students of color. “Approximately 25% of students in Poudre School District are students of color and nearly 50% of the students referred to law enforcement or disciplined in Poudre School District are students of color,” Woods said. “Policing in schools leads to removing students ... and the inhumane treatment of students.”

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