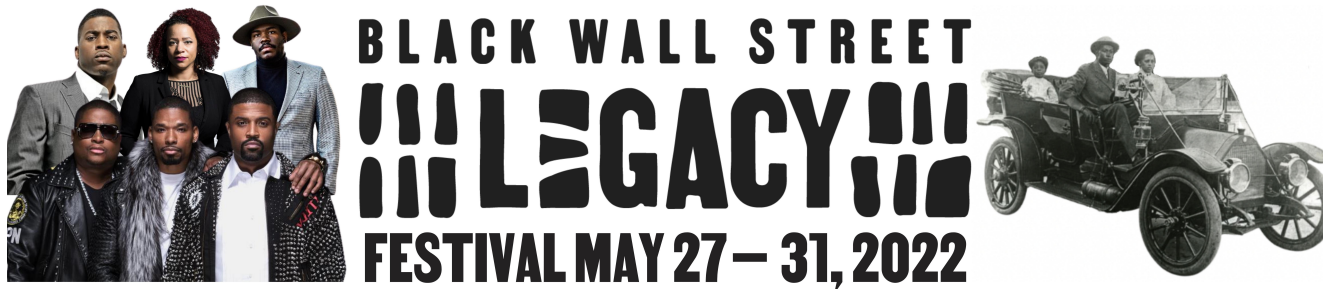


Hank Miller family files lawsuit against Oklahoma Sheriff's deputies

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The brother of unarmed, disabled veteran Hank Miller who was shot at least eight times and killed by Sheriff's deputies in Southeastern Oklahoma joined his family and an attorney as they announced the filing of a civil rights lawsuit in Tulsa on Thursday.

Sheriff's deputies in rural Pushmataha County killed Hank Miller following an early morning traffic stop in Antlers, Oklahoma on May 30, 2021.

Miller, a disabled veteran, was pulled over by Pushmataha County Deputies Keith Knoll and Brian Columbus over an obstructed license plate, according to civil rights attorney Damario Solomon-Simmons, who represents the family.

In a small town where the family said everyone knows everyone, attorneys say Miller provided the officers with his I.D. before telling them he was heading home and that he would "see them at the house." Attorneys say he then followed all traffic laws as he pulled up to his driveway.

During the press conference, Attorney Solomon-Simmons played a clip of the bodycam footage showing officers pulling a female passenger out of the car by her hair and firing on an unarmed Hank Miller while his hands were up.



Attorney Damarion Solomon-Simmons, left, stands next to Hank Miller's brother and sister during a press conference in Tulsa on Thursday, May 26, 2022. (Mike Creef / The Black Wall Street Times)

“He was always wanting to help somebody. Always. He always had a smile,” Hank's brother Dan Miller told reporters on Thursday, roughly a year after the incident.

“We've always been a really close family. This is really really hard. It's really hard because of the way he was killed,” Hank Miller's sister told reporters. She said they come from a family of law enforcement and never expected this to happen to them.

“Even Hank worked at the prison as a sergeant. My nephew is a police officer. For this to happen like it has, it's not fair,” she added.



Disabled veteran Hank Miller (Provided)

Sheriff's deputies refused to render aid, bodycam footage contradicts OSBI report

Immediately after firing the shots, as Miller lay slumped over in the front seat, an officer can be heard in the video saying to another officer, "I thought he was trying to run you over."

Despite shooting Miller at least eight times, the officer continues catching his breath, refusing to render aid. An officer can then be heard claiming Miller was trying to run over an officer.

Officers refused to render any aid until EMS arrived, according to attorneys.

"You emptied a clip into a human and that person is expiring in front of your eyes," attorney Steven Terrill said, calling it a complete disregard for life.

The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation released a press release after the shooting, claiming “Miller was shot by a Pushmataha County deputy after another deputy was hit by the vehicle Miller was driving.” Yet, bodycam footage shown to reporters directly contradicted that statement.



Attorney Steven Terrill speaks during a press conference for Hank Miller on Thursday, May 26, 2022.
(Mike Creef / The Black Wall Street Times)

The bodycam footage shown to reporters on Thursday appears to show the officers on the side of the vehicle, not in front of it.

“It is unbelievable that at this point these officers have not been charged with any crime,” attorney Damario Solomon-Simmons said.

“This video shows these officers deserve to be fired, and more importantly, prosecuted for the murder of Hank Miller.”

Notably, Oklahoma police are the deadliest in the nation and lead with the highest rate of underreported police killings out of all 50 states, according to a report produced by the Lancet in 2021.



FILE – In this Friday, June 26, 2020, file photo, attorney Damarion Solomon-Simmons speaks during a news conference in Tulsa, Okla. Solomon-Simmons, who has sued the city of Tulsa for reparations for the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, filed a lawsuit Wednesday, March 31, 2021, against the city for records related to the massacre. (Mike Simons/Tulsa World via AP, File)

DA recuses himself from Hank Miller case, family says they were told lies

Attorneys say they plan to file a civil rights lawsuit in the federal Eastern District of Oklahoma, at a courthouse in Muskogee.

“We’re suing the sheriff in his official capacity and the three officers that were on the scene, including the officer who fired those eight shots,” Solomon-Simmons said.

“It’s not just a big city issue. It’s not just a small town issue. It’s not just a Black issue.”

Compounding the pain to the family, Dan Miller said he was given misleading statements and told lies by authorities for months after his brother Hank Miller was killed.

“And my mom’s been so upset with the way everything was handled. No one came to her house or told her what happened.”

Miller said he was first told by the Sheriff that his brother’s own actions caused his death.

“He was telling me that my brother was basically belligerent, jumped in his vehicle, and had rolled over an officer,” Miller told The Black Wall Street Times.

Yet, in a town of less than 10,000 people where “Everyone knows everyone,” Dan Miller said his own son used to work for the Sheriff before transitioning to Tribal police. He said his son received anecdotal accounts from his former coworkers that contradict the statement from OSBI and the Sheriff.

Moreover, when Dan Miller sought answers from District Attorney Mark Matloff, he was told the DA recused himself because Matloff hired the current Sheriff.

“It just seems like everyone that has any dealings with law enforcement, every time they say anything about it, it never matches up with the film that we saw with our own eyes,” Miller said.



Pushmataha Sheriff's Office

Lawsuit seeks criminal charges for Oklahoma officers

Ultimately, for months the family was “tortured” as they were continuously told their brother caused his own death.

“They can spin it however they want, but they had a guy with his hands up and they shot him over eight times,” attorney Steven Terrill said.

Illustrating the immense pain the family is going through, Hank Miller’s sister told reporters how she remembers her brother smiling and laughing whenever they were together. She said it was difficult to watch the killing of her brother on video.

“But I wanna see it cuz I wanna know what happened to my brother. I wanna see who did that. I wanna see what happened even though it’s tearing me up, I need to,” she said.

For his part, attorney Damario Solomon-Simmons said he was forced to file an open records request for the documents and video he obtained, saying the sheriff hasn’t turned over everything, such as the initial police report. With the lawsuit, he said the Hank Miller family is seeking to hold the officers criminally responsible for the death of their brother.

“We’re gonna take this case all the way to the Supreme Court if we have to,” attorney Solomon-Simmons said.

“If this can happen to a person like Hank Miller, this can happen to anyone in America.”

The Black Wall Street Times has reached out to the Pushmataha County Sheriff’s Office and the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation for comment. We will update this article when we receive a response.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/VD3uqatbpcM>