Crisis Work and Thought Leadership

The Challenge: The Trayvon Martin Foundation hired TASC to represent Trayvon Martin’s family, their legal team and the foundation’s programmatic mission. The media circus surrounding the trial of Martin’s alleged attacker, George Zimmerman, required around-the-clock responses to inquiries and daily messaging from the family.

Our Strategy: TASC managed the crisis communications elements of the story, fielded thousands of media requests and defended Martin’s reputation during the trial. We used the media attention to discuss Stand Your Ground laws, and steered as much attention as possible to the work of the foundation. We also helped the family build out their social media presence and use these platforms effectively throughout the media campaign.

Results: The prolific media campaign generated thousands of positive stories across the country for the family and the foundation, with well over 300 million media impressions in outlets from The New York Times to NBC’s Meet the Press. The family was interviewed pre-trial on Good Morning America and The View. After the verdict, TASC negotiated interviews with the morning shows at ABC, CBS and NBC, capturing a combined audience of 16 million viewers. An op-ed by the family’s lawyer, Ben Crump, ran in The Washington Post and another by Dr. Bernice King and Martin’s mother, Sybrina Fulton, ran in USA Today. The family testified in front of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee and the U.S. House of Representatives, and over 400,000 people signed the change.org petition to reform Stand Your Ground laws. Peaceful protests occurred across the country, garnering support from A-list celebrities like Jay-Z and Beyoncé. Martin’s parents and Crump became national thought leaders on the issues of race relations, racial profiling, Stand Your Ground laws and policing methods in communities of color. Sybrina Fulton’s Twitter following grew to 136,000, and #JusticeForTrayvon was tweeted 904,000 times leading up to the trial and after the verdict. The attention helped raise over $500,000 for the foundation.