STANDING
IN THE
GAP FUND

Statement from Standing in the Gap Fund

Since its founding in 2023, the **Standing in the Gap Fund** has been guided by one mission: to honor the life of Ajike "AJ" Owens by transforming collective grief into action.

Co-founded by Pamela Dias, AJ's mother, and Takema Robinson, the Fund provides support to families impacted by racial violence, strengthens organizers on the front lines, and works to challenge the laws and systems that perpetuate racial harm, including Stand Your Ground policies that continue to endanger communities of color.

We are incredibly proud that *The Perfect Neighbor* has resonated so deeply with audiences around the world. The film powerfully honors AJ's legacy and invites viewers to confront the realities of racial violence in America.

"After losing my daughter, I knew that I couldn't let her story end there," said **Pamela Dias**, **co-founder of the Standing in the Gap Fund**. "I wanted to create something that not only honored Ajike's life but also helped other families facing the same kind of pain and injustice. The Standing in the Gap Fund exists to provide relief, community, and hope — to make sure no one has to walk this path alone, and to continue pushing for the change our communities deserve."

Pamela's choice came from a place of courage and clarity — much like Mamie Till, who decided the world needed to see her son. She wanted the world to see what happened to her daughter — not for spectacle, but for truth, accountability, and change.

Days after AJ's death, and prior to the film being made, we established Standing in the Gap Fund. Through this independent initiative, we continue the urgent work of supporting families and communities affected by racial violence, advancing Stand your Ground and gun-safety reform, and nurturing healing rooted in Black culture, faith, and love.

Florida became the first state to pass Stand Your Ground in 2005, championed by State Representative Dennis Baxley of Marion County (which includes Ocala, Florida)— with the backing of the NRA and ALEC. Today, thirty-eight states have adopted similar laws. Until Ajike's death, the most widely known SYG case was the 2012 killing of **Trayvon Martin** — a tragedy that revealed the deadly consequences of laws that value fear over accountability.

That is why we remain steadfast — standing with families and organizers on the front lines of racial violence and inequity, ensuring they have the resources, care, and community needed to keep going.

As we move forward, we do so with clarity and conviction: we will not be silent, and we will not stop standing in the gap.

How You Can Stand With Us

For more information visit **www.StandingintheGapFund.org** and follow the journey on social media @standinginthegapfund.

But there's more you can do to take action, today:

1. **Watch and share the film:** Bear witness to ***The Perfect Neighbor*** on Netflix. Encourage others to watch and start a conversation using the hashtag **#ThePerfectNeighborNetflix #StandingintheGapFund**
2. **Join the conversation:** Attend one of our upcoming community talkbacks or virtual gatherings to learn more about the film's impact and the Fund's mission.
3. **Host or organize a community gathering:** Bring people together for guided discussions on truth, justice, and healing. **Sign-up to receive a toolkit from the Fund.**