

# Downtown Protest

Students attend BLM rally

“No lives matter, until black lives matter.”  
“No justice, no peace, prosecute the police.”  
“Stop killing us.”  
“Black lives matter today, tomorrow, and forever.”

These were only a few of the phrases senior **Noah Clayman** and junior **Sofia Ortiz** heard during the Black Lives Matter protest at the former JC Nichols Memorial fountain in Downtown Kansas City.

Clayman and Ortiz attended one of the many nationwide rallies with a couple of friends May 29,

which were sparked by the passing of **George Floyd**, who was choked to death by a police officer in Minneapolis.

“I chose to go because [what] keeps happening to people like George Floyd and **Breonna Taylor** [is] absolutely awful and completely wrong,” Clayman said. “I need to do more than signing petitions to help fight for that cause.”

Ortiz and Clayman joined the crowd about an hour into the protest amid people who held signs

with the names and faces of those who were lost to police brutality.

Although Ortiz was not worried about the protesters becoming violent, she was still mindful of what could happen.

“I was scared to [go to] the protest [because] a white supremacist or anti-protester might be in the crowd and could harm people,” Ortiz said. “Especially in the United States [because] it is so easy for someone to get a gun.”

Going into the protest, Clayman was focused on the injustices and the hardships that minorities face.

“I am angry that people of color still have to fight for their right to live, and a lot of those thoughts were in my head as I was there,” Clayman said.

While some protests have ended in violence, Ortiz and Clayman said the rally they attended was peaceful and supportive.

“There were a few people that seemed to just be there to stir things up,” Ortiz said. “But they were overpowered by the sense of love and care from the rest of the people there.”

The police followed suit and were also peaceful while handling the protesters.

*“I am angry that people of color still have to fight for their right to live...”*

— **Noah Clayman, 12**



However later that weekend, the attitude of the police officers and protesters changed.

“My friend was hurt by a police officer [and had] bruises all over his body when he was trying to help someone up off the ground,” Ortiz said.

Both Clayman and Ortiz believe a lot can be accomplished with peaceful protests, but if steps toward progression are not apparent, then other methods might have to come into play.

“If [protesters’] voices aren’t being heard peacefully, which they aren’t, then they’re going to be violent,” Clayman said. “The basis of what our country was built on is revolution.”

Clayman thinks that those who are against the message of Black Lives Matter, sometimes misconstrue its meaning.

“The whole movement is advocating for equality,” Clayman said. “It’s not saying that only black lives matter — it’s saying that right now we need to focus on protecting the lives of black people who are killed by police brutality and other acts of violence that are racially biased.”

Both Ortiz and Clayman strongly believe in using their voices and doing what they can to make a change in the world.

“I don’t think everything is accomplished by going to a protest, but using my voice, even though [it’s] small, adds to a larger revolution,” Ortiz said. “We are the generation of the future and my voice makes the roar of change louder.”



— **Sofia Ortiz, 11**

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## BLM Protests Nationwide

More than **2,000** protests across **all 50 states** in the two weeks after the killing of George Floyd

Largest age group of protestors is people under 35

More than **40%** of U.S. counties have had a protest

Thousands protested for racial equality in Washington D.C. Aug. 28, the 57th anniversary of the 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington

Information from the New York Times & the Washington Post

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**BLACK LIVES MATTER**

**NO JUSTICE  
NO PEACE**

**PROSECUTE  
THE  
POLICE**



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