

**YOUTH HONOR SLAIN POLICE OFFICER  
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The youth of Washington, D.C., were deeply affected when they heard of the slaying of Metro Transit Authority police officer Marlon Francisco Morales, who was shot over a fare dispute in June 2001 while on routine patrol on U Street.

SGI-USA youth decided to open their Create Peace festival on Aug. 11 with a tree-planting ceremony in honor of slain Officer Morales, who was well known in the community for the positive image he portrayed to the youth. By planting trees in his honor, the youth organizing the festival determined to create value out of such a tragedy for their community.

“Officer Morales was a good person and a dedicated peace officer. Many of us felt that his murder was the last straw,” said Kiana Bridges, 16.

Spearheaded by Washington, D.C., Region Young Women’s Leader Chelsea Honderich, the youth planted three crepe myrtle trees at the site of the U Street-Cardozo Metrorail station to pay tribute to the officer, his wife, Jennifer, and their three children, aged 11 years, 8 years, and 3 months.