

Jemel Roberson's mother demands justice for her son, shot by cop at Robbins bar where he worked as security guard

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FULL TEXT

If Beatrice Roberson ever has the chance to confront Midlothian police officer Ian Covey, she has just one question for him: "Why did you feel the need to kill my son?"

Roberson, speaking during a news conference Saturday in front of Manny's Blue Room Lounge in Robbins, where her 26-year-old son was fatally shot in November while working as a bar security guard, said she believes it's important for the officer and others involved to not only be identified but punished for their actions.

"All of these police officers are responsible for what happened that night," Roberson said. "No one should be able to walk away from this."

Covey was identified Friday by Midlothian police and in an amended lawsuit filed by the Roberson family as the officer who fired the shot that killed Jemel Roberson, of Chicago, Nov. 11 as he was detaining a person believed to have been involved in a shooting incident at the bar. The officer fired despite the fact that Jemel Roberson was wearing clothing that identified him as "security."

Beatrice Roberson said she needs to see justice done for her son, who had ambitions to become a police officer. "I'm doing this for my son," she said. "I'm sure if our situations were reversed, he'd do the same thing to try to protect me."

Roberson's attorney, Gregory Kulis, said Saturday he thinks it is important for Covey be identified publicly. Although he learned the officer's identity several weeks ago, he waited until police confirmed it before adding it to the lawsuit that had already been filed.

The suit seeks "fair and reasonable compensatory and punitive damages" from Covey and the Midlothian police, although Beatrice Roberson said she's more concerned about protecting her late son's image.

She said it bothers her that her son was killed by a police officer, a profession Jemel Roberson wanted to pursue. "I would have wanted him to have any other job than that," she said.

"He wasn't a criminal. He wasn't a gang-banger," Roberson said. "He was church-going. He always had a job. He deserved better than this."

Gregory Tejeda is a freelance reporter for the Daily Southtown.

Credit: Gregory Tejeda

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