

BLACK AND BROWN PALO ALTO HISTORY AND CURRENT EXPERIENCE

A Response to the City Council Referral to
the Human Relations Commission

January 2021

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BACKGROUND

- City Council
 - Affirmed that Black Lives Matter (June 8, 2020)
 - Committed to address systemic racism and bias (June 8, 2020)
 - Directed the Human Relations Commission to produce a report on the black and brown history and current community in Palo Alto (June 15, 2020)

SOURCES

- The history and current experience of local racism was sourced from:
 - Literature, news reports
 - **PERSONAL LIVED EXPERIENCES** shared on:
 - @Palo Alto Speaks (a City online forum)
 - June 2020 protests and demonstrations
 - Youth Rising Up: Can Gen Z Lead on Social Change? (Panel presented by Embarcadero Media and Youth Community Service)
 - HRC Public Forums
 - Police Reform-8 Can't Wait, with community input and expert panel (July 9, 2020)
 - Bearing Witness to Black and Brown Experiences in Palo Alto (August 13, 2020)

PERSONAL LIVED EXPERIENCE
SPOKEN AT JUNETEENTH-2020 EVENT
(FULL TEXT IN APPENDIX IV)

- Good afternoon, everybody.
- Let's not fool ourselves. There's not only inequality. There is inequity within our system, and it's systemic, and many of you have never really even thought about that. *I thank you for the fact that you are here today. It's a great first step, but the reality is that's it's not enough. It's only the beginning.*
- The fact is that starting back in the 70's as a kid here in these schools, I experienced many of those same things, and it's angering and frustrating to hear ...that all that crap still happens today. We say that this place is special. ..., and in many ways it is, but *everybody needs to actually, actively acknowledge and understand the abuse that black people have withstood for years and years, including today.*
- You need to be mindful and *aware and observant* of microaggressions and flat out overt discrimination *that you witness.* You need to be willing to *step in and intervene and say something,*

THEMES

- Persistent
 - We have been doing this a long time and we still don't get it done.
- Consistent aggressions
 - It's the DAILY microaggressions that hurt.
- Positive role models absent
 - Young people don't have positive role models in their curriculum or around town.
- Housing denied
 - Awareness of de jure discrimination limiting access to housing as well as evidence of de facto discrimination

PERSISTENT:
WE HAVE BEEN AT THIS FOR SOME TIME AND WE STILL DON'T
GET IT DONE.

- There was one Black student in the freshman class in 1891 at Stanford. Jane Stanford advocated for that student.
- In 1960, there were two in the entry class.
- Campus activism in the 1960's changed the status quo on campus and in town.
- In 2019, the entry class was 8% Black or African American and 17% Hispanic or Latino..

	% of population Palo Alto July 1, 2019 est.	% of population California July 1, 2019 est.	% of population U.S. July 1, 2019 est.
Black or African American	1.8	6.5	13.4
Hispanic or Latino	5.6	39.4	18.5

Note: % includes only people reporting one race
January 2021

PERSISTENT: CONTINUED.

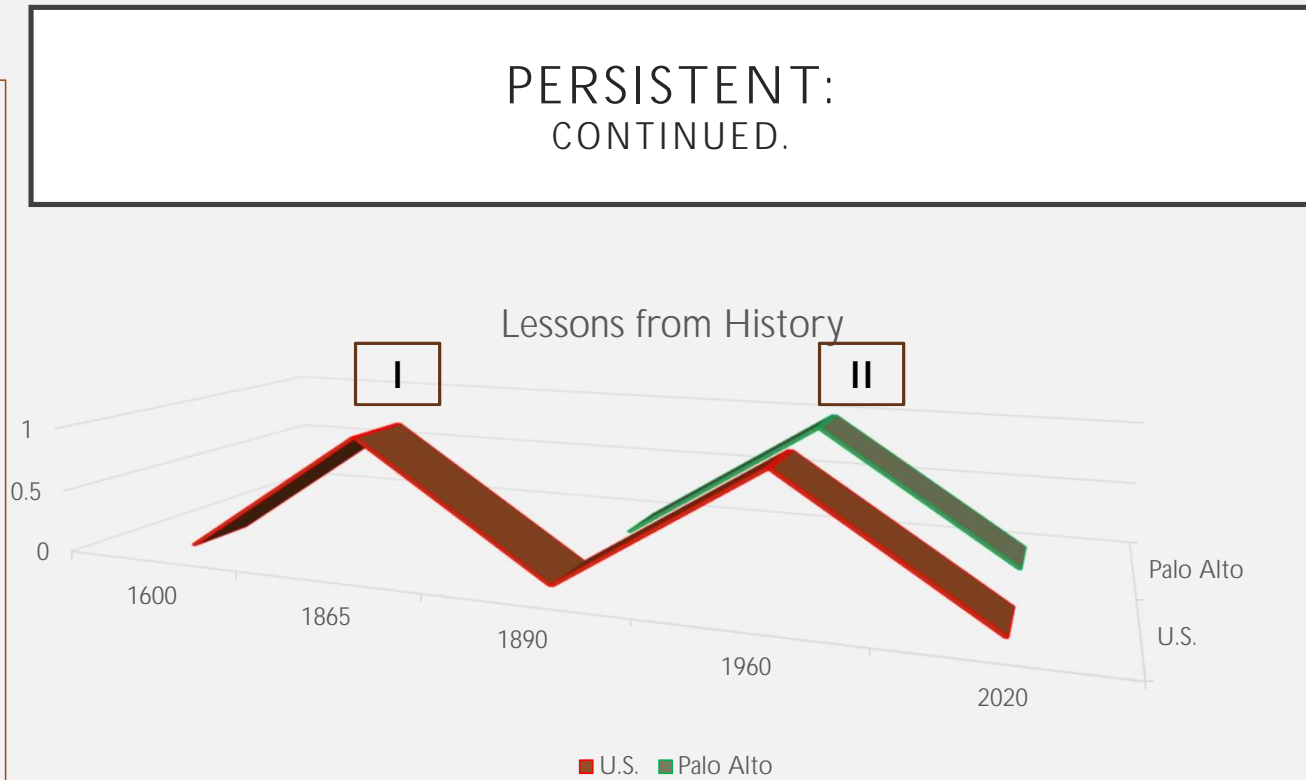
U.S.
1600: Concept of race created to justify slavery

1865: Slavery abolished

1890: Plessy vs. Ferguson upholds segregation and discrimination with 'separate but equal'

1960: MLK, Civil and Voting Rights Passed

2020: After George Floyd's death, demonstrations protest police abuse and systemic racism



Palo Alto
1890: Mayfield residents urged to buy property to prevent Negro influx;
1920: African Americans excluded from housing market
KKK chapters exist;
1950: Joseph Eichler objects to racial discrimination, sells homes in his developments to 'minorities'.
1960: Stanford comes through Civil Rights Era with increased support for Black students and faculty;
2020: Escalation of vandalism and/or hate crimes

Consistent Aggressions:

It's the daily microaggressions that hurt.

- 'I go to the grocery store. When I get to the checkout lane, I try to perform the part of a white person so they don't ask me for my ID. They didn't ask the white persons in front of me for their ID.' (5)
- I'm a lawyer. I went to Stanford Law School. I'm doing everything I'm supposed to do to be successful and move forward and at the time it didn't matter. All they saw were three Black people.' Two or three cops ordered me, at gun point, to stand against a wall. The assumption of guilt: 'This is how you're seen before they find out who you are.' (1)

CONSISTENT AGGRESSIONS, CONTINUED

- 'Going to HBCU to be a part of something ' (4)
- 'I'm different/It hurts' (4)
- I was followed around stores at the Stanford mall and racially profiled around church grounds, being looked at suspiciously whenever I walked around by myself. When I got into college, I felt I had to wear my school's sweatshirt all the time in the Menlo Park/Palo Alto area so as to pre-emptively defy any negative stereotype people would have of me as I moved through a predominantly white space as a Latina woman. (6)
- Me, too. I spend a lot of money in that store. And they follow me around. That's not right. It's the sum of a lot of macro microaggressions. (6)

CONSISTENT AGGRESSIONS, CONTINUED

- It was a pretextual stop. He (my friend) felt deflated, embarrassed, unwelcome, and I want to know where in that officer's time sheet that pretextual stop of this person of color was recorded. Does he have a string of this? Is this a pattern? Because unless we start recording this kind of thing, unless we start using it in evaluations, it just isn't going to quit. That's one of the questions I would like to understand. (6)
- "Our boys especially were stopped all the time. The first question was always, 'Get out of the car, where'd you steal the car?'" (1)
- "The (police) told them their rule was to stop people who look like they don't belong, so I guess we look like we don't belong." (1)
- My family has property in this city for almost 100 years but has always felt that Palo Alto police treat us like invaders who don't belong. Routinely, Palo Alto police see us driving and immediately make a U-turn to pull us over. They have searched our vehicles and detained us for extended periods of time, all without cause. (6)

Teachers use the
'N' word

Change the Black narrative
Pay more attention to
positives

CONSISTENT AGGRESSIONS, CONTINUED

Trying to catch up in this game
Don't look like (them)/don't talk like (them)
Can't afford tutors, prep classes

- Repeated assumptions of guilt – 'it just piles up and piles up' (1)
- 'It's harder if you're Black and you live in a city that counts itself as being liberal, mostly white, where people don't get it, or are in denial or don't understand.' (1)
- 'The police officer was so hostile to him. The assumption is that all Black people carry guns, especially Black men.' (1)
- When I see "Black Lives Matter" signs in people's yards and in their windows in Palo Alto, it seems like a total contradiction if people do a double take and act as though they are afraid when they see a man, woman or child of African American descent.(6)

CONSISTENT AGGRESSIONS, CONTINUED

- Somehow the image I had of American was of an open minded, liberal people - "the land of immigrants and opportunities". Then I was faced with an attitude of exclusiveness and prejudice... I just hope that other newcomers who are joining this community, will not assume that they are excluded because of their personality, but this is the culture of the society here. Assuming otherwise is damaging their self-esteem, causing depression. If parents would know of the prejudice and exclusiveness of the American culture, it would avoid all the disappointments, heart broken and humiliation. (6)
- I wave hello and smile...and folks look directly at me and either keep walking with a blank stare, check their phones, pretend they can't hear me through their earphones or (even worse, very painful and insulting) cross the street. I've gotten a lot of suspicious looks, tugging on purse strings in coffee shops, screwed up faces, turned up noses and shopping carts pushed into the back of my legs. I have been followed when walking or jogging my neighborhood here in Paly and it has been very scary and unsettling. I notice that this kind of behavior isn't directed toward certain racial groups but only towards Blacks. (6)

CONSISTENT AGGRESSIONS, CONTINUED

- I also hope that when we finish "social distancing" that people figure out how to stop self-isolating, stop judging people negatively and learn how to show more love and kindness overall. I've met a few folks who have been kind but the experience of being Black in Palo Alto has been cloaked in a blanket of racial tension that feels oppressive as though being Black, quietly isn't really accepted or valued in this town. I have never felt so marginalized in my entire life(6)
- Feel I am alone in this...feel criminalized, when I go outside, *when I leave my house, I am just a black man*...no matter how educated I am, no matter I am a senior in college...(3)
- I worked tirelessly to assimilate into the dominant culture and downplay my status as a minority, going into debt to "look the part" and speaking and acting in a way that minimized the likelihood that people would scrutinize me for "not belonging." (6)
- I consider myself a proud brown woman and mother of a wonderful child. Like everywhere, implicit bias exist in Palo Alto. I remember going to ...parks, and to drop off my daughter at a friend's house ...where some people, ...thought I was the help. I always brushed it off to ignorance. Since the #BlackLivesMatter movement, it made me realize how my whole entire life I felt insignificant and was never enough (6)

POSITIVE ROLE MODELS ABSENT:
YOUNG PEOPLE DON'T HAVE POSITIVE ROLE MODELS IN THEIR
CURRICULUM OR IN THE COMMUNITY.

- Like everywhere, implicit bias exist in Palo Alto. I remember going to a local school parent party, parks, and to drop off my daughter at a friend's house for a play date where some people, including their children, thought I was the help. I always brushed it off to ignorance. Since the #BlackLivesMatter movement, it made me realize how my whole entire life I felt insignificant and was never enough due to people's implicit bias and the constant barrage of white-washing in beauty advertisements and magazines. (6)
- As a Latina woman, . . . I really do feel like growing up in an area such as MP/PA where most everyone around me was white and far wealthier than my family will ever be led me to have a complex about being Latina in a predominantly white society. I worked tirelessly to assimilate into the dominant culture and downplay my status as a minority, going into debt to "look the part" and speaking and acting in a way that minimized the likelihood that people would scrutinize me for "not belonging." It is still something I struggle with (6)

POSITIVE ROLE MODELS ABSENT, CONTINUED

- (Parent) asked where/how would POCs be included on his list of “American” artists. The teacher responded with anger. (6)
- Representation matters.
 - Mentorship programs, like The Big Homie Project, let kids see someone like them! Mentors push them and make their dreams come true
- In school only thing I’m being taught about myself is slavery, nothing **positive about myself** (4)

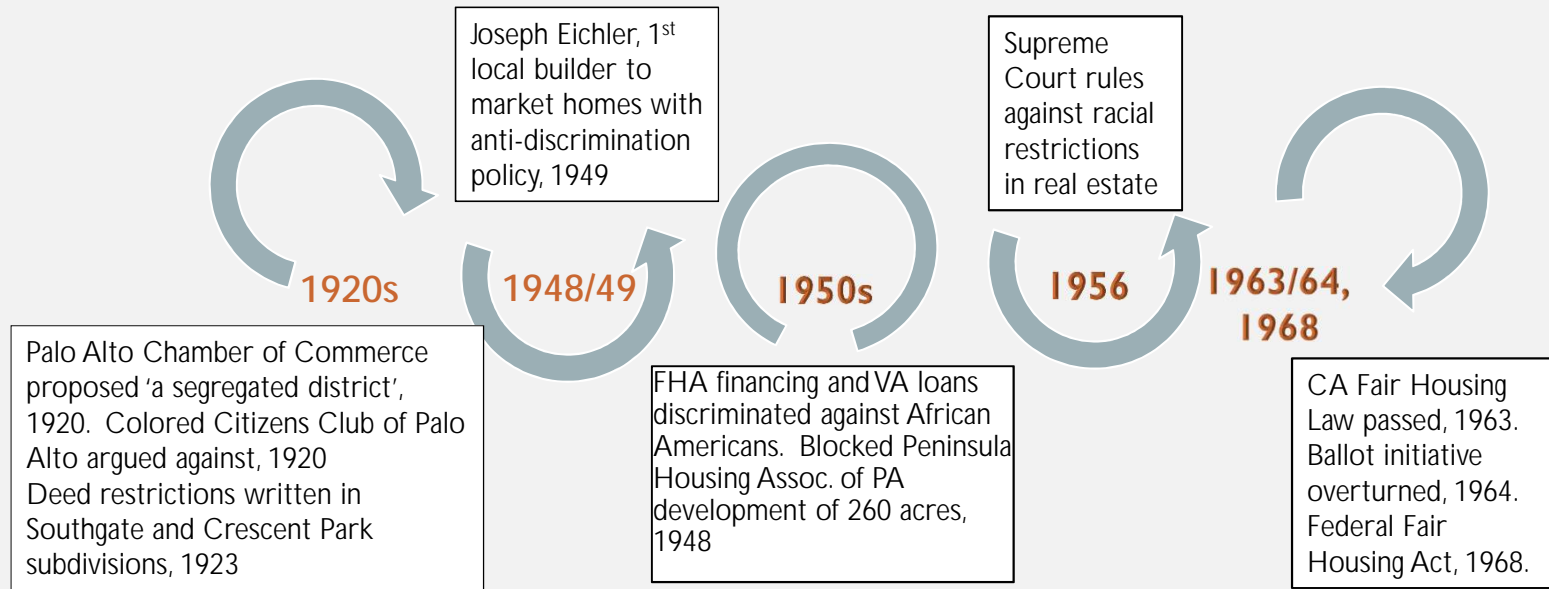
HOUSING DENIED: HISTORY OF INTENTIONAL DISCRIMINATION IN HOUSING SANCTIONED BY LEGISLATION

- Palo Alto Real Estate Board President: 'Most of the minority groups do not want to live in sections where they are not wanted...' 1942 in response to U.S. Supreme Court ruling against housing covenants
- Ronald Reagan: "If an individual wants to discriminate against Negroes or others in selling or renting his home, it is his right to do so," 1964
- President Lyndon B. Johnson, signing the Voting Rights Act of 1965 said, 'Today, what is perhaps the last of the legal barriers is tumbling. There will be many actions, and many difficulties, before the rights woven into law are also **woven into the fabric of our Nation**, but the struggle for equality must now move toward a different battlefield.'
-

HOUSING DENIED, CONTINUED

- Exclusionary zoning is unconstitutional.
- Why not start right here in Palo Alto?
And go big with ADUs while we are at it?
Plus change the story of housing segregation in high school textbooks. (6)

HOUSING DENIED, CONTINUED

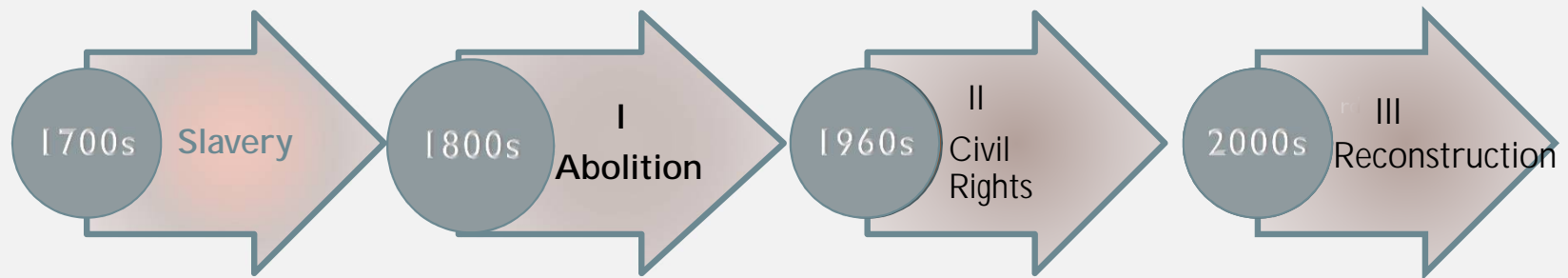


Although the 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act ended most racial discrimination in housing, it was too late.

RECOMMENDATION REIMAGINE COMMUNITY, BASED ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY INCLUSIVE BELONGING

- The HRC will equip the community for grass root change and leveraging community connections for exponential reach
- The HRC will partner with 100 community leaders to lead community circles in the next 12 months
- The HRC will facilitate the formation of 100 community groups to meet and discuss issues of race and belonging over the next 24 months
- The HRC will compile report and findings from community conversations over the next 26 months
- The HRC asks the Council and Community to commit to make this moment a pivot point and commit to be a model for diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging

CLOSING



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Timelines

Markers of Black and Brown Historical Experience

I. MARKERS OF BLACK AND BROWN HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE
A. NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE
SELECTIVE TIMELINE

1613	Concept of white people first appears in colonial U.K. to distinguish English society from East Indians
1660's	Concept of race created by colonists, uniting white colonists, marginalizing native people, and justifying slavery
1808	U.S. outlawed transatlantic slave trade ended segregation in public places and banned employment discrimination
1865	13 th Amendment to U.S. Constitution ratified, Abolished slavery in the U.S.
1868	14 th Amendment to U.S. Constitution ratified, Granted citizenship to all persons
1870	15 th Amendment to U.S. Constitution ratified, Voting Rights given to Black males
1950's	Federal Housing Administration financing requires that deeds prohibit sale, resale, and rental to African Americans. At same time VA loans biased against African Americans WWII veterans.
1954	Brown vs. Board of Education
1956	U.S. Supreme Court strikes down racial restrictions in real estate.
1956	Rosa Parks refused to ride in the back of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama.

- 1963 March on Washington, Martin Luther King, Jr., 'I Have a Dream' speech
- 1963 California Fair Housing Law passed; Overturned by ballot initiative, Prop.14, in 1964.
- 1964 Freedom Summer, Voter registration drive in Mississippi
- 1964 Civil Rights Act of 1964
- 1965 Voting Rights Act of 1965
- 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968
- 2013 Black Lives Matter founded July 13, 2013 to protest police brutality and racially motivated violence against Black people.
- 2020 George Floyd died after he was handcuffed and brutally pinned to the ground by a police officer in Minneapolis. Demonstrations and marches, across the U.S., protested police abuse and systemic racism.

Sources:

<https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/>

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Freedom Summer. History.com Editors. History, <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/freedom-summer>

Russo, Charles. Un-forgetting the segregationist history of Palo Alto. TheSixFifty.com. June 28, 2020. www.paloaltoonline.com/news/2020/06/28unforgetting-the-

STANFORD /SPARQ. WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? INSIGHTS FROM SOCIAL SCIENCE
<https://sparq.stanford.edu/products/sparq-insights-race-and-policing>

Historical Foundations of Race. <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/historical-foundations-race>

I. MARKERS OF BLACK AND BROWN HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE
B. PALO ALTO

- 1892 Pop Harris, one of a few Black residents operated a shoeshine stand by the Stanford campus trolley.
- 1897 Channing School photographs show two or three Black children attending. More Black families arrive by 1925. First major Migration during World War II. A Palo Altoan 'urged fellow Mayfield residents ...to 'come forward and buy property...in order to prevent the Negro influx'' (May, 1923, Palo Alto Times editorial)
- 1897 Early example of citizen petition. One hundred people protested "the disgraceful act of shooting down a man [identified as 'the Negro Johnson'] on the streets" at midday and they demanded, unsuccessfully, the Constable's resignation.
- 1920 The Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce advocated creating 'a segregated district for the oriental and colored people of the city.' The Colored Citizens Club of Palo Alto was repulsed by the proposal, stating 'agitation for such an ordinance will only create race prejudice and cause race friction and strife and discord.' Their response referenced 'more than 80 colored people'; and 10 Black residents who owned property.
- 1923 Southgate subdivided into 200 residential lots with deed restrictions stating that no persons of African, Japanese, Chinese or Mongolian descent were to use or occupy the houses. Restrictions also were written for Crescent Park
- 1924 KKK chapters in city and University. A women's branch formed in 1924. Klan paraded in town and burned crosses, but faced resistance and left.
- 1925 AME Zion Church built on Ramona Street.
- 1942 Defense jobs, for WWII, nearly double the Black population. In a housing crunch, few houses, 10, become available. Racial covenants persist for 'person(s) not wholly of the white Caucasian race'. U.S. Supreme Court ruled against housing covenants. Palo Alto Real Estate Board President responded, 'Most of the minority groups do not want to live in sections where they are not wanted...'
- 1946 Klan presence returns. KKK insignia painted at intersection of Homer and Ramona, near AME Zion Church. Klan also responsible for burning down a house of a 'black man who had moved into an all-white ...neighborhood

- 1948 Wallace Stegner, with 150 families, formed the Peninsula Housing Association of Palo Alto. Three families were African American. The cooperative purchased a 260-acre ranch to develop for housing, recreation, retail and services. The Federal Housing Authority did not approve the loan for the development, which included the three African American professionals.
- 1949 Palo Alto Fair Play Council bought 6 acres in South Palo Alto to establish a 'laboratory for interracial living'. Black, White, Asian families bought homes in the area near Greer Road and Colorado Avenue
- 1949 Joseph Eichler began building homes in Barron Park and South Palo Alto. He was the first local builder who favored selling houses to 'minorities', and he was the first national home builder to market homes with an anti-discrimination policy. Eichler homes were available to buyers of any race, color, or creed. In 1958, he resigned from the Associated Home Builders. He objected to their racial discrimination policies.
- 1951 KKK painted by Black Jerusalem Baptist Church. One year later, Palo Alto Fair Play Council report survey results. Nearly 80% of Palo Altans surveyed would rent only to Caucasians.
- 1970 Roy Clay first Black elected to City Council.
- 1985 PAUSD and seven San Mateo County districts were charged with racial discrimination. Settlement of the Tinsley case allows minority students to transfer to PAUSD schools
- 1993 June Fleming appointed first Black City Manager
- 2020 Escalation of vandalism and/or hate crimes; University AME Zion Church defiled with hate signs, Black Lives Matter lawn signs defaced, Black City Council candidate's lawn sign defaced, and City installation of Black Lives Matter mural defaced.

Sources:

Gullard, Pamela and Lund, Nancy. *History of Palo Alto, The Early Years*. San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1989

Palo Alto Historical Association. *Heritage Sharing Our Lives: Black Neighbors of Palo Alto*. Video. 2002
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Rothstein, Richard. *The Color of Law*. Recorded Books. 2017.

Wachhorst, Wyn. Draft Chapter for Forthcoming Book. 06/2020

Winslow, Ward and the Palo Alto Historical Association. *Palo Alto A Centennial History*. Palo Alto: 1993

I. MARKERS OF BLACK AND BROWN HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE
C. STANFORD UNIVERSITY

The Stanford experience of Black, Latino, and Native Americans is highlighted in the following. Inclusion begins in 1891. Campus activism continues to force change even now, 130 years later. (Note: Activism in support of national/international concerns is not reported here.)

Inclusion Milestones: Black and Latino, Students and Faculty at Stanford University

- 1891 “Stanford, Black Since 1891.” [The first Black student at Stanford was Ernest Johnson](#) who graduated in the pioneer class of 1895. Jane Stanford, of an abolitionist family, may have been a factor in his acceptance to the class. She contacted University President David Starr Jordan about Ernest.
- 1898 The first graduate of Native heritage was John Milton Oskison (Cherokee, class of 1898).
- 1905 The first Latino graduate was Carlos Eliseoe Cortes in 1905.
- 1920 The first Mexican American student, Helen Gertrude Dominguez, graduated in 1920.
- 1966 [Dr. James Gibbs, Jr.](#) was the first tenured Black professor at Stanford. He led the faculty committee that designed the Undergraduate Program in African and Afro-American Studies, the first of such programs at a private university. [Note: today advocates are calling for Stanford to follow its peers and make African and African American Studies, now 50 years old, a department.]
- 1969 70-80 Latino students were admitted and studied at Stanford in the early 1970s.
- 1975 Stanford had nine Mexican American faculty.
- 1976 Arturo Islas became Stanford’s first tenured Chicano faculty member. El Centro Chicano y Latino was established in 1977.
- 2009 52 Hispanic faculty at Stanford.
- 2019 477 students identified as Black or African American, non-Hispanic.

- 1987 Rainbow Coalition formed by the Asian American Student Association, Black Student Union, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA), and the Stanford American Indian Association. The “Rainbow Agenda” highlighted shared needs, including increased recruitment of students and faculty of color, improved curriculum and ethnic studies, a permanent ban on grapes, and a renewed commitment to discourage Indian mascot fanatics. In 1988, they protested the ethnocentric Western Culture requirement, and in 1989 took over of the President’s Office.
- 1988 The use of racial epithets or their equivalent became a violation of the Stanford student code of conduct after residents of Stanford’s Ujamaa ethnic theme dorm experienced racial attacks by their fellow students. Ujamaa celebrates Black culture and heritage.
- 1989 Rainbow Coalition pressured the administration to investigate racial bias, discrimination, and quality of life for students of color in greater depth. The final report of the University Committee on Minority Issues documented the need for more minority faculty and staff, and support for minority students.
- 1992 In May, the night that a jury acquitted the police officers of assault in the beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles, more than 300 Stanford students, led by the Black Student Union, and joined by AASA, MEChA, and SAIO, march from campus to the Palo Alto police station and protest the verdict.
- 1994 Students of Color Coalition, made up of AASA, BSU, MEChA, and SAIO, launch a campaign against threatened cuts to the ethnic community centers’ budgets. A town hall meeting is held, “Fulfilling Stanford’s mission: the gap between Rhetoric and Reality;” an extensive report is prepared by the four ethnic community centers. Administration allocates fixed-term funding for two years to support academic and cultural programs, and graduate student recruitment and retention.
- 1994 The Chicano Hunger Strike witnessed the frustration of students on many fronts: a Chicano studies program, a ban on grapes (as field workers were disproportionately exposed to pesticides), the establishment of a community center in East Palo Alto, and the rehiring of Cecilia Burciaga, former Provost for Chicano affairs and the highest ranking Latina administrator, who was laid off that March. The Hunger Strike, along with the disruption of a Faculty Senate meeting by the Concerned Students for Asian American Studies demanding an Asian American Studies program, led to the founding of the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity.
- 2001 Concerned Students for the Community Centers, a coalition including AASA, BSU, MEChA, and SAIO, campaigned for increased funding and facilities for ethnic community centers. Soft funding was approved by the President and Provost.

- 2011 The Diversity and First-Gen Office (DGen) was created to respond to concerns about the experiences of first-generation (first-gen) college students, to highlight social class as a part of the diversity equation and to innovate diversity programs in general and social class in particular. Stanford University was originally founded as a tuition-free institution and has a history of supporting the education of first-generation and low-income students. The Office of Financial Aid continues need-based financial aid packages.
- 2016 The Who's Teaching Us movement campaigned for faculty diversity and in support of ethnic studies and community centers.
- 2018 Following pressure by Native students, the Administration formed an advisory group to study the renaming of features of the university, including buildings, streets, monuments, endowed positions, and prizes, that are "inconsistent with the University's integrity or... harmful to its research and teaching missions and inclusiveness." Among other changes, Serra Mall, named for Father Junipero Serra, the 18th century founder of the California mission system, was renamed Jane Stanford Way for one of the University founders.

Source:

Contributed by Stanford University Archives and Office of Community Engagement. August 2020

Cohn, Bob. Who Gets in? Stanford Magazine. September/October 1996. <https://stanfordmag.org/contents/who-gets-in>

APPENDIX 11

Additional Sources

- (1) Black in Palo Alto. Palo Alto Weekly. Living Well. July 3, 2020. P.21-22
- (2) City of Palo Alto Human Relations Commission Public Forum. Bearing Witness to Black and Brown Experiences in Palo Alto. August 13, 2020.
- (3) City of Palo Alto Human Relations Commission Public Forum and Expert Panel. Police Reform-8 Can't Wait, July 9, 2020.
- (4) Embarcadero Media and Youth Community Service Panel. Youth Rising Up: Can Gen Z Lead on Social Change? August 6, 2020.
- (5) Lythcott-Haims, Julie. Real American a memoir. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 2017.
- (6) Palo Alto Speaks: Share Your Story. www.cityofpaloalto.org/RaceandEquity
- (7) Smithsonian. National Museum of African American History and Culture. Talking About Race. [HTTPS://NMAAHC.SI.EDU/LEARN/TALKING-ABOUT-RACE](https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race)
- (8) Stanford Facts 2020. Stanford University Today. <https://facts.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2020/02/StanfordFactBook-2020.pdf>
- (9) U.S. Bureau of the Census. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/paloaltocitycalifornia,US/PST045219>

APPENDIX III

Representative Public Forums
Summer 2020

PALO ALTO SPEAKS



January 2021

Palo Alto Speaks:
Share Your Story




Join the City's race and equity conversation by sharing your story. The City wants to learn about the lived experiences of Black and Brown community members in Palo Alto, past and present. Do you live, work, visit, worship, or go to school in Palo Alto? Your stories will be a part of the City's ongoing conversations and incorporated into the Human Relations Commission report to the City Council.

As a Black or Brown person, what is your Palo Alto family history and what has your experience been in Palo Alto? Sharing your or your family's story through written, visual (photos/ video), or audio recordings are all welcome.

-  Share your experience with us on social media by tagging #PaloAltoSpeaks in your post or send a direct message.
-  Send an email to us at RaceandEquity@cityofpaloalto.org.
-  Submit a comment using our online forum at cityofpaloalto.org/PaloAltoSpeaks (can be shared anonymously).
-  Participate in the public forum hosted by the Human Relations Commission on August 13.

Share your story by September 7th.

www.cityofpaloalto.org/RaceAndEquity



YOUTH RISING UP

January 2021



EMBARCADERO MEDIA AND YOUTH COMMUNITY SERVICE (YCS) PRESENT

“Youth Rising Up: Can Gen Z Lead on Social Change?”

A conversation with young adults on racial justice, protest and advocacy.

Thursday, August 6 • 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Presented virtually on Zoom

Registration required at EmbarcaderoMediaGroup.com/youth-forum

PANELISTS

Shown above from top left

Ayinde Bamar Olukotun
2020 graduate of Menlo School and incoming freshman at Pomona College, where he will be studying Public Policy. One of the organizers of the Palo Alto Community Protest on June 6th.

Diya Ganesan
Rising senior at Castilleja School and former president of the Palo Alto Youth Council. Co-founder of Real Talk, a student-led group engaging high schoolers in civil discourse and engagement. Spearheaded a #2020ready campaign to engage Palo Alto youth voters.

Cleo Goodwin
2018 Gunn High School graduate. Transferring to North Carolina Central for the upcoming year

after attending De Anza College and studying communications following high school. Was a speaker at Palo Alto's Juneteenth event.

Helo'ine Grewe
Rising senior at Menlo Atherton High School; daughter of a Black father and Tongan mother and active in various social justice and environmental campaigns and organizations. Raised in East Palo Alto and the eldest of four children. Works part time as a Census worker and a graphic designer.

Makayia Miller
2020 graduate of Palo Alto High School and currently a student at Louisiana State University. Organizer and speaker at Palo Alto's Juneteenth march and Menlo Park's Black LGBTQIA Lives Matter rally and march. Former president of Black Scholars United at PaLy.

MODERATOR

Julie Lythcott-Halms
Former corporate lawyer, former Stanford dean of freshmen and undergraduate advising, and bestselling author of the anti-helicopter parenting manifesto "How to Raise an Adult." Her second book is the award-winning prose poetry memoir "Real American," which illustrates her experience as a Black and biracial person in white spaces. A third book, "Your Turn: How to Be an Adult," will be published in April 2021. BA from Stanford, JD from Harvard, and MFA in Writing from California College of the Arts. Serves on the boards of Foundation for a College Education, Global Citizen Year, and Common Sense Media.



APPENDIX IV

Transcripts—Lived Experience

Juneteenth 2020

Palo Alto

Good afternoon, everybody.

I am Palo Alto High School Class of 1987, born in Columbus, Ohio. My family moved here in 1972. My father was born in Columbus, Ohio, and left there when he earned his PhD in Education Administration. That was also with a little bit of a push from my mom, who was raised in West Virginia, a coal miner's daughter with a third-grade education.

Now, I will also tell you that I am a reluctant public speaker here today. My mom's grandmother, whom I loved very much and whose father was my hero, my grandmother was quite a believer in God and felt that if you did not believe in Him, you would not make it to heaven. My grandfather did not attend church all that much, but he never yelled, and he never swore. I can't say that I am the same, so today I don't know if you're going to get a little bit of a sermon, or if you're going to get a little bit of Richard Pryor.

But in all seriousness, one of the reasons why it was important for my mom to leave the state of West Virginia was because of the deep-rooted, systemic racism that she experienced there. She does not swim. She has a fear of water, but she was never given the opportunity to overcome that, because where she lived, blacks were only permitted to swim in the pool the day before it was closed for the season.

It's things like that that many of you have never experienced or never thought about. We have moved here, and many of us have lived here in Silicon Valley because of the opportunities in front of us related to education and jobs and innovation and entrepreneurialism, but let's not fool ourselves. There's not only inequality. There is inequity within our system, and it's systemic, and many of you have never really even thought about that. *I thank you for the fact that you are here today. It's a great first step, but the reality is that's it's not enough. It's only the beginning.*

I could give you a long list of things, such as my paternal great, great grandmother being the product of a rape of her mother at the hands of her master and the fact that she was given to her white sister as a wedding gift. So my existence is very checkered in and of itself. But when we talk about the perception of opportunity in a place like this, we cannot we fooled. Makayla already very eloquently spoke about what she has experienced, and the fact is that starting back in the 70's as a kid here in these schools, I experienced many of those same things, and it's angering and frustrating to hear and to know wholeheartedly that all that crap still happens today. We say that this place is special. I've said that this place is special, and in many ways it is, but *everybody needs to actually, actively acknowledge and understand the abuse that black people have withstood for years and years, including today.* It's unfortunate that it's taken so many deaths for some people to actually wake up, but I'm happy that many of you finally have. Do not let a day like today be your only method

or action when it comes to truly fighting for our country. We are in true crisis, true crisis. Register to vote. Get out your vote. Talk to people, and get this started. [Applause] My challenge to you is to do more. Voting is just the beginning, but **what are you going to do after today and tomorrow and the next day with your money, and with your opportunity.** You need to be mindful and **aware and observant of microaggressions and flat out overt discrimination that you witness.** You need to be willing to **step in and intervene and say something,** even if it means that you have a sacrifice, because ultimately our goal when I talk about equality and true equity is the fact that those of you who have privilege – and some of you have privilege that’s so far and above that you don’t recognize it – that you’re going to have to share more of the pie. Your piece of the pie is actually going to get smaller, but the reason that you need to be willing to give up that piece of the pie is on principle alone. Otherwise, you’re full of it. Just straight up. So, even with your internal conversations that you have with yourself today, make a decision. **Are you part of the change?** Are you friend, or are you foe? That’s what I want to know. Are you friend? [Applause]

When George Floyd was killed – murdered, thank you – I did not have a strong emotional reaction. I had an expletive in my head. Oh, here we go again. But the reason that I did not have a strong emotional reaction is because my people have been through this time and time and time again, not just a hundred years ago, not just fifty years ago. Last week. Yesterday. Those that we see, because of these devices that are – I’ll going on a tangent ,messing with our kids’ mind,

because kids are too involved on those things. You've got to get off of that a little bit. Read a book – the exposure that people have gotten because of the videos is helpful, but why? I've asked myself, why now? Why is it different now than it was last week, last month, last year, last decade? People have been getting killed for forever, and nobody has said anything. This is the time to stand up and step forward. [Applause] Thank you. At first I was frustrated when people would say, "Well, it's because of COVID, and I finally saw it," and whatever. That pissed me off. But in the end, if that's the case, I accept it, as long as there is a positive result. Is it because it was so nonchalant and so methodical and so protracted, even with private citizens very respectfully coming in, in order to intervene, yet they were rebuffed? Ask yourself these questions, because there's a long list of people that you could name off, even in the last number of weeks who have been killed.

Ultimately, for those of you have privilege and those of you who have not experienced racism and have actually been able to take advantage of it, I'm not here to shame you today. I appreciate the fact that you are here, the fact that there is acknowledgment, but my challenge to you once again is to make sure that this is not just a moment, but that it is, in fact, a movement and that you, when you get to your final day, can say to your family you actually did something and helped create positive change, not just here in Palo Alto, but within the world. [Applause]

APPENDIX V

Lythcott-Haims, Julie. *Real American* a memoir.
New York: Henry Holt and Company. 2017.

White people.

We win some small victories but America behaves as America does, and we experience small slights and enormous tragedies committed by you.

My nephew is a forty-one-year-old Black man and he was at your house the other day because he and your husband are old friends and he was in town for a meeting so he stayed with us but came over to your place to hang out for a long, long while and he left his shoes behind. (How does a man leave a house without his shoes is the kind of question often left in the wake of my nephew – my nephew who from the airport as he waits for his flight to New York texted me Can u get my shoes from my friend's house and mail them to me?)

So I drive over to your house, which is in my neighborhood, and it is evening and it is dark and I park my car at the curb and make my way along the stepping-stones of your manicured walk and I ring the doorbell and to the left of the large door is a picture window with drapes only partly drawn against the dark night and from a warm living room your little blonde girl peers out at me and then turns around and tells you something. Then you answer the door and say quite sternly, "How can I help you," and I just want to pick up some fxxx shoes left by my nephew at the home of his close friend and his wife but instead I perform.

"Hi, I'm Michael Lythcott's Aunt Julie, I'm here-"

"What?"

"Yes, sorry to bother you, but I'm here to pick up my nephew Michael's shoes-"

"Your-?"

"Yes, my – Michael, he apparently left his shoes?" I gesture to the pile of shoes visible in the foyer behind you. "He texted you, told you I'd be coming by to pick up his shoes. Or he called you?"

You hear the name of your close friend, my nephew, now for the third time. Your foreboding facial façade gradually falls away into a relaxed smile. "Oh yes of course," you say, stepping back, sweeping your hand across the vestibule of your doorway as if to invite me in, relief visibly slaking off your once-rigid body, and you point at a pile of shoes, where my nephew's lie indistinguishable in the heap of the shoes belonging to your family. And you make some statement about how you love my nephew and I plaster a false smile on my face, which you know is false, and my nephew's shoes are a size twelve and when you hand them to me they leave behind their absence, an absence you will stare at after I leave and even when you take your toe to the corner of your husband's shoe and kick it so it fills the space left by my nephew's you will remember my nephew's shoes.