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Los Altos for Racial Equity Newsletter - Issue 26

1 message

LARE via ActionNetwork.org <info+community-members-info@sg.actionnetwork.org>

Tue, Feb 11, 2025 at 8:20 PM

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Hi Tanya!



January/February 2025**Issue 26**

Los Altos for Racial Equity's (LARE) mission is to advocate for all people, especially Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) who live, work, and play in Los Altos and surrounding communities, to be treated equitably in all aspects of their lives. We are a group of Los Altos residents who share a commitment to the work of social justice.

LARE has several Working Groups focused on the following areas: Policing & School Resource Officers (SROs), Racial Identity and Profiling Act (RIPA) data analysis, Education, Membership, Local Government. If one or more of these Working Groups resonate with you and you would like to participate in making change happen in our community, reach out to us and let us know how you can help! We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Accomplishments in 2024

It is 2025 and already February! We have been busy this past year and would like to share our accomplishments with you.

Policing Work

- Participated for the second time in the hiring process for our Police Chief, Chief Saskia Lagergren
- Spoke on the panel at the Los Altos Mountain View Community Foundation (LAMVCF) Community Town Hall on Policing
- Our research was used to inform the current Automated License Plate Reader Policy (ALPR), Drone Policy, and Military Equipment Use Policy (MEUP) in Los Altos
- We began meeting with City Manager Gabe Engeland and Police Chief Lagergren on a quarterly basis
- Began working with American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and attended a convening on Assembly Bill 481, ([AB 481](#)) , held by AFSC and addressing potential deviations in the MEUP Policy and studying Drone regulations

Education

- Joined a North County Work Group and partnered with Santa Clara County Democrats for Education to mobilize volunteers to protect public school education from attacks by groups such as Mom's for Liberty Santa Clara
- Developed and presented trainings to teachers and members of the public on how to protect the school boards from right wing attacks
- Participated in supporting the Ethnic Studies curriculum in the Mountain View Los Altos School District

Community Outreach and Support

- Sent newsletters to our community addressing current events and historical relevance
- Helped to draft the Anti-Hate Proclamation for Los Altos
- Contributed letters and Op-Ed pieces to the Town Crier
- Attended and spoke at numerous City Council meetings
- Wrote a blog, available on our website, addressing Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) data and providing data analysis on Los Altos policing

We have been busy! And we are ready for 2025. We are anticipating a year of addressing old and new issues that will impact our community. Won't you join us?!

February is Black History Month



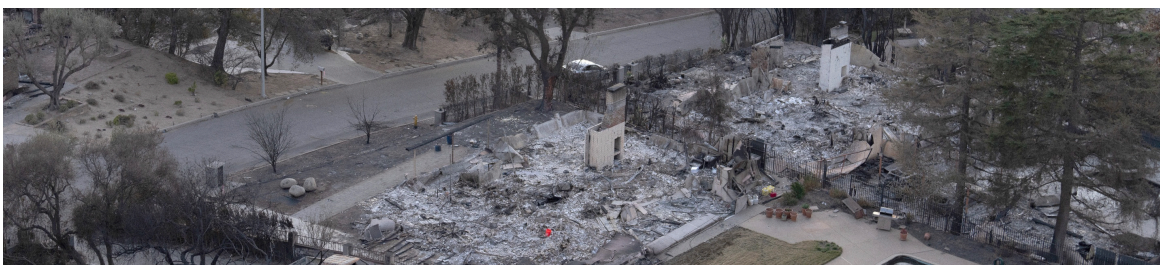
Archives Center, National Museum of American History

Recognizing the lack attention given to the successes and achievements of Black people in the United States, [Carter G. Woodson](#) founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now the [Association for the Study of African American Life and History](#)) in 1915. Woodson was wanting to recall lost voices and celebrate their stories. The following year Woodson launched, [The Journal of African American History](#), one of the earliest scholarly journals highlighting Black history, research and book reviews (the Journal continues to be the leading scholarly publication in the field of African American history with [Bertis D. English](#) as editor).

In 1926 Woodson founded the first Negro History Week in February. The month of February was selected with President Abraham Lincoln and Fredrick Douglass in mind, as both celebrated their birthdays in February and both were looked upon by many as symbolizing freedom. In 1976 President Gerald Ford extended this celebration to one month and the tradition has continued and has become known as Black History Month.

Each year, Black History Month has a different theme. This year's theme is African Americans and Labor. "The focus will be on the various and profound ways that work and working of all kinds – free and unfree, skilled, and unskilled, vocational and voluntary – intersect with the collective experiences of Black people." ([ASALH](#)) Intellectuals and organizers have always placed remembering as a tool for resistance and healing ([28 Days of Black History](#)).

Redlining and Wild Fires



In Altadena, CA, a historically Black middle class neighborhood in Los Angeles, the aftermath of the wildfires was of devastation and destruction. Following the fires a study was conducted by the [UCLA Ralph Bunche Center for African American Studies](#), the [UCLA Center for Neighborhood Knowledge](#), and the [UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Institute](#). The study found strong correlations between the redlining of the 1930s and the development of a predominantly Black community in a much more precarious and susceptible area when facing a catastrophic event, like the wildfires. Figures show that 61% of Black households in Altadena were located within the Eaton Fire perimeter, compared to 50% of non-Black households. On January 8th the Eaton Fire led to more than 2,800 Black homeowners being ordered to evacuate their homes.

The Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) created Residential Security Maps in 1939 which ranked neighborhoods by the relative risk to lenders and placed the areas of Black homeownership as "definitely declining" setting up the beginnings of redlining. In this study it was found that many Black homeowners were 'cost burdened' (45%) or 'severely cost burdened' (28%) which highlight the financial challenges some faced within this community before losing their homes. This will undoubtedly disproportionately impact the ability of some Black homeowners to rebuild. In addition, about 57% of the Black homeowners in Altadena are 65 or over and could face additional financial burdens when considering rebuilding.

"The impact of redlining cannot be overstated. Redlined communities struggled to receive federally backed home loans, making property ownership much more difficult for residents. Moreover, it made getting loans for home improvements – maintenance, upkeep and renovation – though not impossible, very unlikely. Neighborhoods fell into a vicious circle of decline: the inability to access capital led to disrepair and the physical decline of a community's housing stock, which in turn reinforced the redline designation. That redlining became equated with race and class led to the naturalization of segregation; white, working-class homeowners often sought to exclude those populations seen as threatening to home values. Redlined communities also sat closer to industrial areas, vice districts, and environmentally compromised settings, exposing residents to health risks and crime."
([PBSSoCal](#))



Justice Vanguard: Soul Night, 2/21 & 2/22

Justice Vanguard is hosting two 'Soul Nights' in February. [Soul Night San Jose](#) is the first on February 21st, 6pm - 9pm, at CreaTV San Jose. On February 22nd, 6pm - 9pm, will be [Soul Night Los Altos](#) at the Hillview Community Center. Both evenings will be a celebration of Black History with special guest, Eric Dozier, an internationally recognized musician and activist whose work breathes life into the rich history of African American music. There will also be an Art Exhibit featuring the powerful works of the Original Black Panther Artist, [Emory Douglas](#). A delicious dinner will be served by [Soulful Elegance](#) at the Los Altos event on 2/22. [Buy](#) tickets for one or both evenings! Let's learn and celebrate together!

Learning, Reading, and Supporting

Learn: Dr. Leah Barlow, professor at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, was getting ready to teach her class, 'Intro to African American Studies', and decided to post a welcome video on TikTok for her 35 enrolled students. The next morning Dr. Barlow had 250,000 new subscribers to her [channel](#)! Within days a number of Black educators, experts, and content creators, connected with Dr. Barlow and a free digital HBCU, [Hillmantok](#), was established. What is Hillman? What is an HBCU? These are your first assignments!

Read: If you only have white authors on your shelves, now is a great time to mix things up a bit with this curated list by [goodreads](#) of fiction and nonfiction titles written by Black authors.

Support Black owned business by downloading this [Guide](#)! If you have a favorite Black owned business that you do not see listed, there is an option on the website for vendors to submit their business for consideration.

In Our Words

Steering Committee member, Brian Jones, was recently featured in the February 5th publication of the Los Altos Town Crier. Titled, '[Let's take a neighborly path to public safety](#)',

Jones wrote this piece following the Public Safety Town Hall last December hosted by The Los Altos Police Department (LAPD) and [Resilient Los Altos](#) (RLA), a group "dedicated to strengthening neighborhoods in Los Altos by providing residents with the knowledge, training, and resources needed to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies such as power outages, storms, fires, and earthquakes." Jones has deftly contrasted the messages from RLA and LAPD; RLA promoting neighborly strength in crises and LAPD promoting strength in policing. Give this opinion a read and recall the words of community organizer, Mr. Rogers: "Would you be, could you be, won't you be my neighbor?".

Keeping an Eye on Education

Yes, Santa Clara Mom's for Liberty is back in action (did you know their newsletter is written by a man who doesn't have kids; he encourages people from local evangelical churches to show up to school board meetings to support his views, per our Education Committee who heard him speak in Palo Alto on January 21st), but more important right now is the shift in immigration policy brought on by the new administration in the White House. For so many students, learning will be disrupted and replaced by fear. Some in their families will choose not to go to work in fear of ICE raids which could then impact housing and food security. California and Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, and Washington have declared themselves Sanctuary States, which has mostly held.

Even though California is a Sanctuary State here are a few resources to protect yourself or someone else:

- [Santa Clara County Rapid Response Network \(RRN\)](#): RRN is a community defense project developed to protect immigrant families from deportation threats and to provide accompaniment support during and after a community member's arrest or detention.
 - [California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice \(CCIJ\)](#): CCIJ offers traditional legal services and supports innovative approaches for the liberation and empowerment of detained immigrants and their communities.
 - [National Education Association \(NEA\)](#): The NEA offers guidance on immigration issues for students, schools and communities. Know Your Rights: You can print your own 'red card' that outlines human civil rights regardless of immigration status ([English](#), [Arabic](#), [Spanish](#), [other languages](#)).
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Important Dates

- Tuesday, 2/11, 7pm: [Los Altos City Council meeting](#)
- Friday, 3/14, 6pm - 9pm: [St. Paddy's Beer Stroll](#)

Ongoing Events

- First Fridays: First Friday of every month
- Every Other Friday, 8:30am: LACC Interview on [YouTube](#)
- Every Third Thursday of the month, 5:30pm - 7pm: Conversations and Reflections about Local History offered by the Los Altos History Museum
- Everyday: **Dial 988** and ask for the [TRUST mobile team](#) if you, someone you know, or someone you see is experiencing a mental health or substance abuse crisis. Responders include behavioral health trained staff.

Read more about LARE on our [website](#) and follow us on social media (Instagram, Facebook), [@losaltosforracialequity](#). Questions? [Email](#) us.



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