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Los Altos for Racial Equity Newsletter - Issue 25

1 message

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

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Hi Tanya!



July/August 2024

Issue 25

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!

July was National Minority Mental Health Month

[Mental Health America](#) has identified six myths that have been found within Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities around the topic of mental health: 1) Talking about my feelings and needing help is a sign of weakness. 2) What happens in the family should stay in the family. 3) Therapy is for crazy people. 4) Mental Illness is a white people problem. 5) If you're struggling you aren't praying enough. 6) My ancestors and family had it worse, so I don't have a right to feel how I do.

These myths may not be exclusive to the BIPOC community, but they are often cited as reasons why treatment was not considered or sought out in a mental health crisis. Not only can there be barriers of insurance restrictions, finding a BIPOC therapist, availability, and/or cost, someone within the BIPOC community may also be struggling with the above internal messaging.

A few resources for mental health providers:

- [La Selva Group](#), is a service of [Momentum for Health](#) and is a bilingual local provider of mental health services.
- If you have a family member experiencing a mental health crisis call the [TRUST](#) Mobile Team, a behavioral health service offered by Santa Clara County. The teams are made up of different types of practitioners and workforce members, including licensed and unlicensed waived clinicians, Master of Social Work (MSW), Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT), family specialists, and peer support workers with training and expertise in crisis response who may work closely with law enforcement, crisis hotlines, the community and family members to deliver the best services possible.
- [Inclusive Therapists](#).is a directory of BIPOC practitioners in California.

August is Black Business Month



Why is there a Black Business Month, you may ask. August was designated as Black Business Month in 2004. Frederick E. Jordan, an engineering entrepreneur, partnered with the executive editor, John William Templeton, of eAccess Corp (a scholarly publishing company) started Black Business Month to not only highlight and empower Black business owners, but also to acknowledge the unique challenges that minority business owners face ([National Today](#)).

Black entrepreneurship can be traced back to the 1700s when enslaved and free Black people opened their own small shops, such as barbershops and tobacco outlets. The period of 1900 - 1930 was a period known as the 'golden age' for Black owned businesses. Booker T. Washington founded the National Negro Business League in 1900 which is now called the National Business League and prides itself as being the oldest and largest trade group in America for Black Businesses.

Today there are an estimated 3.7 billion Black owned business in America which makes up approximately 11.3% of all businesses. As one of the larger states, California currently has 252,729 Black owned businesses. If frequenting a Black Owned Business is not a part of your routine, start now! You can use this [guide](#) to find some Black owned businesses to support. Uplift the business owner and his/her/their establishment. Tell your friends and/or post about it on your social media channels.



Not only is August Black Business Month, it is also known as [Black August](#). Black August has become the month dedicated to honoring the work of Black Liberation and Revolutionaries who were killed by the government in the struggle for liberation. Nat Turner's Rebellion is a major event in the history of the enslaved. In 1831 Turner coordinated an uprising against enslavement and the enslavers, believing he received a message from God to organize the uprising. Turner was also inspired by the [Haitian Revolution](#) (1791-1804).

George Jackson was a 29 year old who was incarcerated for participating in a robbery at the age of 18. While incarcerated, Jackson began studying revolutionary theory and began to

organize with other Black incarcerated men to fight back against a racist prison system. Jackson was appointed as a Field Marshal by the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. He wrote two books while incarcerated, [Blood in My Eye](#) and [Soledad Brother](#). Both are collections of his letters written while incarcerated.

Khatari Gauden followed in Jackson's footsteps and continued organizing the resistance. Jackson was killed by guards while trying to escape from San Quentin. This killing sparked the [largest prison uprising](#) in US history in Attica, New York in 1971. Gauden died in prison in August of 1978 due to medical neglect by the system.

The Why

Why is there a need for acknowledgements like [Black History Month \(February\)](#), [Juneteenth](#), [Black Business Month](#), and [Black August](#)? Because on this day, August 20th, in the year 1619, the *White Lion*, an English ship, docked in a Virginia colony with "20 and odd Negroes" captured from Africa with the sole intent of being sold into enslavement.

"Although in the mid-17th century Virginia became the first British colony in North America to legally mandate race-based, hereditary enslavement, slavery did not immediately become the predominant form of labor there. For decades after slavery was formalized, Virginia plantation owners held nearly 10 times as many indentured servants as enslaved Africans, and many of them were white. By the 1680s, however, African slave labor became the dominant system on Virginia farms and the population of enslaved people continued to grow exponentially. As enslavement became a status centrally tied to race, colonial American laws and culture developed to create a narrative of racial difference that defined African people as intellectually inferior, morally deficient, and benefitting from the "civilizing" influence of slavery.

This belief system and institution spread widely over the next two centuries, even as the U.S. gained independence and embraced a national identity as the "land of the free." At the start of the Civil War in 1861, Virginia had the largest population of enslaved Black people of any state in the Confederacy." ([Equal Justice Initiative](#))

With this history of enslavement in the US comes the stories of the enslaved who fought for their freedom, those who helped others when he/she/they found their freedom, and abolitionists who used their power and put their lives on the line to fight with the enslaved. Because these voices continue to be spoken over or dismissed, we must continue to teach the true history and continue to uplift the work of those before us as the struggle for justice and equity continues. Recognizing each and every historic success will continue to fuel the engines of freedom.

Keeping an Eye on Education

An important race to follow in the November 2024 elections is the [Trustee of Area 1](#) Santa Clara County Board of Education seat. Los Altos resident, Jessica Speiser, is running to win the seat from incumbent Grace Mah who has held the position for the *past 17 years*.

The [Santa Clara County Board of Education](#) holds many important roles in the county:

- The Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) is a regional service agency that provides instructional, business, and technology services to the 31 school districts of Santa Clara County.
- It is responsible for the 21 Charter Schools in the county (one of the 21 charter schools, Bullis Charter School, is within Area 1). It votes on the initial approval of a charter school and is then responsible for the ongoing academic and fiscal oversight of each school as well as ruling on renewals of each school.
- It provides fiscal and academic oversight and monitoring of District schools.
- The County Office of Education directly serves students through special education programs such as [Early Learning Services](#) (including Head Start and State Preschool programs), [Migrant Education Program](#), and [Opportunity Youth Academy](#).
- It oversees the [Alternative Education](#) program which provides educational programs for students under court supervision, and who are expelled or who are deficient in credits and have experienced challenges in matriculation in the traditional school settings.

If you would like to learn more about this race, reach out to us! We have an Education Committee that can provide you with much more information.

Important Dates

- 5/23 - 9/15: [Los Altos History Museum, Expressions: Multicultural Artists Showcase](#), Main Gallery
 - 8/25, 5pm - 8pm: [Los Altos History Museum](#) Members Summer Picnic and Volunteer Appreciation
 - Sunday, 8/25, 11am - 5pm: [Head West](#) on State Street
 - Tuesday, 8/27, 7pm: Los Altos City Council meeting
 - Friday, 9/20, 6pm - 9pm: Wine Stroll [LAVA](#)
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Ongoing Events

- 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
- Every Thursday through October 10th: Farmer's Market
- 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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