



COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

"Enriching lives through effective and caring service"

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Chief Executive Officer

February 1, 2024

MEMORANDUM TO THE COMMISSIONERS

FROM: Ilan Davidson, President

SUBJECT: Commission Meeting- Monday, February 5, 2024

Our Commission will meet on Monday, February 5, 2024 from 12:30 p.m.-2:00pm at 510 S. Vermont Ave., 9th Floor, Room A., 9TK11, Los Angeles, California 90020.

You may also join meeting **Via Teams Calendar Invitation** [Click here to join the meeting](#). If you are unable to do so, you may Dial: [+1 213-204-2512,,980587174#](tel:+12132042512980587174)

Please Post Agenda in your location.

Parking is located at 523 Shatto Place. Please pull a ticket when entering the parking structure. Please take the elevator to the 9th floor and walk through the bridge, which is located towards the northwest corner of the parking structure, to reach Terrace (T) Level of the designated candidate waiting area. Prior to leaving the facility, please take your ticket to either security desk (Ground Level or Terrace Level) for validation. **Do not park at the 510 South Vermont Avenue structure. Violators may be towed at vehicle owner's expense.**

Please review, and let me know if you have any questions.

If you are unable to join the meeting, please call me at (213) 639-6089 no later than 9:00 a.m., Monday, February 5, 2024.

Grace Löwenberg
(213) 639-6089



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

510 South Vermont Avenue, 11th floor
Los Angeles, California, 90020
www.lahumanrelations.org
(213) 738-2788

[DRAFT] MINUTES

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS

Meeting of January 8, 2023

510 S. Vermont Ave., Terrace Level (9th floor), Conference Room A, Los Angeles, CA 90020
and via Microsoft Teams Video & Audio Conferencing

PRESENT: Michael Gi-Hao Cheung
Helen L. Chin
Lisa Dabbs*
Ilan Davidson*
Jeanette EllisRoyston
Isabelle Gunning

Kevork Keushkerian
Preeti Kulkarni*
Guadalupe Montaña
Jason Moss*
Fredrick Sykes
Gay Yuen

STAFF: Tony Cowser
Grace Lowenberg
Robert Sowell

Robin Toma
Siranush Vardanyan
Theresa Villa-McDowell

GUEST: Pascale Cardozo
Dana Coffman
Andria Seo

(*) Indicates Commissioners who participated via Teams video conferencing and provided their location address timely to include on the posted agenda.

1. **Call to Order and Land Acknowledgment of Indigenous Peoples:** Commission President Ilan Davidson called the meeting to order at 12:34 p.m. with a quorum in attendance. He began with recognizing that we occupy land originally and still inhabited and cared for by the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples. We honor and pay respect to their elders and descendants - past, present, and emerging - as they continue their stewardship of these lands and waters. We acknowledge that settler colonization resulted in land seizure, disease, subjugation, slavery, relocation, broken promises, genocide, and multi-generational trauma. This acknowledgment demonstrates our responsibility and commitment to truth, healing, and reconciliation, and to elevating the stories, culture, and community of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on these ancestral lands. We are dedicated to growing and sustaining relationships with Native peoples and local tribal governments, including (in no particular order) the Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians, Gabrieleño

Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, and San Fernando Band of Mission Indians. To learn more about the First Peoples of Los Angeles County, please visit the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission website at lanaic.lacounty.gov.

2. **Review & Approval of December 4, 2023 Meeting Minutes:** The motion to approve the minutes of the Commission meeting of December 4, 2023, as presented by Vice-President/Secretary (VP-Sec.) Isabelle Gunning was moved by Commissioner Guadalupe Montañó and seconded by Commissioner Kevork Keushkerian. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

3. **President's Report**

3.1 **Spotlight on Staff: Theresa “Terri” Villa-McDowell, retiring February 1st:**

President Davidson asked Executive Director (ED) Robin Toma to introduce staff Theresa “Terri” Villa-McDowell. ED Toma shared that Terri will be retiring on February 1st and reminded attendees that a document was emailed about her background. ED Toma expressed his appreciation for her work and gave information about her background, noting that her career with LA County began as Assistant Executive Director in April 2001, until she left to work to focus on students with disabilities at ABC Unified School District. Terri returned to the Commission in 2018, and worked closely with ED Toma to bring LA vs Hate to life, including the following:

- Implemented reporting and case management line through 211-LA;
- Integrated a 15-agency network of partners to help victims of hate;
- Selected arts-based marketing firm to maximize funds by using digital media and art, community based large scale art interventions and community-led art healing interventions;
- Obtained substantial grants from LA County Productivity & Quality Commission, and support from L.A. Care to kick start LA vs Hate;
- Obtained over \$1 Million in Measure B funds to permanently fund case management; reporting line; network of partners to assist victims of hate;
- Obtained \$2 million in American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act funds, which with those ARP funds, launched 8 Dream Centers at public secondary schools from Antelope Valley to Hawaiian Gardens with two nonprofit partners; each partner has obtained grants to expand work of Dream Centers. ARP funds also provided training for law enforcement; case management for AAPI victims of hate, and evaluation of ARP programs;
- Data driven decision making launched several Special Initiatives, including Anti-Black Racism Training; Street Vendor Outreach through Chamber of Commerce; Seniors Fight Back training video.

Commission LA vs Hate manager Villa-McDowell thanked ED Toma and expressed her appreciation for the chance to have worked with many of the individuals on this important work during her time with LA County. ED Toma expressed the huge debt of gratitude to Terri for bringing to the Commission, and to the people of LA County, her warmth, energy, intelligence, humor, ‘can do’ spirit, and such a wide range of skills and talents. Additionally, VP-Sec. Gunning, Commissioner Montañó, staff Grace Lowenberg, as well as President Davidson also thanked Terri for her time, sharing positive words and well wishes on her retirement.

- 3.2 **Commission representation at Board Chair Horvath’s Menorah Lighting:** President Davidson shared that he and ED Toma were present at Supervisorial Chair Horvath’s Menorah Lighting and that it was a spectacular event. ED Toma added that nearly all the Supervisors

attended and that Dr. Scorza was also one of the speakers of the event jointly sponsored by the Jewish Federation, and it was a wonderful opportunity to come together.

4. Executive Director's Report

4.1 Strategic Priorities Check In:

ED Toma shared his screen to show the Commission's FY 2022-2025 Strategic Plan noting that we are about mid-term. For Priority One, he noted that manager Monica Lomeli and senior staff Roland Gilbert had been working to identify issues and bring recommendations. Assistant Executive Director (AED) Robert Sowell stated that senior staff Gilbert has identified the growing influence of white supremacy as a major issue that continues to get stronger and has given suggestions that are now being considered. ED Toma continued to Goal Two from the Strategic Plan, regarding responding to at least three identified human relations issues- and explained that one of them, which is related to how law enforcement and their response to victims of hate incidents, has been addressed. Additionally, the Commission staff responded in many ways to the growth in anti-Asian hate fueled by the pandemic, one example being funding AAPI Black Coalition project. Commissioners asked questions regarding the Commission work on these goals. ED Toma responded and noted that this will be a continuing item to complete the updates on our work to complete the Strategic Plan goals.

4.2 Bringing LA vs Hate Care Coordination in house:

ED Toma explained that in addition to requesting an additional communication staff person, there has also been an identified need for additional staff positions for LA vs Hate. With the uncertainty about the care coordinator positions and the county contract with 211 LA, we have requested additional staff do care coordination and hate violence prevention work in house. ED Toma explained that the budget is being requested for these positions and we are hoping for support. Commissioner Keushkerian asked when this would be finalized; ED Toma responded the budget is approved by the Board before June 30th so that it can start in July.

4.3 Communications Update with PIO Tony Cowser:

ED Toma asked PIO Tony Cowser to provide his communications update, which he did sharing his screen to present on media coverage of the John Anson Ford Awards, the HRC Website updates, and Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

4.4 JAF event and other program and administrative updates:

ED Toma reminded attendees that the John Anson Ford Awards event is next week. He also reported on a meeting with the LA LGBT Center about how we can strengthen our work given the rise in anti-LGBT crime, and with one of the Supervisor's staff about an anti-caste discrimination law given what is happening statewide. He also shared that a new partner was funded named The Community Action League, who will be doing hate violence prevention work with the Black and Latino communities in the Antelope Valley.

5. Committee Reports

5.1 Transformative Justice Committee: Committee Chair Gunning stated that the Committee met with the community partners who have been doing a study on suburban policing in Pasadena, South Pasadena and Glendale, and the key takeaways. She explained that there are different trends in terms of arrests in Glendale and South Pasadena with the departments deciding to continue to arrest people for drug misdemeanor crimes that were reduced from felonies by Prop 47. Additionally, Black and Latino folks have higher bails compared to white folks based on the data, which is a concern and needs to be addressed.

5.2 Policy and Advocacy (Legislation) Committee: Committee Chair Guadalupe Montañó stated that there is no report at this time.

5.3 LA vs Hate Committee: Committee Chair Guadalupe Montañó shared there is no report at this time.

5.4 John Anson Ford Awards Committee: Committee Chair Guadalupe Montañó announced that event is on January 16th on the 8th floor of the Hall of Administration at 10:30 am and that Commissioners Gay Yuen and Kevork Keushkerian will be speaking, along with others such as Commission President Davidson. Commissioner Montañó extended an invitation to Commissioner Kulkarni to also speak and introduce one of the Supervisors as well. Parking will be arranged.

6. Public Comment: No public comments.

7. Action/Discussion Items

7.1 John Anson Ford Human Relations Awards event: No additional action or discussion required.

7.2 Support for request for additional staffing positions: ED Toma stated that there is a memo in the packet in support of additional staffing positions. A motion was made to present the support letter to request for additional staffing positions by Commissioner Jason Moss and seconded by Commissioner Preeti Kulkarni. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

7.3 Commission follow-up on the findings of the hate crime report and LA vs Hate annual report: This item was tabled.

7.4 New Resource on Fostering Compassionate Dialogue on College Campuses: President Davidson, Commissioner Moss, and others agreed that this is such an important document, and we should share this document with many others as needed.

8. Commissioner Announcements: Commissioner Moss shared that on January 27th at Pasadena City Hall, the Jewish Federation, in partnership with the City of Pasadena will be hosting a UN International Holocaust Remembrance Event at 7pm. Commissioner Keushkerian shared that Supervisor Kathryn Barger will be presenting a motion demanding the immediate release of Armenian hostages held captive in Azerbaijan and asked that he be there to support this motion.

Adjournment: Guadalupe Montaña invited a motion to adjourn the meeting in honor of Terri Villa-McDowell. Commissioner Kulkarni seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no objections.

Respectfully submitted,

Isabelle Gunning
Commission Vice President-Secretary



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

510 South Vermont Avenue, 11th floor
Los Angeles, California, 90020
www.lahumanrelations.org
(213) 738-2788

January 8, 2024

TO: COMMISSIONERS

FROM: Robin Toma, Executive Director

SUBJECT: LA VS HATE VICTIM ASSISTANCE/ADVOCACY STAFFING

The Request: We request Commission support for inclusion in our FY 2024-25 budget sufficient staff positions to address the rise in hate crimes and incidents in L.A. County, and to recognize the need to provide staff dedicated to reversing the rise in hate by assisting and advocating for victims of hate crimes and incidents, which enables us to identify policies, practices and cultures that need to change to address structural and institutional racism, homophobia, religious bigotry, transphobia, anti-immigrant prejudices, sexism and other forms of illegal and harmful discrimination and violence.

The Need: The number of hate crimes reported in our county has reached the highest level since 2001, reflecting an 18% increase in 2022. While better reporting is due to LA vs Hate as seen in the 41 hate crimes reported to www.LAvsHate.org and 211, the growth in hate crimes in other jurisdictions without a reporting system as ours indicates more hate crimes are also being committed. Hate crimes rose against the Black (34%), Jewish (52%), and the LGBTQ communities (20%), while White Supremacist-marked hate crimes jumped 66%, and anti-Latino crimes had the most violent proportion of any racial/ethnic group. (See Commission's annual report.)

With the coming presidential election, the impact of wars, and other social dynamics, the Commission anticipates continuing growth in intergroup conflict and hate violence. This will require increased capacity to assist victims of hate crimes and incidents, and to advocate for policy and systems changes that allow hate and discrimination to go unchecked, or that actually promote discrimination and inequity.

Also, the County is changing its model of service provision to increase coordination amongst county agencies so that a "No Wrong Door" approach is implemented. This will require increased staff to coordinate with other county agencies and serve constituents who would be redirected to our Commission.

Proposed Solution: Using available ongoing budget from Measure B and any net county cost to cover the difference, to bring in needed staff (two human relations consultants and one senior human relations consultant staff positions, or other appropriate positions) to ensure continuity and capacity for hate crime and incident victim assistance and advocacy for the FY 2024-25 Human Relations Commission budget.



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations
510 S. Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90020
(213) 738-2788

**AGENDA FOR MEETING OF THE
TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE COMMITTEE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS**

Monday, February 5, 2024 | 10:45AM – 12:15PM

510 S. Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90020
9th Floor, Conference Room A

[Via Microsoft Teams](#)
Or Call In at +1 (213) 204-2512
Phone Conference ID: 333 921 796#

Chair: Commissioner Isabelle Gunning | **Secretary:** Commissioner Azusena Favela

Members: Commissioners Preeti Kulkarni, Fredrick Sykes, Derric Johnson,
Jeanette Ellis-Royston, Gay Yuen

Staff: Robin Toma, Robert Sowell, Pierre Arreola, Joshua Parr, Paul Smith

- 1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement of Indigenous Peoples (10:45)**
- 2. Review & Approval of January 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes (10:47)**
- 3. Presentation: Dr. Seva Rodnyansky & Dr. Jorgen Harris (10:50)**
 - 3.1. Report on Suburban Police Department Data
- 4. Discussion: Sheriff Accountability (11:20)**
 - 4.1. LA County Custody Facilities Visits
 - 4.2. Office of Constitutional Policing Partnership
 - 4.3. Civilian Oversight Commission Partnership
 - 4.4. Sybil Brand Commission Partnership
- 5. Discussion: Staff & County Updates (11:55)**
 - 5.1. Regional Projects
 - 5.2. Public Safety Cluster
 - 5.3. Justice, Care and Opportunities Department
 - 5.4. Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee
- 6. Public Comment (3 Minutes Per Person) (12:00)**
- 7. Action Items (12:05)**
 - 7.1. LA County Custody Facilities Visits
 - 7.2. Office of Constitutional Policing Partnership
 - 7.3. Civilian Oversight Commission Partnership
 - 7.4. Sybil Brand Commission Partnership
- 8. Commissioner & Staff Announcements (12:10)**
- 9. Adjournment (12:15)**

Note: The following Commissioners will be participating by conference telephone communication from the following locations: Preeti Kulkarni, 3419 Federal Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90066.

For translation to other languages o para más información en Español, call (213) 738-2788 or email us at PArreola@hrc.lacounty.gov. An asterisk () denotes that this agenda packet includes written material regarding this agenda item.*

Meetings are held in English. If interpretation in other languages or accommodations for persons with disabilities are needed, please contact the Human Relations Commission at (213) 738-7288 at least 3 business days before the meeting. The meetings of the Human Relations Commission are accessible to persons with disabilities.



Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

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Item 7.1
January 31, 2024

Memorandum to: COMMISSIONERS

From: ROBIN TOMA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Subject: AGENDA ITEM 7.1. OUR POSITION ON ACA 5 & MARRIAGE EQUALITY

On January 11th, Andria Seo of County Counsel requested the Commission's input for the CEO by January 18th regarding Assembly Constitutional Amendment (ACA) 5, a proposed amendment to the State Constitution, which was passed by over two-thirds vote in both the State Assembly and the State Senate, and will be on the ballot in the upcoming November election.

ACA 5 (Low) Marriage equality. (Res. Ch. 125, 2023), if approved by the voters, would amend the Constitution of the State of California (California Constitution), by repealing and adding Section 7.5 to Article I thereof, relating to rights. The amendment would repeal the language in the California Constitution stating marriage is only between a man and a woman. This measure would provide that the right to marry is a fundamental right and furthers:

1. The rights to enjoy life, liberty, safety, happiness, and privacy, guaranteed by Section 1 of Article I of the California Constitution. and
2. The rights to equal protection and due process guaranteed by Section 7 of Article I of the California Constitution.

Given the need to provide a response before our next meeting, I contacted President Ilan Davidson and conveyed the request. Based on our Commission's mission, values, and programmatic work, as well as past stances, I advised him that our Commission would be in support of ACA 5. President Davidson responded with strong agreement.

I then conveyed to Andria Seo that our agency input would be to recommend our County's strong support for ACA 5. I noted that while religions can have their own policies and perspectives on who can marry whom in those private institutions, it is a different question for government, which serves all. As a matter of government policy, it is discriminatory and inequitable to deny the ability of one person to marry another; and your gender or your sexual orientation should not prevent you from marrying whom you love, as far as the government is concerned. In fact, the current state definition is outdated, unconstitutional, and unenforceable under federal law since 2015.

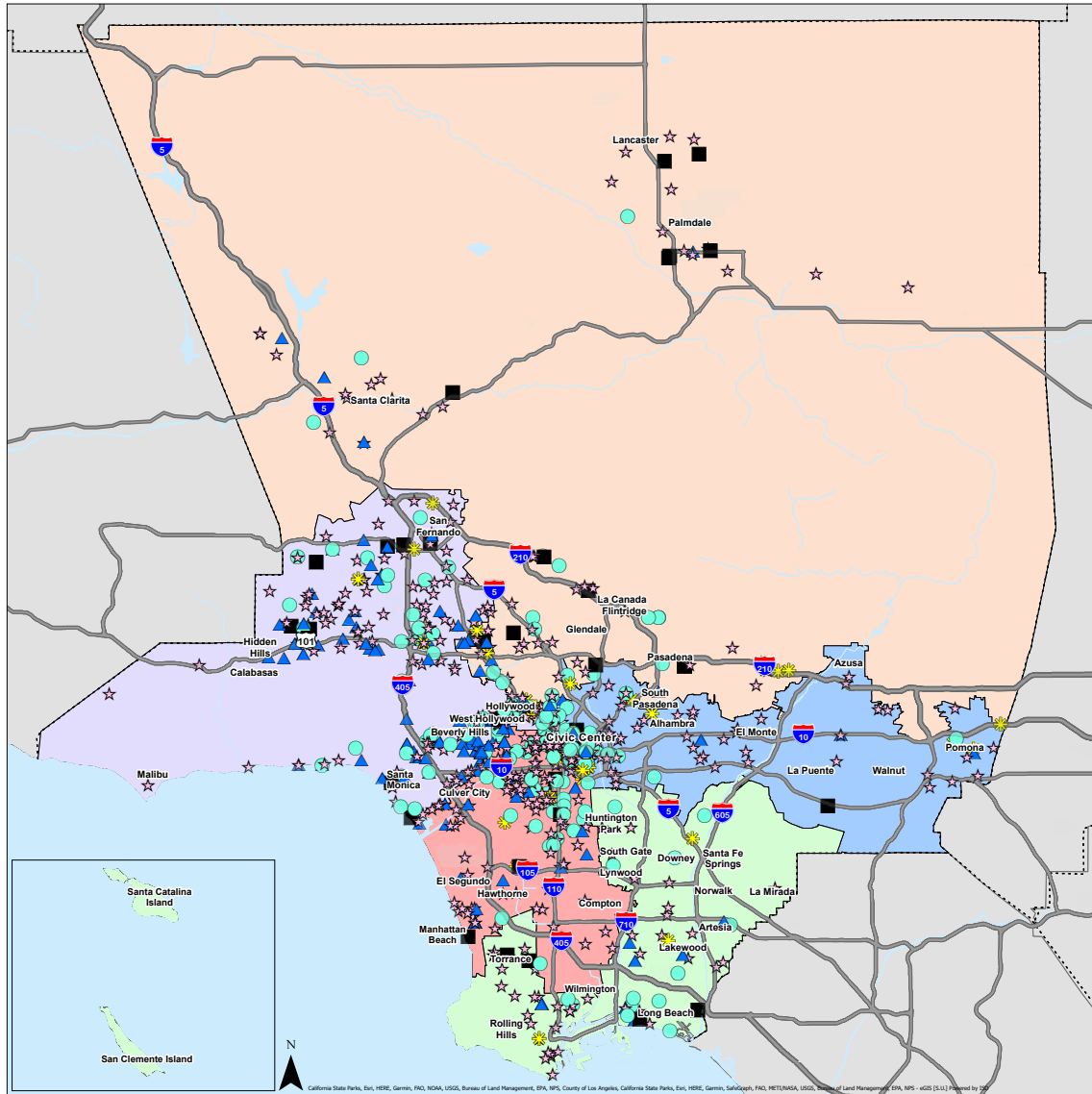
This matter is now brought before the Commission for action/discussion regarding ratification of this position.



2022 **HATE CRIME** REPORT



2022 Los Angeles County Hate Crimes



County of Los Angeles

Hate Crimes 2022

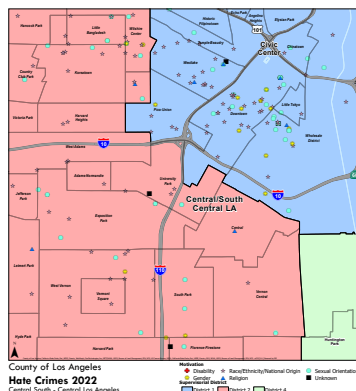
Motivation

+ Disability ★ Race/Ethnicity/National Origin ● Sexual Orientation
★ Gender ▲ Religion ■ Unknown

Supervisorial District

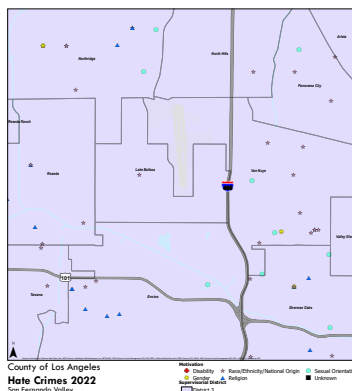
■ District 1 ■ District 2 ■ District 3 ■ District 4 ■ District 5

Central/South Central L.A.



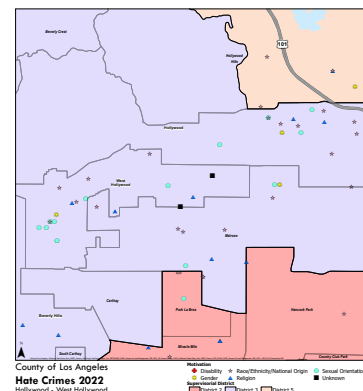
County of Los Angeles
Hate Crimes 2022
Central South - Central Los Angeles

San Fernando Valley



County of Los Angeles
Hate Crimes 2022
San Fernando Valley

Hollywood/West Hollywood



County of Los Angeles
Hate Crimes 2022
Hollywood - West Hollywood

In addition to the hate crimes shown on these maps, there are crimes that are not displayed due to insufficient address information.

Maps by Enterprise GIS (eGIS)
Powered by ISD.

2022 Hate Crime Report



Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

Janice Hahn, Chair	Fourth District
Hilda L. Solis	First District
Holly J. Mitchell	Second District
Lindsey P. Horvath	Third District
Kathryn Barger	Fifth District

County of Los Angeles

Fesia Davenport	Chief Executive Officer
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Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors

Celia Zavala	Executive Officer
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Pierre Arreola, Human Services Administrator I
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Monica Lomelí, Ph.D., Human Services Administrator I
Terri Villa-McDowell, J.D, Human Services Administrator I
Marshall Wong, Human Services Administrator I
Robert Sowell, Assistant Executive Director
Robin S. Toma, Esq., Executive Director

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Preface

Since 1980, the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations has compiled, analyzed, and produced an annual report of hate crime data submitted by sheriff and city police agencies, educational institutions, and community-based organizations. L.A. County jurisdictions are among the best trained in hate crime investigation and prosecution. This report is one of the longest-standing efforts in the nation to document hate crime.

Using information from this report, the Commission sponsors a number of ongoing programs related to preventing and combating hate crime, including the Network Against Hate Crime and the LA vs Hate Project. L.A. County is one of the best trained jurisdictions in hate crime investigation and prosecution, and the Commission produces one of the longest-standing reports in the nation documenting hate crime.

Since its inception, this report has been disseminated broadly to policymakers, law enforcement agencies, educators, and community groups throughout Los Angeles County and across the nation in order to better inform efforts to prevent, detect, report, investigate, and prosecute hate crimes. Using information from this report, the Commission sponsors an array of ongoing programs to prevent and combat hate crime, including the Network Against Hate Crime and the LA vs Hate Project.

What is a Hate Crime?

According to California state law, hate crime charges may be filed when there is evidence that bias, hatred, or prejudice based on the victim's real or perceived race/ethnicity, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, gender, or sexual orientation is a substantial factor in the commission of the offense.

This definition is codified in the California penal code sections 422.55 to 422.95 pertaining to hate crime. Evidence of such bias, hatred, or prejudice can be direct or circumstantial. It can occur before, during, or after the commission of the offense.

Hate speech is a criminal offense when the perpetrator has threatened violence with spoken or written words against a specific person or group of persons. The threat must be immediate, unconditional, and unequivocal. It must also cause the victim sustained fear. Frequently, derogatory words or epithets are directed against a member of a protected class, but no violence is threatened. Such hate incidents are important indicators of intergroup tensions. They are not, however, criminal offenses. Such language is protected by free speech rights set forth in the California and U.S. constitutions.

Graffiti is a hate crime when it takes the form of vandalism that is disparaging to a class of people protected by hate crime laws. This is most often indicated by the use of epithets or hate group symbols or slogans. To be a hate crime, graffiti must be directed at a specific target. For example, racial graffiti on a freeway overpass that does not address itself to a particular person is vandalism, and therefore illegal, but probably not considered a hate crime. Vandalism of a house of worship or of an ethnic, religious, or gay and lesbian organization may be investigated as a hate crime in the absence of evidence of other motives.

Underreporting of Hate Crimes

The U.S. Department of Justice has reported that nearly half of all violent hate crimes, are not reported to law enforcement. * This result was obtained from the department's Bureau of Justice Statistics National Crime Victimization Survey. We can expect that an even greater portion of hate incidents and nonviolent hate crimes are not reported. According to the victimization survey, most hate acts are not reported to law enforcement because they are handled in another way.

In addition, survey respondents have identified the following beliefs as other reasons hate-motivated acts are not reported to law enforcement:

- Incident was not important enough to be reported to police
- There was nothing police could do to help
- Police would not want to be bothered or to get involved
- Reporting the incident would bring more trouble for the victim

Other factors that may inhibit victims from reporting hate crimes include fear of retaliation, cultural and linguistic isolation, unfamiliarity with the criminal justice system, and previous negative experiences with law enforcement. For LGBT hate crime victims who are not "out" to their families, employers, or neighbors there may also be fear of unwanted publicity that would disclose their sexual orientations or gender identities.

It is important to keep in mind, as well, that there is not consistent uniformity in the ways that law enforcement agencies identify hate crime. This may be due to a variety of reasons. There are differences in priorities and training among different agencies, for example. Crimes with multiple motivations or involving gangs may not be formally identified as hate crimes. There is an additional burden on investigating detectives to identify and confirm evidence of hate motivation. Hate-motivated violence that occurs in schools, jails, and juvenile detention facilities, including large-scale racial brawls, may not be formally identified as hate crimes. In some cases, there may be reluctance to contribute to possible negative publicity for a neighborhood or municipality.

When the U.S. Department of Justice annually requests hate crime data from law enforcement agencies, about 85% either fail to respond or claim they had no hate crimes reported in their jurisdictions.

It is reasonable, therefore, to conclude that the hate crimes documented in this report likely represent only a portion of hate crimes actually committed in 2022.

* U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Hate Crime Victimization, 2005 – 2019 September 2021.

Hate Crime and Human Rights

Hate crimes are not only illegal under state and federal laws, they also violate human rights as defined by the international community.

In the aftermath of World War II, leaders from many nations came together in 1948 to establish the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Among the principles included in this declaration are affirmations that all human beings are equal in dignity and rights and no one is to be subject to torture or to cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment. Groups and nations around the world continue to work diligently to turn the UDHR's powerful principles into action.

Since 1965, the U.S. and 176 other nations have signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which compels signatory nations to combat racial and national origin discrimination. Under this treaty, hate crimes are considered serious human rights abuses. The CERD Committee has stressed that government action as well as inaction can violate CERD, and there is no excuse for complacency or indifference by a government toward either public or private discrimination, particularly when it involves violence.

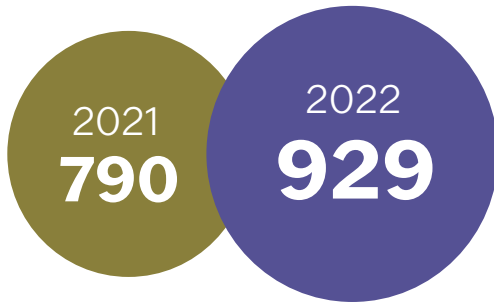
When the U.S. and 167 other nations signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), they committed to respect and fulfill the right to life and the security of the person regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.

The U.S. Constitution states that the Constitution and treaties are the supreme law of the land. Thus, all levels of government in the U.S. – including counties, cities, and school districts – and individuals have a duty to uphold these treaty obligations to address discrimination in any form, including hate crime.

Human Rights First (www.humanrightsfirst.org/discrimination) suggests the following strategies for responding to hate crime:

- Acknowledge and condemn hate crimes whenever they occur. Senior leaders should send immediate, strong, public, and consistent messages that violent hate crimes—including against migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers—will be investigated thoroughly and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.
- Strengthen enforcement and prosecute offenders. Governments should ensure that those responsible for hate crimes are held accountable under the law and that the prosecution of hate crimes against any individuals regardless of their legal status in the country is a priority for the criminal justice system.
- Develop educational and transformative approaches, particularly restorative justice mechanisms, for hate crime offenders. Governments need to use effective methods to heal communities and reduce recidivism.
- Monitor and report on hate crimes. Governments should maintain official systems of monitoring and public reporting to provide accurate data for informed policy decisions to combat hate crimes.
- Reach out to community groups. Governments should conduct outreach and education to communities to reduce fear and assist victims, advance police-community relations, encourage improved reporting of hate crimes to the police, and improve the quality of data collection by law enforcement bodies.

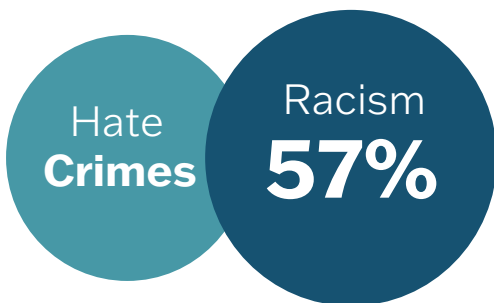
2022 Quick Facts



Reported hate crimes rose 18% from 790 in 2021 to 929 in 2022, the second highest in more than 20 years.



72% of the reported hate crimes were of a violent nature. This is the second highest rate in at least 20 years.



Race was by far the most common motivation, constituting 57% of all hate crimes. They jumped 14%.



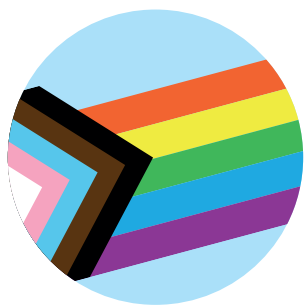
African Americans were again grossly over-represented and made up 53% of racial hate crime victims.



Anti-Latino/a crimes rose 3% and experienced the highest rate of violence (93%) of all racial/ethnic groups.



Anti-Asian crimes declined 25% but the 61 crimes were the second largest number ever.



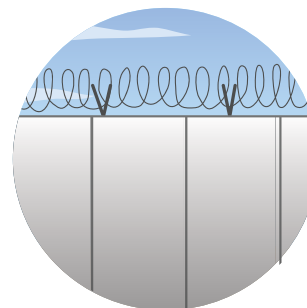
Eighteen percent of hate crimes were motivated by sexual orientation and 81% of these crimes targeted gay men.



Religious crimes spiked 41% and comprised 16% of all hate crimes. Eighty-three percent of these crimes were anti-Jewish.



There were 44 anti-transgender crimes, the largest number ever documented. Ninety-one percent of these crimes were violent.



Hate crimes in which anti-immigrant slurs were used continued to climb 12% and the 94 crimes comprised the largest number ever recorded.



Hate crimes committed by gang members were 6% of all reported hate crimes. These were overwhelmingly attacks by Latino/a gangs against African Americans.



The largest number of hate crimes took place in the Metro Region which stretches from West Hollywood to Boyle Heights followed by the San Fernando Valley. However, if one accounts for population the Metro Region had the highest rate followed by the West Region (which includes parts of West L.A., Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, and a number of beach communities).

Executive Summary

The Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations (Commission) has produced an annual hate crime report since 1980, one of the longest standing efforts of its kind in the nation. Hate crimes are serious violations of state, federal, and international law. The Commission collects reports from every law enforcement agency in Los Angeles County, as well as from some colleges, school districts, and community-based organizations, and directly from some victims (see page 45).

Hate crimes documented in this and other reports represent only a portion of hate crimes actually committed in the year 2022. The U.S. Justice Department has reported that nearly half of all violent hate crimes are not reported to law enforcement. We can

expect that an even greater portion of hate incidents and nonviolent hate crimes are not reported. (See page 4)

Nationally, the number of hate groups in the U.S. totaled 523 in 2022 according to the Southern Poverty Law Center. It is important to keep in mind, though, that most hate crimes in LA County are not committed by those with apparent active formal affiliations to hate groups.

By providing the extensive information contained in this report on hate crimes in Los Angeles County, the Commission helps law enforcement as well as educational, community, governmental, and faith-based agencies to more effectively prevent and respond to these serious violations of human rights.

Significant finds of this report include:

- Reported hate crimes in 2022 rose 18% from 790 to 929, the second highest in more than 20 years. For the past 8 years, hate crimes have been trending upwards and since 2013 there has been a 142% increase (see page 10).
- 72% of hate crimes were of a violent nature, the second highest percentage in at least 20 years* (see page 13).
- Racial, sexual orientation and religious hate crimes all grew sharply. But racism was by far the most common motivation, constituting 57% of all hate crimes. Racial crimes jumped 14%, from 476 to 545 (see page 11).
- Although they only comprise about 9% of the county's population, African Americans were again disproportionately targeted and comprised 53% of racial hate crime victims. The 294 anti-Black crimes reported in 2022 were the second largest number ever recorded. While anti-Black crimes climbed, all other major racial and ethnic groups experienced slight increases or declined significantly. (See page 25)
- Anti-Latino/a crimes rose 3% and they again were the second largest group of racial victims. This was the seventh year in a row that Latino/as experienced the highest rate of violence (93%) of any other racial/ethnic group. (See page 25)
- Anti-Asian crimes, which had soared to record highs during the pandemic, declined 25%. However, the 61 crimes reported were the second largest number in this report's history. (See page 25)
- Sexual orientation crimes comprised the second largest motivation (18%) and grew 20%. 81% of these crimes targeted gay men. (See page 31)
- Religious crimes spiked 41% and comprised 16% of all hate crimes. Eighty-three percent of these crimes were anti-Jewish. (See page 35)
- There were 44 anti-transgender crimes, the largest number ever documented. Ninety-one percent of these crimes were violent, a rate much higher than racial, sexual orientation, and religious attacks. (See page 38)
- After skyrocketing 48% the previous year, hate crimes in which anti-immigrant slurs were used continued to climb another 12% from 84 to 94. This was the largest number ever recorded. Suspects used anti-immigrant language in 55% of anti-Latino/a crimes and in 25% of anti-Asian offenses. (See pages 26)
- Hate crimes committed by gang members remained elevated and comprised 6% of all hate crimes. 74% of these were racially motivated. (See page 18)
- The largest number of hate crimes took place in the Metro Region which stretches from West Hollywood to Boyle Heights followed by the San Fernando Valley. However, if one accounts for population the Metro Region had the highest rate followed by the West Region (which includes parts of West L.A., Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, etc.).

The full report is available at our website: www.hrc.lacounty.gov. * We can only search the database back to 2003.

2022 Hate Crimes in Perspective

2022 witnessed deepening divides across the U.S. along lines of political party, race, sexual orientation, religion, and gender identity. At the community level, supporters of former President Trump continued to back policies that reflected growing intolerance and bigotry.

Since the January 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, more than 1,000 rioters have been arrested and at the time of this report's release, more than half had pled guilty to a variety of charges, ranging from trespassing to seditious conspiracy. The convicted included members of hate groups, such as the Proud Boys and the Oathkeepers, but 85% of those arrested had no known affiliation with extremist organizations. Nearly 30 of those charged were residents of Southern California, including a retired police chief, the founder of a right-wing UCLA student group, and an anti-Vax physician.

In December 2022, a Congressional committee recommended criminal charges against Trump himself, and released a report detailing the ex-president's role in the attack.

The former President has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing and labeled the investigation a "witch-hunt." Apparently, many of his devoted supporters agree with him. In poll after poll, a large swath of voters continued to support Trump and believe that the 2020 presidential election was stolen from him.

During the same time, the U.S. Supreme Court has issued ruling after ruling undoing decades of legal precedents, including:

- Over-turning *Roe vs. Wade*, the landmark ruling that made reproductive rights the law of the land;
- Upholding a Trump era policy challenged by the Biden administration that required that migrants seeking asylum in the U.S. must remain in Mexico until their cases are adjudicated; and
- Defending the right of a high school football coach to publicly pray after his team's games, eroding constitutional prohibitions against promotion of religion by government officials and potentially discriminating against non-Christians.

The year 2022 also saw public schools fully re-opened, and many Americans returning to work

Racial* and Ethnic Terminology

For the purposes of this report, we use "African American" and "Black" interchangeably.

We also use, "American Indian," "native," and "indigenous" interchangeably.

In traditional Spanish, "Latino" refers to men and women of Latin American heritage. "Latino/a" is an alternative term that is more gender-inclusive.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "Asian/Pacific Islander" and "Asian Pacific American" are both used to describe, "a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent" or any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands." For this report, we use "Asian" and "Asian American" as shorthands.

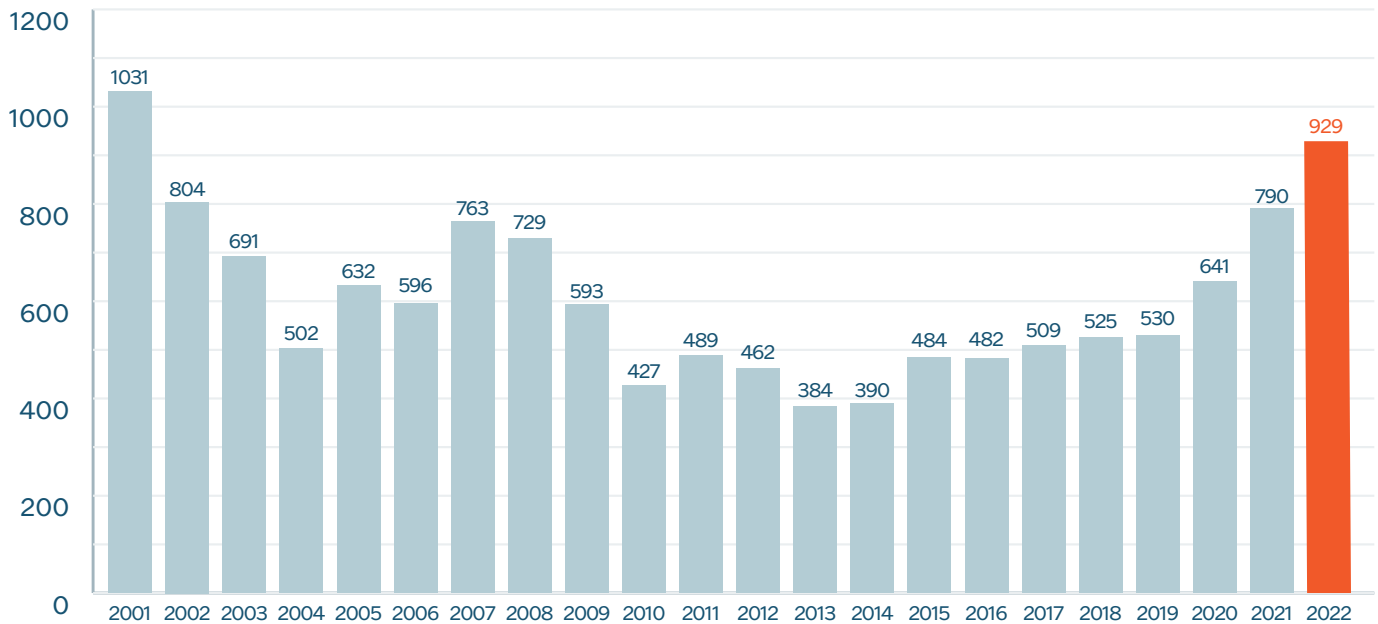
and other activities curtailed during the worst period of the pandemic. Yet at the same time, deep debates continued to rage about masking and vaccination policies and decisions that led to sections of the economy closing. Many polls showed that party affiliation and race were predictors as to where Americans stood on these issues.

Closer to home, the City of Los Angeles was shaken by the November release of a year-old secret recording of a meeting between three councilmembers and the head of the County Federation of Labor. The discussion was widely viewed as racist, in which several Latino/a leaders made disparaging remarks about African Americans, Oaxacans, and others and discussed how to expand Latino/a political representation through the city's redistricting process at the expense of other communities.

Another haunting local image from 2022 was a group of people raising their arms in a Nazi salute and holding a banner over a freeway overpass that read, "Kanye was right about the Jews" after the musical artist made a string of anti-Semitic remarks.

*For the sake of brevity, we refer to crimes motivated by race, ethnicity, or national origin as "racial" hate crimes throughout this report.

Total Number of Reported Hate Crimes by Year



Reported hate crimes rose in the 1990s, following adoption of legislation by the California State legislature in 1989 that mandated law enforcement to record and report hate crimes.

On May 14, 2022, the country watched in horror as news broke that 18-year-old Payton Gendron opened fire at a Tops Friendly Market in Buffalo New York killing ten people and wounding three. All of those slain were African American. Of the three who were wounded one victim was Black and two were White. A self-avowed white supremacist, Gendron had written a manifesto expressing belief in the “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory.

In November, Gendron pleaded guilty to all charges, including murder, domestic terrorism, and hate crimes. He was sentenced to 11 consecutive life sentences, without the possibility of parole. The nation already had been rocked by hate-motivated mass shootings in Pittsburgh in 2018 that killed eleven Jewish worshipers, in El Paso in 2019 which took the lives of 23 Latino/a victims, and in the Atlanta area in 2021 when eight people, including six Asian women were gunned down at three day-spas.* Communities already reeling from bias-inspired violence again experienced shock and despair as the victims of the Buffalo supermarket shooting were laid to rest.

* The defendant in this case said that he was a sex addict and denied any racial animus for the crimes, but Georgia prosecutors have announced that they intend to prosecute the homicides as hate crimes.

It should be no surprise then that after two record-breaking increases, hate crimes in Los Angeles in 2022 rose to the second highest in more than 20 years.

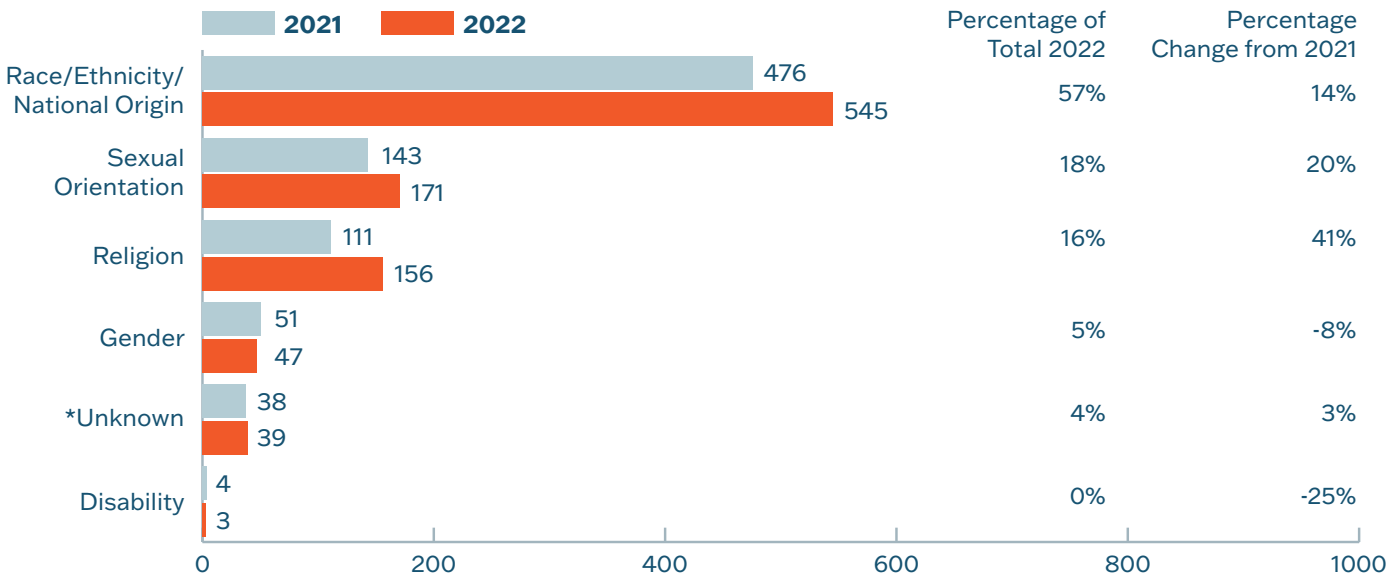
In 2022, hate crimes increased 18% from 790 to 929**. This was the second highest in more than 20 years. For the past 8 years, hate crimes have been trending upwards and since 2013, there has been a 142% increase.

The California State Attorney General reported an increase of 20.2% (compared to a 41.9% spike the previous year). The number of victims increased from 1,763 in 2021 to 2,120 in 2022. At the time of this report’s release, the FBI had not released national hate crime statistics for 2022.

It can be helpful to consider the number of hate crimes in the context of overall crime statistics. Regarding general crime statistics, the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD) documented a 14.27% increase in violent crime and a 11.83% increase in property crime in 2022. LASD reported a 30.60% decrease in homicides. The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) reported a 2.1% increase in violent crimes and a 12.2% increase in non-violent crimes. In addition, LAPD reported that homicides decreased 2.7% from 402 to 391.

** As stated in the Methodology section, this report counts the number of hate crime victims, not events.

Hate Crimes by Motivation



* These were primarily cases of vandalism that used hate symbols and the motivation could not be determined.

Note: Some cases contained multiple motivations. The total number of motivations does not equal the total number of hate crimes.

In 2022 the largest number of hate crimes were motivated by race.* They accounted for 57% of all hate crimes. These cases increased 14% from 476 the year before to 545.

Once again, African Americans were targeted at a higher rate (53%) than other racial groups. This represented a 34% increase from 219 to 294. This is the second largest number of anti-Black crimes ever reported. Anti-Latino/a crimes remained remarkably similar to the previous year, increasing slightly from 117 to 121. In addition, there were 61 anti-Asian crimes (a decline of 25%), the second largest number in this report’s history. Lastly, anti-Middle Easterner and anti-White crimes declined. (See “A Closer Look at Racial Hate Crimes”)

Sexual orientation crimes were the second largest group (18%) compared to 17% the previous year. They increased 20% from 143 to 171. Crimes targeting gay men and lesbians both rose.

Religious crimes made up 16% of all reported hate crimes and were the third largest motivation. This represented a huge 41% increase from 111 to 156.

* For the sake of brevity, we refer to crimes motivated by race, ethnicity or national origin as “racial hate crimes” in this report.

Crimes targeting Jewish persons spiked 59% from 81 to 129 and comprised 83% of all religious crimes (up from 74%). No other targeted group exceeded 7 crimes (4%).

Gender motivated crimes comprised 5% of all hate crimes (down from 6%). Forty-four of these offenses targeted the transgender community and 3 were anti-female.

Crimes motivated by disability decreased from 4 to 3.

In addition, 4% of cases had an unknown motivation (down from 5%). These are cases in which the motive could not be determined (for example, a swastika appears on public property and the location does not suggest any particular victim group). This report classifies these crimes as having an “unknown” motivation.

As in previous years, the great majority of hate crimes (77%) targeted four groups: African Americans, gay men, lesbians, and LGBT organizations, Jewish persons, and Latino/as, compared to 71% the previous year.

As mentioned in the Methodology section, fluctuations in numbers from year to year are common and don’t necessarily indicate trends. It is more useful to study multi-year analyses to get an accurate picture.



#CampusBridge

LEADING A DIVIDED CAMPUS: Ideas and Illustrations

An Initiative of the Divided Community Project
The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law

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<https://go.osu.edu/dcptoolkit>:

- Key Considerations for College and University Leaders: Preparing the Campus at a Time of National Polarization (2020)
- Symbols and Public Spaces amid Division: Practical Ideas for Community and University Leaders (2021)
- A Practical Guide to Planning Collaborative Initiatives to Advance Racial Equity (2nd ed. 2022)
- Identifying a Community Spirit (2019)
- Divided Communities and Social Media: Strategies for Community Leaders (2nd ed. 2020)
- Key Considerations for Leaders Facing Community Unrest: Effective Problem-Solving Strategies That Have Been Used in Other Communities (2nd ed. 2020)
- Planning in Advance of Community Unrest (2nd ed. 2020)
- A Checklist for Extending Support to Other Students (2023)

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INTRODUCTION

Students depend on their leaders to appreciate their viewpoints, support them, and keep them safe, all while engaging in a shared educational enterprise that, by design, presents challenging learning experiences. They depend on leaders to set expectations and apply practices that promote learning and engagement but discourage behavior that undermines their sense of safety and well-being. During divisive moments, students especially appreciate this leadership.

A theme of this guide is that it is urgent for college and university leaders to expand their efforts to support students and promote respectful treatment of each other, as they react to the violence occurring in Israel and Gaza. With a series of hate incidents against studentsⁱ, violence has now also arrived closer to home for students sharing an identity with both Gaza and Israel. Students are affected as well by the surge of harassment and hate crimes against Israeli, Jewish, Palestinian, and Arab people nationwide. They have been doxed for speaking out in ways that have led even to canceled employment offers.ⁱⁱⁱ As they check their phones multiple times a day, they are exposed to the dramatic escalation in the number of angry posts, many of which contain explicitly violent language.^{iv} In other words, students are mourning, angry, uncertain, and afraid. Most do not believe that their college and university leaders are doing enough to support them.^v

Still, campus leaders' decisions will not be easy ones. The violence in the Middle East presents issues that have not arisen on campuses recently. As Chancellor Carol Christ of the University of California – Berkeley said, “This situation is so different from other situations of controversy in that it has really split the student body.... there is deep, deep division on the campus.”^{vi} While some students seek more protection, others are upset that administrators are interfering with their rights to express themselves through protest. Administrators must often find the narrow thread between institutional values of both a welcoming environment and rigorous free speech and also between legal requirements to protect free speech/assembly and to take action when students' well-being is in question.

Taking these tensions into account, this guide offers promising ideas for college and university leaders to broaden and deepen their support of students and to reinforce norms of humane behavior in the midst of vigorous disagreements. It begins with an executive summary that can be viewed as an action checklist. The chapters keyed to each number on the summary then develop each element in depth, including sharing illustrations of effective practices by college and university leaders. The appendix includes additional resources, identifying groups that sponsor dialogue, offer trainings for staff, or provide mediating services. Because of the role played by the evolving law on free speech rights and civil rights, campus leaders will want to consult with legal counsel on that as well; this guide does not provide guidance on the legal issues. In addressing these vital challenges, the guide draws on the experience of educators, mediators, and communication experts from across the nation and the direct input of those listed in the Acknowledgments at the end of the guide.



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Announce to the campus community what has occurred on the campus and the implications—in a tone that is neither routine nor alarmist but rather an expression of heartfelt care for the well-being of students.

SECTION 3: Select the Messenger and Mode of Communications

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Ask those persons trusted by each affected campus stakeholder group to add their voices to yours on the content noted just above or quote them.

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Form teams of decisionmakers and experts to plan a series of new initiatives after a divisive/hate incident, implementing each when it fits the climate and emotions.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Leading a divided campus: ideas and illustrations

The steps listed in this executive summary begin when campus administrators become first aware of a concern, conflict, or divisive incident. This summary of steps also addresses responses to hate incidents that deeply affect the campus community. The steps apply whether the incident occurred on campus or unfolded elsewhere but deeply affected students, as with the violence in Israel and Gaza. Leaders, and those working with them, will sometimes need to address the first three tasks below in a few hectic minutes or hours. Otherwise, false narratives may take hold on social media, and students may be frightened, engage in speech or conduct that exacerbates the situation, and begin saying to each other that administrators do not care about them. The applicability of the ideas will vary depending on the moment, as there are times when emotions are too raw for discussions about differences to be productive and times when they are just right.

SECTION 1

ASSESSMENT: Become engaged right away, once you learn about a divisive issue likely to affect the campus community, such as contested issues on campus, a hate incident, or events in the world outside the university. Ask other campus leaders to do the same. Reach out to learn how each community on campus is affected and responding. Assess the nature and intensity of their differing reactions and needs.

SECTION 2

DRAFT COMMUNICATIONS: Announce to the campus community what has occurred on the campus and the implications—in a tone that is neither routine nor alarmist but rather an expression of heartfelt care for the well-being of students. Include, as pertinent:

- the details that the campus community urgently desires to know as they assess their safety and well-being.
- for hate incidents, a focus on and explanation of the harm caused and violation of norms, but trying to avoid augmenting the perpetrator's notoriety.
- where students can check to learn new details as they emerge and where they can report hate incidents.
- those you have consulted and their reactions.
- actions to assure safety for members of the campus community.
- affirmation of free speech/assembly while underscoring the university's core values and behavior expectations, including regard for others' need to be respected, feel safe, and express themselves, and condemnation of identity-group hate-based targeting.
- how you will let them know further developments and decisions, describing the values and opinions that will be taken into account in making additional decisions.

SECTION 3

SELECT THE MESSENGERS AND MODE FOR COMMUNICATIONS: Ask those persons trusted by each affected campus stakeholder group to add their voices to yours on the content noted just above or quote them. Use formats (press conference, town hall, email, social media, etc.) that together connect with multiple audiences. Counsel faculty and staff on how to reach out to students and each other on an individual basis to offer support.

SECTION 4

ENHANCE STUDENT SUPPORT: Form teams of decisionmakers and experts to do the following quickly, implementing each when it fits the climate and emotions:

- Augment resources as necessary to assure that students are and feel safe and are able to participate in their educational programs.
- Encourage and guide students to extend individual support to friends.
- Make timely suggestions to faculty, staff, residence hall and student leaders, faith leaders, parents, and community groups on how they might reach out to students and each other to extend support.
- Organize vigils in safe locations if students are mourning.
- Provide trusted places for students to vent.
- Create options for students who want to contribute, such as participating in de-escalation teams or preparing humanitarian aid, when feasible.
- Arrange mediators who can interface with those groups likely to ask the university to make changes.
- Take advantage of the “teachable moment” to offer training in skills and knowledge that will be useful in careers and helpful in the moment.
- Let students know what is permitted or prohibited under student codes and laws affecting demonstrations.
- Establish or refer to existing trusted reporting sites, counseling, reports to campus, and condemnation for hate incidents.
- Identify and prepare for likely future flash points that will affect students.
- Listen to students and message about these options constantly.
- Begin preparations to host student discussions of the underlying conflict, to be held when students are ready to listen across their differences, appreciate each other’s experiences, and begin to heal.

SECTION 5

PLAN APPROACHES TO CROWD EVENTS AND REACH UNDERSTANDINGS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT:

Consider what will be done in each crowd situation. Protocols with law enforcement can reflect shared understandings of what approaches and procedures should be used under various circumstances, should protests, disruptions, and hate incidents occur. Plans for crowd events will vary, depending on the range of goals among participants and the likelihood of violence. Arrange a command post that includes campus administrators with law enforcement to modify plans as an event unfolds. Do joint planning as well for the possibility of hate incidents. Once volatile events cease, university leaders can usefully organize staff, faculty, students, and other constituencies to take additional steps discussed in this guide,^{vii} so that they can learn from an after-incident analysis, plan for future divisive situations, and repair fractures in campus communities to encourage reconciliation.



SECTION 1

ASSESSMENT

Become engaged right away, once you learn about a divisive issue likely to affect the campus community, such as contested issues on campus, a hate incident, or events in the world outside the university. Ask other campus leaders to do the same. Reach out to learn how each community on campus is affected and responding. Assess the nature and intensity of their differing reactions and needs.

WHY TAKE THESE STEPS?

Checking with those affected, both the persons targeted and those who share an identity group with those persons and therefore might also be affected, as well as others in the community, can be valuable. It helps avoid adopting an understandable, though often erroneous, approach of making educated guesses about how events are impacting stakeholder groups based on your own reactions. Checking in and listening to those affected, and others, allows you to direct your first actions effectively, and it demonstrates that you are genuine in your efforts to understand the needs of affected students.

Prompted by the October 7 attacks and subsequent violence in Israel and Gaza, University of Wisconsin-Madison Chancellor Jennifer Mnookin did an assessment of what students had experienced and the range, nature, and intensity of student emotions. She then incorporated those insights to shape this well-received communication to the campus community. It helped students recognize that she had listened and was committed to promoting understanding among the students:

"In separate conversations I have had over the last several weeks with Palestinian, Arab and Muslim students and Jewish and Israeli students, some have told me that they have experienced fear on our campus, or in Madison, based on their identities. Jewish and Israeli students have told me about having feelings of unease wearing a Star of David necklace or kippah. And Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students have shared similar discomfort with wearing a keffiyeh or hijab. And some in each group told me that they have experienced worse – people calling them names, or, in one instance, throwing things at them. Students have expressed feelings that some of those who disagree with them vehemently about politics have also ceased to see or recognize their fundamental humanity."^{viii}

Careful listening can also lead to university administrators, faculty, and staff taking actions that are responsive to what the students seek and, given the level of emotions and their impact on students' well-being, are situated to do. In a memo to the Cardozo law faculty, following October 7, Dean Melanie Leslie used what she learned in her ongoing conversations with students to suggest an action that met the students' expressed need:



"I spoke with a group of students...yesterday. Several mentioned how much it means to them when one of their classmates or a professor shows concern by simply asking how they are doing, but noted that this seldom happens. One student singled out [professor's name] as a positive example, stating that [this professor] began class this week by taking a moment to acknowledge that students might be in distress and asking them to let her know if they were unprepared on any given day as a result. A few simple sentences had a profoundly positive impact. Please do what you can – very small gestures of kindness and empathy will make a very powerful difference." ix

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES

The personal conversations reflected in the statements by Chancellor Mnookin and Dean Leslie communicated a heartfelt concern for students, but leaders may be forced by the urgency of other duties to delegate the assessment to others. When delegating, it may be helpful to identify to the relevant staff the type of information that would be valued for shaping an informed response. You could begin by customizing the following checklist for those staff doing the assessment:

CHECKLIST *FOR* LISTENERS

Through an empathic and compassionate conversation, please listen for and report back on the topics listed below. Please take with you a list of campus and community resources that might be helpful to students or follow up with them afterward with these resources.

Listen for and make observations about:

For those who personally experienced an incident or conflict:

- ☐ Reactions, including feelings
- ☐ Intensity of their feelings
- ☐ Whether they feel safe
- ☐ Whether they feel comfortable continuing to participate in university/college activities
- ☐ Any support that we can provide
- ☐ What they are seeking
- ☐ Comments regarding others who have been affected
- ☐ What they wish other community members would understand about the situation
- ☐ How they want to be involved, if at all, in developing the university's/college's response to the situation

For those who share an identity group with those who are personally experiencing an incident or conflict:

- ☐ The same issues as above, plus: What, if any, ways they connect the current situation to something that happened historically on this campus or elsewhere

For those who are trusted by each portion of the campus:

- ☐ What are they hearing in terms of students' emotions, support sought, personal and academic plans, requests for support from the college/university
- ☐ What they think will happen next
- ☐ Whether they agree with at least some of what the university/college leaders express and will make statements, either publicly or to friends, that reflect that agreement.
- ☐ If they are willing to speak out also or be quoted by the president on topics of agreement or open to joining with the president in speaking out

A similar checklist might be used for those following social media typically used by students:

Identify relevant keywords and hashtags:

Monitor social media platforms for keywords and hashtags related to the community conflict or crisis, as well as general terms related to stress, anxiety, and mental health concerns.

Track sentiment:

Analyze the sentiment of social media posts to identify students who may be experiencing negative emotions or distress due to the ongoing conflict.

Engage with students:

Reach out to students who are posting about their struggles or concerns, offering support and resources to help them cope with the situation.

Monitor for warning signs:

Look for posts that may indicate a student is in need of immediate help or intervention, such as posts expressing thoughts of self-harm or harm to others.

Collaborate with campus resources:

Work closely with campus mental health services, counseling centers, and other support services to ensure that students in need are connected with the appropriate resources.

Provide regular updates:

Keep students informed about the conflict and the resources available to them through social media and other communication channels.

Review and update the monitoring strategy:

Regularly review and update the social media monitoring strategy to ensure that it remains effective and relevant in addressing the needs of students during times of strife and conflict.

It can be useful to monitor changing emotions and reactions, needs, and plans over and over again.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Leaders may be torn between conducting an assessment and getting a statement out quickly. By delegating in these urgent situations, they can accomplish both. In fact, it is critical that leaders do both. When time permits, the leader's engagement in making the assessment will humanize the communications to the campus community.



SECTION 2

DRAFT COMMUNICATIONS

When a divisive conflict or hate incident occurs, announce to the campus community what occurred and the implications. The tone of the message is significant: hopefully, it is neither routine nor alarmist but rather an expression of heartfelt care for the well-being of students. Include, as pertinent, in initial and subsequent communications:

- the details that the campus community urgently desires to know as they assess their safety and well-being.
- for hate incidents, a focus on and explanation of the harm caused and violation of norms but trying to avoid augmenting the perpetrator's notoriety.
- where they can check to learn new details as they emerge and where they can report hate incidents.
- those you have consulted and their reactions.
- actions to assure safety for members of the campus community.
- affirming free speech/assembly while underscoring the university's core values and behavior expectations, including regard for others' need to be respected, feel safe, and express themselves and condemning identity-group hate based targeting.
- how you will let them know further developments and decisions, describing the values and opinions that will be taken into account in making additional decisions.

WHY TAKE THIS STEP?

Announcing what has occurred often reduces anxiety and increases trust in the administration's transparency. An early communication may forestall false narratives before they take hold on social media, in class hallways, and dormitory lounges. This is a reasonable strategy even if a hurtful campus event is not yet generally known, for, at some point, it will become publicized campus-wide. At that point, previous nondisclosure risks that some students will interpret that silence as a cover-up attempt. Referencing who has been consulted and their reactions and concerns, all the while focusing on the harm it caused, helps some students feel heard and others understand the reactions of those persons directly affected or those sharing an identity group with them. The statement, importantly, can also frame the situation in terms of college/university values. A letter to the American University community from President Sylvia M. Burwell, as she communicated with her community regarding an incident involving the appearance of Nazi signs and statements in a university building, illustrates (with annotations added) this approach: ^x

The details that the campus community wants, quickly, even if they have not yet heard:

"Last night, swastikas and a Nazi slogan were graffitied on two room doors and in a bathroom in Letts Hall."

Framing the situation by connecting campus values to the harm caused, in a tone of heartfelt concern:

"This hateful act of antisemitism is reprehensible. Jewish students live in both rooms where the doors were vandalized. When we are so deeply focused on our community of care – supporting each and every member of our community who is in pain and feeling scared and vulnerable – it is unacceptable that our Jewish community was targeted and harmed through this act. Hate speech will not be tolerated. It violates the values that define our community."

Who has been consulted and what decisions are being made:

"We are supporting the students in the involved rooms... AUPD (American University Police Department) is thoroughly investigating this incident... Anyone found responsible will be subject to university policies and appropriate disciplinary actions."

How to report and what is being done about safety:

"If any member of the community has any information about the Letts Hall incident, please contact AUPD at 202-885-2999 or with the RAVE Guardian app, where anonymous tips can also be submitted. AUPD is operating with increased awareness across campus to support the safety of the community. Anyone who feels unsafe can call the AUPD emergency number at 202-885-3636, use the blue light emergency telephones on campus, or use the RAVE Guardian app."

What values will govern and who will be consulted as more decisions are made:

"As we address this incident and the larger issues causing pain in many parts of our community, we are focused on supporting our community members, hearing their concerns, and working to ensure their safety... We will not waver in our focus on safety and support for our community."

A similar illustration might reflect that hate incidents are proliferating amid current violence in the Middle East against Palestinian and Arab students as well. A horrifying shooting of three Palestinian-American students identified with the Palestinian cause by clothing and speech left one student paralyzed and their three universities deep in grief.ⁱⁱ

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES

Several situations present conflicting values and thus thorny strategy issues.

Which harmful acts should leaders condemn in a public fashion?

The tension on campus that results from actions or speech regularly present complex connections between cherished values that are conflicting: protecting the well-being of students colliding with supporting free speech and assembly. A potential standard for judging when to announce and ameliorate a hate incident might be the one announced in a November 2023 "Dear Colleague" letter from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights:

"Harassing conduct can be **verbal or physical and need not be directed at a particular individual**. OCR interprets Title VI to mean that the following type of harassment creates a hostile environment: unwelcome conduct based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics that, based on the totality of circumstances, is **subjectively and objectively offensive** and is so severe or pervasive that it **limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the recipient's education program or activity**. Schools must take immediate and effective action to respond to harassment that creates a hostile environment."^{xi}

This standard – subjectively and objectively offensive plus so severe or pervasive that it adversely affects students' ability to participate in or benefit from their educational program – represents a mandatory floor for engagement by leaders at those colleges and universities that receive federal funding and are thus bound by Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act. And it represents a reasonable approach for other institutions.

What should be included in the statement about the tensions between holding perpetrators accountable and not violating their Constitutionally-protected rights of free speech and assembly?

This tension presents a challenging situation. Sometimes students follow leaders at rallies in voicing a chant without understanding the historical context of the wording. Regrettably, that crowd chanting itself engenders fear among those who understand its context all too well. Leaders can address the fear and explain the reasons to students without necessarily disciplining them for it; the two issues can be distinct.

Some initial statements from leadership to the campus finesse this free speech versus accountability tension by using broad terms such as “unacceptable” rather than stipulating whether the act or speech violates the student code of conduct or the law. Reflecting such an approach, President Burwell, in her statement noted above, says, noncommittally, “Anyone found responsible will be subject to university policies and appropriate disciplinary actions.” Another generally stated approach appeared in a statement to the Yale University community by President Peter Salovey in December 2023:

“Yale stands resolutely as a place that welcomes many beliefs, identities, views, and cultures, and we are unwavering in our devotion to free expression, open dialogue, and civil debate. Our right to free expression does not obviate our responsibility as colleagues and peers to one another. Yale aims to be a place where all students feel free to express their views inside and outside the classroom. Yale will not tolerate discrimination and harassment, including threats of violence, intimidation, or coercion.”^{xiii}

At some point, someone may ask what this general language means in terms of what conduct or speech will lead to discipline or prosecution or, comparably complex, whether speech will be stopped proactively. Indiana University Provost Lauren Robel, a constitutional law scholar, faced a similar challenge in 2019 when students demanded the firing of a professor whose posts on his private social media account expressed “racist, sexist, and homophobic views.” She defended both free speech rights and students' safety and well-being interests with the following statement to the IU community:

“Various officials at Indiana University have been inundated in the last few days with demands that he [the Professor] be fired. We cannot, nor would we, fire [him] for his posts as a private citizen, as vile and stupid as they are, because the First Amendment of the United States Constitution forbids us to do so. That is not a close call. Indiana University has a strong nondiscrimination policy, and as an institution adheres to values that are the opposite of [his] expressed values... If he acted upon his expressed views in the workplace to judge his students or colleagues on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, or race to their detriment, such as in promotion and tenure decisions or in grading, he would be acting both illegally and in violation of our policies and we would investigate and address those allegations... Moreover, in my view, students who are women, gay, or of color could reasonably be concerned that someone with [his] expressed views would not give them

a fair shake in his classes, and that his expressed biases would infect his perceptions of their work. Given the strength and longstanding nature of his views, these concerns are reasonable. Therefore, the Kelley School [of Business] is taking a number of steps to ensure that students not add the baggage of bigotry to their learning experience: No student will be forced to take [his] class... The Kelley School will provide alternatives... [he] will use double-blind grading... If other steps are needed... Indiana University will take them. The First Amendment is strong medicine, and works both ways. All of us are free to condemn views that we find reprehensible... I condemn, in the strongest terms, [his] views on race, gender, and sexuality... But my strong disagreement with his views—indeed, the fact that I find them loathsome—is not reason for Indiana University to violate the Constitution of the United States.”^{xv}

In this statement, Provost Robel supported the Professor’s free speech rights but used a form of accountability – public condemnation – that, combined with developing alternative classes or grading procedures, responded to student interests in their ability to continue to participate in or benefit from their respective education program. Most of the IU community accepted her approach.

Both parts of this tension between Free Speech and non-harassment are complex and subject to change through evolving caselaw. Leaders can work with legal counsel, emphasizing in that interaction their desire or imperative to publicly condemn reprehensible, even if not discipline-worthy, acts or speech and to explain to the campus community how student interests are protected consistent with supporting robust speech.

Should the university/college take a position on the merits of an off-campus conflict that also divides the campus community?

There is no easy answer to this compelling question. Considerations vary for public, private, and religion-affiliated institutions. Many public universities avoided weighing in on the merits of the Israel and Gaza violence, despite demands from students and others to take a stand and, in some cases, pressures from donors.^{xvi} Instead, these university leaders issued statements about the students’ situation – much like those quoted in this section. This institutional posture became more controversial as student groups took positions on the fighting. Those institutions that have taken positions



on the Middle East violence, often private and some religiously-affiliated, also faced resistance from their communities and demands that they reverse course as casualties mounted.^{xvii}

Kalamazoo College President Jorge Gonzalez explained on November 30, 2023 the decision not to take a position on who was right or wrong in the violence in a letter to the college community:

“In the past several weeks, I have received many conflicting heartfelt requests from members of our community calling on the College to make a statement regarding the horrifying conflict happening in the Middle East. Some are dismayed by the institution’s silence, and I want to take a moment to explain why we do not take an institutional position on this, or any other, geopolitical event. Despite the growing expectation that colleges and universities take stands and choose sides in global matters. Kalamazoo College is, by its very nature, not a monolith, but a collection of individuals from across the country and around the globe. On geopolitical matters, it would be disingenuous to presume that the president or the administration of the College can speak to the beliefs and ideologies of every person on our campus and in our extended community. And with so much conflict and tragic loss of life occurring in areas all over the world, we could not possibly touch on them all, nor can we choose to speak out on some and ignore others. Our focus is on the campus community, where we can have the greatest and most meaningful effect – ensuring that our students, faculty and staff who are affected by the tragedies around the world receive support and care. It is also critical to uphold our educational mission, which values academic freedom and freedom of speech in the context of a diverse and complex world. Additionally, we emphasize that our beliefs – however deeply held, however strongly advocated – should never manifest as violence or harassment toward people of differing perspectives or identities...”^{xviii}

Especially when emotions are raw, it may be worthwhile to ask an expert in the underlying conflict to review your potential communications and alert you to words that will lead some students to conclude that you have taken a side in the conflict, even if that was not your intent. Thus, in the midst of violence in Israel and Gaza, words such as “occupation” or “oppressor,” for example, might be interpreted as mis-identifying or discounting one side.”^{xix}

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Despite the important complexities described above, promptly speaking to the campus community, and doing so quickly and frequently, is still a wise approach. Speaking out has the potential to calm anxieties, promote understanding among students, reinforce norms of humane treatment, communicate care when people are hurting, frame the issues for the campus, and defuse false narratives.





SECTION 3

SELECT THE MESSENGERS AND MODE FOR COMMUNICATIONS

Ask those persons trusted by each affected campus stakeholder group to add their voices to yours or quote them. Use formats (press conference, town hall, email, social media, etc.) and approaches that together connect with multiple audiences.

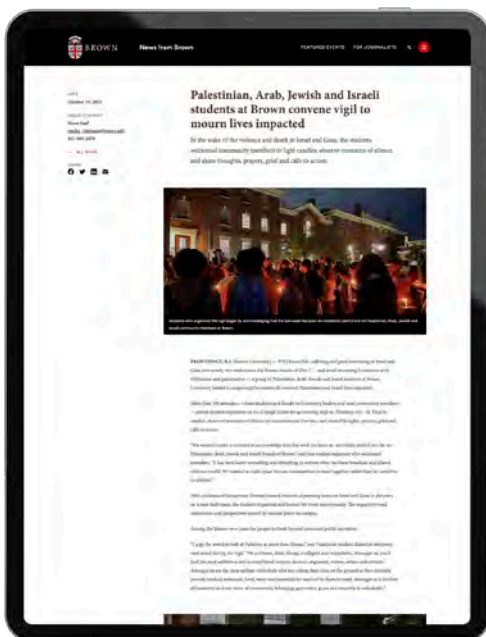
WHY TAKE THESE STEPS?

Trust in institutional leaders often dissipates during a conflict.^{xiv} Many students isolate when they are afraid or they seek to avoid argument. Efforts by institutional leaders to persuade students to treat each other with respect and compassion are difficult to “land” effectively. Persuasion often requires repeated messaging from trusted persons that somehow penetrates the information fog.^{xix} Thus, in addition to the usual challenges of reaching students who interact in different ways with campus life – undergraduate, professional, graduate, non-traditional students – both the need and challenges are greater during conflict.

University and college leaders can accomplish more by heightening their efforts to join with trusted voices and to use multiple modes of communication with frequency.

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES

Fortunately, there are illustrations of leaders whose communications effectively penetrated the trust barriers and reached the students who have turned their attention to information sources that reinforce their own views. These may spark ideas that fit other situations. In Section 4, we discuss the related strategy of asking faculty and staff to help.



Convening unlikely allies, scheduling joint events, adding visuals

People who disagree do, nonetheless, share some values and goals. When people see that, it helps to humanize their disagreements and may be surprising enough to gain their attention, particularly if captured in an interesting photo. A group of Brown University students, for example, organized and held a vigil within two weeks of the start of violence in Israel and Gaza. The Brown president, provost, and other faculty and staff joined in person. The vigil didn't attract many students – 100 persons attended, according to a news report – but the university and a newspaper published a photo of the university leaders and faculty, known local community members, and clergy interspersed with the students, holding lit candles in the dark and observing a moment of silence. Both news sources reported the Brown University chaplain's statement: **“There's a flame that burns in every human heart that's capable of kindling love, even in moments when hatred, fear and division feel as pervasive as they have over the past eleven days.”**^{xxii} A few weeks later, a Brown Palestinian-American student was shot and paralyzed while on vacation in Vermont in what is under investigation as a hate crime, and the Brown students again held a vigil. This time national news covered the vigil, and it included a protest, but was peaceful again.^{xxviii}

Combining voices on common values

To increase the number of students who believe the message, campus leaders can ask trusted individuals to stand with them as they make a public announcement; issue individual but consistent, reinforcing statements simultaneously; or organize and execute a sequence of statements – all to convey that they agree on issues of basic safety and humane treatment, even as they disagree on other matters. Student leaders whose organizations hold conflicting views on the matter might be willing to issue a joint statement condemning hate incidents and violence. In a modification of the joint leader message approach, University of Wisconsin-Madison Chancellor Jennifer Mnookin quoted an inter-faith statement in the opening letter to the campus community in November 2023:

“I am writing to share what is, to my mind, an extraordinarily thoughtful statement prepared by faith-based and community leaders who are the UW-Madison Center for Interfaith Dialogue’s Faith Advisory Council. In it, they name a tension we are feeling acutely on our campus right now: the responsibility to ensure the right to free speech while simultaneously acknowledging that certain forms of legally protected speech can cause significant emotional harm to the members of our community. The leaders, representing a wide range of faith traditions, urge us to ‘speak freely, but with humility,’ and to ‘act strongly, but do no harm.’ Whether or not you are a person of faith, I am grateful for this call and echo the sentiments of the message. These wise leaders remind us that ‘when passionate advocacy leads people to disregard the safety... of others, free speech can cause serious harm.’”^{xxiv}

Communicating with the people who talk to students

Parents, alumni, community members, and journalists are in communications with students. Taking advantage of this broader audience, Yale University President Peter Salovey, issued a broadly addressed email just as students would be finishing fall semester 2023 finals and returning to their families. His statement described the on-campus hate incidents to date, what was being done both to support and protect students and to teach them in ways that promote understanding and respect, and how free speech is protected.^{xxv}

Addressing what occurs on social media

As students check their mobile phones multiple times a day, they may be looking at hateful social media posts about the conflict. Some posts may contain misinformation and disturbing images or headlines designed to get clicks. Artificial intelligence permits rashes of divisive posts that may appear to be from fellow students, when they are actually generated elsewhere, even from offshore.^{xxvi}

Posting videos

About **32% of young adults** (aged 18 to 29) get their news from TikTok, a quadrupling from 2020 to 2023.^{xvii} To reach these students, the Campus Bridge Initiative has created language that campuses can use to record short videos, using their own students, to help students understand how to extend support to each other.^{xviii} The suggested posts will link to the checklist included in Section 4. Videos might be created to play on campus buses or in other places that students wait.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This section may explain the dissonance between administrators who have carefully crafted the content of emails to the campus community and students who say that they have not heard from their leaders. Long emails may be the proverbial trees falling in a forest, heard by no one or at least unheard by students who gain news via their phones or social media. And trust dissipates during conflict. All of this underscores the importance of focusing not just on content but also on who issues the communication and how it is transmitted to each constituency – faith leaders, parents, dorm counselors, etc. – who affect support for students.



SECTION 4

ENHANCE STUDENT SUPPORT

Form teams of decisionmakers and experts to do the following quickly after a divisive/hate incident, implementing each when it fits the climate and emotions:

- Augment resources as necessary to assure that students are and feel safe and are able to participate in their educational programs.
- Encourage and guide students to extend individual support to friends.
- Make timely suggestions to faculty, staff, residence hall and student leaders, faith leaders, parents, and community groups on how they might reach out to students and each other to extend support.
- Organize vigils in safe locations if students are mourning.
- Provide trusted places for students to vent.
- Create options for students who want to contribute, such as participating in de-escalation teams or preparing humanitarian aid, when feasible.
- Arrange mediators who can interface with those groups likely to ask the university to make changes.
- Take advantage of the “teachable moment” to offer training in skills and knowledge that will be useful in careers and helpful in the moment.
- Let students know what is permitted or prohibited under student codes and laws affecting demonstrations.
- Establish or refer to existing trusted reporting sites, counseling, reports to campus, and condemnation for hate incidents.
- Identify and prepare for likely future flash points that will affect students.
- Listen to students and message about these options constantly.
- Begin preparations to host student discussions of the underlying conflict, to be held when students are ready to listen across their differences, appreciate each other’s experiences, and begin to heal.

WHY THIS MATTERS?

Well-crafted leadership statements and references to counseling resources and safe spaces is constructive and may be enough in some situations, but as we write this, in the midst of violence in Israel and Gaza, it is not. Seventy percent of students in one national poll said that their universities were not doing enough to support them, though it seems, anecdotally, that campus administrators have been working particularly hard to provide support for students.

^{xxix} It is a moment to expand support – vastly.

The strategies suggested below reflect several assumptions, based on our collective experience. If students are feeling unsafe, addressing that, we assume, takes priority in terms of leadership actions. We assume that visible campus leadership support is calming and reassuring, but that people are most meaningfully supported by and can most comfortably vent and mourn with people they already trust – friends, professors and staff they interact with frequently, and family. In our experience, many students want to make a difference regarding a conflict – to provide humanitarian assistance, to advocate for a change in policy, to gain attention for a cause, or to help friends who are suffering. Going to the streets may constitute visible, public action to advance their goals, but it may also, in part, reflect frustration that they can do nothing else to help. Thus, we suggest that campus leaders can helpfully address their aspirations by holding vigils and creating ways, some listed below, for students to “do something.” We assume that anticipating flashpoints helps to have resources in place immediately. When people feel isolated, visible and frequent communications help reassure persons of their being valued members of the university community and may also correct false narratives on social media.

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES

Some strategies employed elsewhere may spark an idea.

Safety

A number of universities have recently added security and offered escorts. Yale President Peter Salovey took the added step of telling students that he had expanded security forces, summarizing hate incidents that had occurred, and noting that he was staying in touch with local police concerning any threats or indications of trouble.^{xxix} Taking the other steps on this checklist may also contribute to student safety.

Encouraging students to extend support to each other

Students told the Divided Community Project that they were hesitant to reach out to classmates whose position on the Middle East violence they did not know, fearing that they could face an argument or an unwanted request to sign a petition. Some reported that they were mostly going to class and heading straight home. The Project worked with a group of law students studying negotiation to create this relatable checklist, which seems to give students encouragement and a few hints for extending support while avoiding the dreaded arguments:

Extending support to other students during divisive events: a few ideas

Transformative events - such as the violence in the Middle East - affect us deeply, yet unevenly. Whether it is a brief interaction in a class or student club meeting or when passing one another in the hallway, you can reach out to support another student - even when your views differ from theirs. Here are some ideas to show support in brief one-on-one talks.

- ☐ **Think before you talk and then talk like a real person.** Remind yourself that the purpose for reaching out is to show support and empathy.
- ☐ **Be genuine when connecting with other students.** Let them know you value them as a person. There are no magic words; just be yourself when you reach out to check in. Acknowledge the situation and be supportive. ("I know there's lots going on. It's tough watching the news. How are you doing?")
- ☐ **If they are grieving a personal loss, express empathy.** ("How are you feeling?" "Losing a loved one is unimaginable. I am sorry for your loss. I am here if you want to talk.") Sometimes you can let them know you care by just sitting with them for a while without saying anything.
- ☐ **Show that you hear them without judging or entering into an argument.** ("I think I hear not only your sadness and concerns about the thousands of innocent lives lost but also apprehension about what happens next." "So, with your connections to the region, you are feeling this with even more depth and urgency.") If they try to persuade you to agree with their position, let them know that you're focused on being a friend. ("There are some important arguments going on, but mostly I'm wondering how you're doing in the midst of this awfulness.")
- ☐ **If they express concern about their safety or well-being,** offer to help locate and make an appointment with safety resources, counselors, those who will help them report, or other professionals on campus. You might ask about their confidence or trust in available resources.
- ☐ **Think about ways to conclude the conversation.** Try to end on a positive note. Allow them to preserve self-esteem and leave them with the sense that you value them and want to be supportive in a difficult time. End the conversation after checking in, or, regrettably, if the discussion turns argumentative. ("Let's stay in touch." "Thanks for talking. This is a tough time.")
- ☐ **Reaching out matters even if they are not interested.** The other person may not want to talk now, or at all. Respect their answer if they are not interested. ("I understand. If you want to talk later, let me know.")

This checklist is for a student reaching out to another student. It might be useful for faculty and staff reaching out to support each other as well.

It may help to give students roleplay practice using such a list to build their skills and confidence. Colleges and universities may use this checklist ([posted online here](#)), create a derivative checklist, or re-brand the checklist with the local logo.

Suggestions and guidance for faculty, staff, and others to extend support to students

Administrators can usefully prepare faculty and staff for the ways that issues might play out in classrooms (taking the moment to thank and support these frontline personnel and encourage them to support each other). The suggestion may be as informal as Cardozo Law Dean Melanie Leslie's email, featured in Section 1, in which she wrote that another professor "began class this week by taking a moment to acknowledge that students might be in distress and asking them to let her know if they were unprepared on any given day as a result," noting that "very small gestures of kindness and empathy will make a very powerful difference." Or a leader may more formally ask faculty to acknowledge compassionately and non-judgmentally that students may be feeling a variety of deep emotions regarding the event that has occurred and the availability of campus resources for them. They might point out when to announce a willingness to modify requirements for a student's role in classroom discussions or assignment deadlines. Leaders can also counsel faculty, if warranted, against spotlighting a student who shares a race or ethnicity with one of the conflicting groups^{xxxii} or opening a discussion of the Middle East violence while emotions are so raw that students may still be angry and more tempted to insult than listen.

Constructive options for students to contribute and learn

Ideas for students need to fit the campus climate and the types and intensity of feelings. If they are mourning, perhaps organizing a vigil as Brown University's at two sad moments or a collection drive for humanitarian assistance items to donate for displaced persons. If they are deeply angry, they still might extend support to each other and have discussions within their own faith communities.

When their anger is raw, they may not be able to listen to students with opposing views or discuss respectfully with them about the violence in the Middle East; that discussion might devolve into angry insults. Still, depending on the students and facilitator, this might be a teaching moment on skills that students could use immediately and would help them in the long-term. So, it's tricky and not without risk – but worth exploring. And, if not now, the time will come when they are still interested and can learn in such a discussion. A time of raw emotions might also be a teaching moment on skills that students could use immediately and would help them in the long-term. For example, anticipating an upcoming difficult year politically, The Ohio State University launched widely attended campus-wide a difficult conversations series, with classes available for students at all levels and study areas.^{xxxiii} Another illustration of skills training might be the "ambassadors" training done in conflict areas by the U.S. Department of Justice's Community Relations Service. Pairs representing both sides in a conflict learn to use their differences as a strength in de-escalating potentially violent situations at demonstrations and elsewhere.

Students may also become more interested during a conflict in more theoretical classes, such as constitutional guarantees for speech and assembly as well as civil rights laws that might result in accountability for harassment or taking a deeper dive into conflict resolution skills and processes. Or they may want to learn more about the history and culture of the region where the conflict is occurring.

Even when the campus divides because of conflict elsewhere, students often pose demands to their own college or university administrations that are designed to both tangibly and symbolically affect that situation. They might ask the institution to divest investments, fire a person, take a public position, or change the name of a program or building (on the naming issues, see [this guide](#)). It can be constructive to engage a civil rights mediator before such demands might emerge in order to keep in touch with student groups likely to demand an action that will lead to a flat "no" from the institution's governing board (see Appendix: Resources, below). The mediator can teach students to meet with administrators to discuss their underlying interests, rather than issue an impractical demand, and can organize discussions that can lead to a positive result for all concerned.



Handling hate

Hate incidents can diminish the targeted students' sense of well-being and of their being a valued member of the college community. They affect not just the individual victim, but they also affect people who share the targeted identity with the victim. As discussed in Section 2, those students who are signing petitions or shouting the slogans that caused the problems may not realize the anxiety and hurt they are inflicting. Added to this difficult situation are those students who are away from home for the first time and too new on campus to have developed trusted friends. When they are targeted personally or as part of a group, they may be reeling.

Many universities have built extensive webpages for reporting incidents, learning about reported incidents, setting out an investigatory and adjudicatory process, explaining codes and laws, and announcing resources. The University of Massachusetts has an extensive one. This enables the campus to respond appropriately to secure accountability for perpetrators and safety of students and establishes a credible database that supplants rumors regarding the frequency and types of such occurrences.

Even if the reported painful, disruptive incident does not represent a violation of the student code or the law, it might be especially valued in a time of searing conflict for universities to make sure each student received the help they need by training those who might receive reports.

It will also be important to reinforce repeatedly the norms against taking out anger against leaders elsewhere in the world on campus community members who share a similar race, ethnicity, or religion. On some campuses, leaders announce prosecutions of those charged with hate crimes. Administrators could also make short videos for campus buses or other spots, as discussed in Section 3. For example, the Michigan Civil Rights Department created a [YouTube public service announcement](#) for city buses on hate reporting and opposing hate.^{xxxii}

Predict and prepare for future flashpoints

A group knowledgeable about the underlying conflict and the campus can meet periodically to identify flashpoints and prepare leaders ahead, thus improving the college or university's responses. Some potential flashpoints, such as a public statement about the conflict by a professor or a challenge to institutional investment policies, are campus specific. Developments in the underlying conflict – commitment of U.S. troops to join a war, for example – might lead to actions on a campus – such as sit-ins at the ROTC building. This group's expertise and alliance network can valuably help prepare an appropriate response in advance of the event.

Constant listening and messaging

Repetition helps to reassure and to restate values. Ohio State University Interim President Peter Mohler included in his end-of-semester and holiday message to the campus a reminder that the Middle East fighting continued to be on the minds of administrators and that students had moral obligations as well. He wrote:

"During this holiday season, I would be remiss if I did not also acknowledge that as hopeful as we (OSU) are for the future, the present is still a challenge for too many. It is heartbreaking to see suffering, pain and death impacting people around the world, especially the Israeli and Palestinian people – and the resulting impacts on our community."

"There is no question that division exists in our nation and around the world. The hate and intolerance we see on display daily...might suggest we are too divided to come together. It is more important than ever to demonstrate our values as Buckeyes... Our campuses are where we live, learn, teach and work. Ohio State must be a place where our community feels a sense of belonging – a place where everyone can succeed and thrive."^{xxxiv}

Plans to stay in touch with students might also include: using two-way communication channels, informal techniques, and mediators to reach affected communities; watching and using social media to reach students and each part of the community that affect students; warning students about divisive comments on social media generated by artificial intelligence operations both offshore and onshore that heighten divisions on both sides can augment efforts to correct false stories before they “take hold.”

A social media checklist might include:

- ☐ **Digital citizenship:** Students learn about their rights and responsibilities as digital citizens, as well as how to protect their privacy and personal information online.
- ☐ **Media literacy:** Students develop the ability to critically analyze and evaluate media messages, including the ability to identify bias, propaganda, and fake news.
- ☐ **Cyberbullying and online harassment:** Students learn about the consequences of cyberbullying and online harassment, and how to prevent and address these issues.
- ☐ **Digital footprint and online reputation management:** Students learn how to manage their digital footprint and online reputation, including how to create a positive online presence and avoid damaging their reputation through inappropriate online behavior.
- ☐ **Social media ethics and etiquette:** Students learn about the ethical considerations of using social media, as well as the importance of proper etiquette and respectful communication online.

Preparing for healing

At some point, emotions will become less raw. At that point, many students will be willing to listen across their differences, appreciate each other’s experiences, and restore ties with those on all sides of the conflict. Plans for that period can begin immediately. Ideas used to restore relationships and take advantage of a learning moment might include:

- Panels of experts in the underlying conflict, following by facilitated discussions among students.
- Facilitated discussions in which students tell stories about how the violence related to their past experiences and those of their families.
- Initiatives to provide humanitarian aid to the region, co-sponsored by student groups that took differing approaches to the conflict.
- Joint statements by previously opposed student groups on values they share and a desire to restore relationships.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Divisions affecting students deeply call for creative, well-organized, and extensive attention to and engagement by their leaders. “Here are our counseling and inclusion resources” will be insufficient in this setting. By answering the call to protect students, leaders can take advantage of their intense interests to help students learn skills and understandings that will contribute to their educational and lived success. They can remind students, repeatedly and through multiple media, to treat each other humanely. They can arrange the mutual support that keeps students resilient. They can focus them on the positive and away from hate.



SECTION 5

MAKE A PLAN

Plan approaches to crowd events and understandings with law enforcement

Consider what will be done in each crowd situation. Protocols with law enforcement can reflect shared understandings of the approaches to be used under various circumstances, should protests, disruptions, or hate incidents occur. Plans for crowd events will vary, depending on the range of goals among participants and the likelihood of violence. Arrange a command post that includes campus administrators with law enforcement to modify plans as an event unfolds. Do joint planning as well for the possibility of hate incidents.

WHY TAKE THESE STEPS?

In disruptive but peaceful situations, campus leaders have choices. Those choices have consequences in terms of potential violence, criminal records for students, and student and community trust. The choices deserve due deliberation made possible through early discussions involving campus administrators and law enforcement personnel.

During this current conflict in Israel and Gaza, campus leaders have differed in their choices. In December 2023, student protesters held sit-ins in the administration building at Brown University and Haverford College. Brown police arrested and charged 41 students who did not leave by closing time on the first day.^{xxxv} Fortunately for all, no students were injured during the arrest process. In contrast, Haverford administrators allowed protesters to stay for a week, at which time the students left voluntarily with no arrests or injuries. Administrators said that the College would address any issues through student code enforcement.^{xxxvi}

Choices for addressing disruptive but peaceful divisive events can be pivotal. The decisions have sometimes created new conflicts, with students who did not originally protest becoming angry about what they see as free speech limitations or calling in force against fellow students. As far back as 1970, the blue ribbon “Scranton Report” on dissension on campuses reported that when students assembled peacefully but violated traffic laws, crowded into a building, or interrupted a speaking event, police often warned the students to move and, when some did not comply, began to move them out forcibly (not always gently), including arresting some for resisting. Protesting students immediately shifted their focus to blaming university administrators for authorizing these punitive measures. On that issue, they were joined by students who had not originally been concerned about the underlying issues but wanted to stand by fellow students.^{xxxvii} Developing protocols ahead allows for discussions between campus and law enforcement leadership about who will make the pivotal decisions about moving students and how that will be accomplished.

A second benefit of reaching an agreement ahead is that it can be shared publicly. Students can be informed how they can handle the event without repercussions and warned of consequences.

Another advantage of the understandings with law enforcement is that campus administrators can then inform those in the community about the reasons for their approach. Otherwise, they may view a decision to allow disruption for a period of time to be one of ceding control to students.

Discussions with campus/city law enforcement might also focus on how to handle reports of identity group hate incidents, including those that do not constitute crimes. Hopefully, law enforcement will be willing to refer students in these situations to campus personnel who can follow up, rather than simply turning the student away.



In addition, the meetings can determine who will be present in a joint command post during a crowd event to change the plans as necessary and determine routes for the march or from an event that will keep participants safer. The “Unite the Right” march in Charlottesville in 2017 illustrates the importance of these agreements with law enforcement. According to an independent “after action” report, planning by state, city and university police was primarily internal to each, though a few planning communications occurred. As a result, state and city police could not communicate quickly when the event changed – their radio frequencies did not match. When the marchers reached the University of Virginia campus, the university police tried to handle the crowd by itself, with city police waiting outside campus. They failed to separate opposing demonstrations and did not ask city police to help until violence began. It then took time for the combined police forces to control the violence. The lack of shared plans or a joint command post to change them as events developed may have led to a failure to stem the violence on campus. That, in turn, may have emboldened protesters to engage in violence the following day. ^{xxxvii}

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES

A series of joint discussions and actions between campus administration and law enforcement leadership might avert these and other avoidable difficulties.

For crowd events:

Consider involving in these discussions a representative of each law enforcement agency that might get involved in worst case scenarios: This might be not only campus and city law enforcement but also additional agencies, including county, state, or federal agencies that might be called in when more resources are needed.

Discuss who decides whether, at what point, and how law enforcement will intervene in nonviolent campus crowd situations. Recognizing that law enforcement intervention can change a nonviolent situation to a violent one, or vice versa, clarify understandings regarding who decides whether and when to intervene. University administrators may well decide to move or cancel an interrupted speech rather than risk injuries and student arrests or allow congested traffic situations rather than clear students out of a street, whereas law enforcement leaders acting at the scene might decide differently. Campus leaders may organize “ambassadors” to warn passersby to stay clear of the demonstration to avoid situations in which demonstrators hurt individuals they believe oppose their views. Discussing “how” to intervene also matters; examining de-escalation techniques may help. Consider whether these “how” decisions should or can be reduced to writing so that they remain operative as leadership changes in various agencies.

Decide who will be in the joint command post: In addition to representatives of campus, city, and other involved police agencies, it may be wise to include campus administrators and a civil rights mediator.

Discuss mutual sharing of information so that both sets of leaders can prepare for crowd events and recognize trends in hate incidents. In these settings particular attention should be paid to social media, which both students and community groups use to communicate news, plans, speeches, developments, etc. Recognize that any university leaders and law enforcement elements interacting with the crowd may be recorded or live streamed, so they should measure their responses so that posted videos do not escalate the situation.

Inquire about event plans and help event planners secure permits, explaining that safety of those involved in the event can be increased if information is shared.

Tell students of legal and student code limitations on their actions. Students may engage more safely in crowd events if they realize what actions might subject them to legal or student code sanctions, and that these may have consequences for their careers. Further, they may understand, if explained, that many of the limitations are designed to ensure their own safety.

For hate incidents:

Discuss training for law enforcement personnel to recognize:

- what are state and federal hate crimes,
- the importance of reporting them and where to report,
- that targeted hate negatively impacts not just the targeted individual, but also those who share the targeted identity,
- that complaints about hate incidents that are not crimes should be treated with empathy, compassion, and trauma-informed practices and referred to supportive resources.

Consider preparing joint law enforcement-university statements about reporting hate incidents. To convey how seriously these leadership personnel take such matters, leaders might, for example, assure community members that each individual report matters in terms of reducing such acts. They can also inform the community about punishments that courts have recently imposed for such acts in this jurisdiction, valuably signaling to students, especially those new to campus, about the risks they might be taking in engaging in actions that they may erroneously regard as protected speech but in reality may constitute a hate crime.

Organize transparency regarding hate incidents and their consequences. Both campus and law enforcement might accumulate and post reports on a website available to students, parents, and others, so that community stakeholders can be aware of safety risks. They should also report incidents to the FBI and the applicable state agency.

Transmit to law enforcement a list of current campus resources for counseling, health services, student faith centers, student affinity groups, and victim support services.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Campus leaders may be tempted to “turn over” disruptive situations and hate complaints to law enforcement. If instead they plan ahead together – beginning before conflict generates protests and hate incidents -- reaching agreement on how to handle these situations, they may avert unnecessary violence, criminal records for students, alienation of students, new conflicts with students over their handling of the protests or hate reports, and unwelcome criticism from those within the broader community.

APPENDIX: Endnotes

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- ^{xi} Dear Colleague Letter from Catherine E. Lhamon, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, November 7, 2023. For criticism of the letter, see <https://www.thefire.org/news/departments-educations-newest-dear-colleague-letter-relies-unconstitutional-standards-offers>.
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APPENDIX: Resources

Consultation, mediation and training service offered without charge:

Available nationally:

Community Relations Service in the U.S. Department of Justice

CONTACT:

Phone: 202.305.2935 | Email: askcrs@usdoj.gov

“CRS serves as “America’s Peacemaker” for communities facing conflict based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. CRS works toward its mission by providing facilitated dialogue, mediation, training, and consultation to assist these communities to come together, develop solutions to the conflict, and enhance their capacity to independently prevent and resolve future conflict.

“All CRS services are confidential and provided on a voluntary basis, free of charge to the communities. CRS is not an investigatory or prosecutorial agency and does not have any law enforcement authority. CRS works with all parties to develop solutions to conflict and serves as a neutral party.”

Bridge Initiative of the Divided Community Project, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law

CONTACT:

Bill Froehlich, Director, Divided Community Project,

Email: Froehlich.28@osu.edu | Website: <https://go.osu.edu/dcp>

“Upon request and at no cost, mediators and other experts with extensive experience in helping local leaders respond effectively to civil unrest and tension in communities across the country can help mediate conflicts between community and law enforcement, train local community members on effective strategies to keep protests safe, and offer technical assistance to executives and community members seeking to build sustainable infrastructure for inclusive engagement.”

Available within their states:

California Civil Rights Department’s Community Conflict Resolution Unit

CONTACT:

Email: CCRU@calcivilrights.ca.gov

Website: <https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/disputeresolution/community-conflict-services/>

“The [CCRU] works with communities, and/or local and state public bodies to constructively manage or resolve conflict, minimize or eliminate the potential for violence, reduce or eliminate antagonism within communities, or help them reach mutually acceptable outcomes.”

Michigan Department of Civil Rights Community Engagement and Education Division

CONTACT:

Anthony Lewis, Director, Phone: 313-456-3740 | Email: LewisA4@michigan.gov

Website: <https://www.michigan.gov/mdcr/divisions/community-engagement>

“The [Crisis Response Team] initiates proactive measures and acts as needed to diffuse situations of community tension and unrest, and to assure that all people enjoy equal rights under the law. To carry out its responsibility, the Department monitors incidents involving race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, and other civil rights-related matters.” The office offers related training.

New Jersey Division on Civil Rights Community Relations Unit

CONTACT:

Tee Leonardo-Santiago, Director of Community Relations

Email: Tisha.Leonardo@njcivilrights.gov | Website: www.NJCivilRights.gov

The Community Relations Unit offers civil rights mediation and consultation, as well as educational programs.

At the local level:

Community mediation programs often have mediators experienced in promoting discussions among groups of people and may offer training. A search function of the National Association for Community Mediation, NAFCM, <https://www.nafcm.org/search/custom.asp?id=1949>, allows a search for a local community mediation program. The local bar association may also have a list of mediators and their experience levels, though private practitioners will typically will charge fees.

Publications offered by the Divided Community Project without charge:

- A Checklist for Extending Support to Other Students, <https://go.osu.edu/dcpexs>.
- Key Considerations for College and University Leaders: Preparing the Campus at a Time of National Polarization (2020), https://moritzlaw.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2021-07/CampusPreparation2020_3.26-2_1.pdf.
- A Practical Guide to Planning Collaborative Initiatives to Advance Racial Equity (2022), <https://moritzlaw.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2022-07/DCP%20Racial%20Equity%20Guide%202nd%20July%202022.pdf>.
- Symbols and Public Spaces amid Division: Practical Ideas for Community and University Leaders (2021), https://moritzlaw.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2021-12/DCP_Mershon_Symbols_Guide_2021a_web.pdf.
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APPENDIX: Acknowledgements

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In addition to several members of the Project's Steering Committee, the following experts in conflict resolution and campus communications met during November and December 2023 to contribute to this guide. They helped to identify the key issues and promising ideas for dealing with them. They include: Sara Childers, Assistant Vice Provost for Inclusive Excellence, The Ohio State University; Chris Davey, ThirtyPR and former Senior Associate Vice President for The Ohio State University; Luby Ismail, president, Connecting Cultures, trainer and consultant on cross-cultural conversation and Islamophobia; Carlo LoParo, ThirtyPR and public relations professional; Sara Scheinbach, Director of Jewish Partnerships, Anti-Defamation League; and Ron Wakabayashi, former regional director, U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service. We are grateful to the AAA-ICDR Foundation for the grant that funds this publication and the broader #CampusBridge initiative of the Divided Community Project at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. The Divided Community Project also thanks the Moritz College of Law, the JAMS Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, and the Ohio State University Mershon Center for International Security Studies for supporting its work in using collaborative approaches to turning division in to positive progress.

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POSTED IN OBITUARIES

OBITUARY: Alan Nishio, 78; Beloved Civil Rights and Community Leader



by Rafu Reports 01/06/2024



Alan Nishio speaks during the Day of Remembrance program in February 2018 at the Japanese American National Museum. (MARIO GERSHOM REYES/Rafu Shimpo)

Rafu Staff Report

9. Alan Nishio Obituary

Alan Takeshi Nishio passed away on Dec. 27 at his home in Gardena, surrounded by family, after battling cancer for more than 17 years. He was 78.

Born on Aug. 9, 1945 in the Manzanar concentration camp, Nishio grew up in the Venice-Mar Vista area of Los Angeles. He received his B.A. in political science from UC Berkeley in 1966 and his M.A. in public administration from the University of Southern California in 1968. He completed a certificate program in Asian studies at Sophia University in Tokyo in 1972, after a six-month course of study.

Thereafter he returned to the U.S. and became a prominent leader in the Japanese American community, dedicating his efforts to the community's welfare and recognition in U.S. society.

Nishio played an instrumental role in the fight for Japanese Americans to attain redress and an apology from the government for their wartime incarceration as founder and co-chair of the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (NCRP). His leadership from 1980-90 assisted in the enactment of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 and greatly enhanced the public's understanding of Japanese Americans and their unique history, challenges, and triumphs. He testified before the federal Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in Los Angeles in 1981 and was a speaker at Day of Remembrance observances in both Southern and Northern California.

"Like most Japanese Americans, my family never spoke of the World War II incarceration out of a sense of shame that we had done something wrong," Nishio recalled. "I felt it important to speak out so that our experiences from the camps would serve as a lesson for our nation about what can happen when groups can be profiled and scapegoated in the name of national security."

9. Alan Nishio Obituary



Alan Nishio (1945-2023)

Renamed Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress, NCRR has continued its advocacy on behalf of Japanese Americans and other communities of color. Nishio helped celebrate the book launch for “NCRR: The Grassroots Struggle for Japanese American Redress and Reparations” in 2018.

“The main challenge is to understand the importance of this moment in history and how we need to fight for many of the rights that we take for granted,” Nishio once said. “We need to fight complacency and find ways in which we can be part of the solution.”

As a leader of the Little Tokyo People’s Rights Organization (LTPRO), Nishio assisted residents and small businesses that were displaced by redevelopment carried out by the city and large corporations in the 1970s and early 1980s. LTPRO and Japanese Community Progressive Alliance in San Francisco teamed up to produce a newspaper, the *Nikkei Sentinel*. Over the years, LTPRO gave rise to other advocacy groups, including NCRR, Asian Americans for Nuclear Disarmament, and Asian Americans for Jesse Jackson.

9. Alan Nishio Obituary

Nishio was involved with the Little Tokyo Service Center from its early years, serving as a board member from 1984, board president from 1994-1998 and 2003-2014, and later as chair of the Board of Governors. Under his leadership, LTSC developed extensive services for Japanese-language speakers, the only linguistically accessible services of their kind offered in the region.

He also propelled the realization of the Budokan project to bring a community sports center to Little Tokyo. Three decades in the making, Terasaki Budokan opened its doors in 2022 and will advance the preservation and promotion of Japanese American community traditions through sports for generations to come.

Nishio was involved in various efforts to promote deeper understanding of the Japanese immigrant experience in America. He was chair of the California Japanese American Community Leadership Council, which brought together activists from Southern and Northern California, from 2005 to 2015.



Alan Nishio (center), spokesperson for the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations and the Little Tokyo People's Rights Organization, testified on behalf of the Gardena Committee for Redress and Reparations at the 1981 hearing of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in Los Angeles. He was joined by Roy Nakano (left) and Mike Murase (right). (Photo by Susie Ling/NCRR)

9. Alan Nishio Obituary

Nishio was a delegate of the inaugural class of the Japanese American Leadership Delegation Program in 2000, sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. After the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, he traveled to Japan several times on U.S.-Japan Council delegations to assist non-profit/non-governmental organizations involved in the Tohoku region's recovery. The Japanese government awarded him the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, in 2016.

One of the founders and first staff members of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center and assistant director of the Center for Social Action at USC, Nishio was engaged for many years as a mentor to younger community leaders, teaching seminars in Asian American studies and advising the Asian American Student Association at CSU Long Beach, where he served as an administrator from 1972, retiring as associate vice president of student services in 2006.

Nishio was a charter member of the Japanese American National Museum, a board member of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, and an advisor to Kizuna, an organization striving to nurture the next generation of Japanese American leaders. He also worked with the Manzanar Committee, returning to his birthplace as a speaker during the annual Manzanar Pilgrimage and receiving the Sue Kunitomi Embrey Legacy Award in 2017.

During last year's JACL National Convention, held in Little Tokyo, Nishio received the Lifetime Achievement Award, with JANM Senior Curator Karen Ishizuka accepting on his behalf. Nishio was unable to attend in person but watched the proceedings via livestream. The audience gave him a raised-fist salute in honor of his '60s activism and Helen Ota, Keiko Kawashima and Haruye Ioka of Grateful Crane Ensemble sang his favorite song, John Lennon's "Imagine."

Nishio was a long-time cycling enthusiast, and about 100 of his friends held the inaugural "Cycle for Alan" event in his honor last April, going from Dockweiler Beach to Manhattan Beach. Nishio did not ride but was on hand to greet the participants. It is anticipated that the event will continue in his memory.

Both his colleagues and those he mentored are remembering Nishio not only for his leadership and dedication to community causes, but also for his warmth and sense of humor.

Naomi Ostwald Kawamura, director of Seattle-based Densho, noted, "Alan just emanated kindness and thoughtfulness."

9. Alan Nishio Obituary

Densho Content Director Brian Niiya added, “Beyond the things on his resume, Alan was a trusted friend and mentor to many and also someone who modeled what balancing a mainstream career, activism, family — and in the last years of his life, illness and mortality — could look like. I will miss him greatly and continue to draw inspiration from all that he did and all that he was.”

“Alan had a very rare cancer which he fought with the same determination he approached so many of the issues facing our community,” said Chris Komai of the Little Tokyo Community Council and Little Tokyo Public Safety Association. “That he survived and remained productive for his final 17 years speaks to his character. A life well lived. RIP.”



Alan Nishio with Karen Korematsu, daughter of Fred Korematsu, in 2016. Nishio, who was born at Manzanar, often spoke about the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans. (J.K. YAMAMOTO/Rafu Shimpo)

9. Alan Nishio Obituary

Nishio decided to stop the treatments he had been undergoing for his cancer, including radiation and chemotherapy, having found them to be more debilitating than helpful, and to use the time he had left to get his affairs in order.

According to *Rafu* columnist Sharon Yamato, he took his six grandchildren to see the movie “Living,” a remake by British novelist Kazuo Ishiguro of the 1952 Akira Kurosawa classic “Ikiru,” in which a civil servant learns that he has a terminal illness and decides to do something worthwhile before he dies — build a long-delayed playground for the local children. “When Alan saw this film in the ’60s, it profoundly affected him, and seeing it again with his grandchildren gave him the opportunity to express how it had inspired his life and work,” Yamato said.

Nishio also took his family to the Ireichō at JANM, which contains the names of over 125,000 Japanese Americans who were incarcerated. People are invited to place *hanko* stamps beside their own names as well as names of deceased loved ones — in Nishio’s case, his grandparents, Genroku George and Kinu; his parents, Kay Kiyoshi and Mitsue; and his sister, Jane Michiko. Nishio was accompanied on this visit by his wife, their two daughters, and their six grandchildren.

“As the grandchildren stamped each name, Alan used the opportunity to share noteworthy family history that could easily have been lost or forgotten with his passing,” Yamato wrote. “He began with the story of his grandfather, who immigrated from Hiroshima to earn tax repayment money for the family farm and spent his first months doing arduous labor as a railroad worker. He then moved on to his grandmother, who was only allowed in the U.S. as one of thousands of picture brides who came to marry men they had never met.

“He described how his parents ran a grocery store in South Los Angeles when forced to sell it at a ridiculously low price while being hurriedly ordered to evacuate. Leaving their stored possessions behind in a warehouse, they returned after the war to find it ransacked, thus having to start over with virtually nothing.

“Perhaps worse than losing their material possessions, however, was losing what Alan called their ‘hopes and dreams.’ He surmised that his father most likely turned to alcohol partly to avoid facing postwar life in work he hated as a gardener. As a child required to garden by his father’s side while never speaking to his non-communicative parent, Alan now spoke openly about his father’s alcohol addiction so as not to pass this legacy of silence on to his grandchildren.”

He also talked about his sister, who developed a long-term dependency on tranquilizers prescribed by her therapist and did not see her family during her final years.

9. Alan Nishio Obituary

Kay Ochi, Kathy Masaoka, Suzy Katsuda, Richard Katsuda and Janice Yen of NCRR made the following announcement on Dec. 28: "It's with great sadness that we share the passing of Alan Nishio on Wednesday, Dec. 27, after a 17+-year fight against cancer. Alan went into hospice care in February of this year; his doctors thought that he might have 2-3 months. While the going was tough, he had the best care possible by his wife Yvonne, their daughters and families, and the support of a large community of friends.

"Yvonne shared that Alan had become bedridden about 1½ weeks ago, but on Christmas Eve he gathered his grandkids around him for a special talk ... about life and what is important in life ...

"Alan's lifelong efforts on behalf of students, redress/reparations, the Little Tokyo community have benefited us and so, so many ... May he rest in peace."

Nishio is survived by his wife of 55 years, Yvonne Wong Nishio; daughters, Angela Nishio and Mia Lockwood; son-in-law, Gregory Lockwood; and grandchildren, Evan, Alex, Sara, Ty, Kira and Emi, ages 14 to 19.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, Feb. 10, at 2 p.m. at Terasaki Budokan, 249 S. Los Angeles St. (between Second and Third streets) in Little Tokyo. In lieu of flowers or koden, a donation to LTSC is requested.

To RSVP, visit Give.LTSC.org/AlanNishio. For more information, contact Chris Aihara at aihara.chris@gmail.com.