

The Competitive EdgeNews

The Official Newsletter for the Southern California Black Chambers of Commerce

Hollywood Cities Black Chamber:
Inland Cities West Black Chamber:
Pomona Valley Black Chamber:
Riverside Cities Black Chamber :
Moreno Valley Black Chamber:
High Desert Black Chamber



San Gabriel Valley Black Chamber :
Inland Cities East Black Chamber:
Inland Valley Black Chamber:
Palm Springs Black Chamber:
Barstow Black Chamber
International Black Chamber

Blackchamberofcommerce.org

888-466-7408

February 2018

From The Desert To The Sea

SAVE THE DATE

Chamber of Commerce Annual Joint Mixer

at The  **20 YEARS** PALM SPRINGS
AIR MUSEUM
EST. 1996

Wednesday, May 2 at 5:30pm



THE COMPETITIVE EDGE

PUBLISHER

Southern California Black Chambers of Commerce

PRODUCTION

Richard Wallace

Controller

Bonnie Williams, Julia Moody

Director of Franchise Sales & Training

Nancy E. Williams

Business Development Strategist

Catherine Francis

Vice President of Membership

Julia Moody

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Glendora, Covina, West Covina, Azusa

Alicia Gayles - Inland Cities West

Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga,

Linda Lewis - Hollywood

Hollywood, North Hollywood, Culver City, Inglewood, Baldwin Hills

Dee Goins—Riverside Cities

Corona, Norco, Jurupa Valley, Mead Valley, Good Hope,

James Chapman -Inland Cities East

Rialto, Highland, San Bernardino, Redlands,
Loma Linda, Beaumont, Big Bear, Arrowhead

Patricia Littlefield - Palm Spring

Cathedral City, Palm Desert, Indian Wells, La Quinta, Indio

Nikisha Bond— Inland Valley

Temecula, Lake Elsinore, Wildomar,
Murrieta, Perris, Menifee, Canyon Lake

Roscoe Lee Owens Pomona Valley

Pomona, Diamond Bar, Montclair, Chino, Upland, San Dimas, La Verne

Moreno Valley BCC

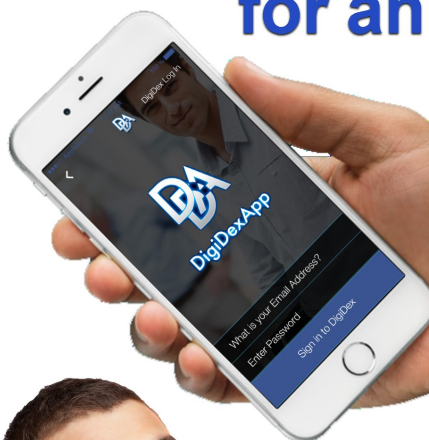
Mead Valley, Good Hope

Barstow High Desert BCC

Apple Valley, Victorville, Adelanto, Hesperia, Big Bear Lake,

**Jeff McCarty— International Chapter
The World**

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CALIFORNIA BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION
PRESENTS



THE AFRICAN AMERICAN



Weekend Conference 2018



Moving The Urban Agenda

April 20-21, 2018

Holiday Inn Sacramento - Capitol Plaza

300 J St. Sacramento, CA



CALIFORNIA BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Dedicated To Economic Empowerment

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED

2018 Legislative Reception and Public Policy Luncheon

Sherton Grand Hotel | 1230 J Street | Sacramento, CA

Legislative Welcome Reception

Tuesday, February 6, 2018
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm (RSVP Only)

Capitol Public Policy Luncheon

(Water & California's Future)

Wednesday, February 7, 2018
11:30 am - 1:30 pm

Chamber Members: \$20

Non-Members: \$35



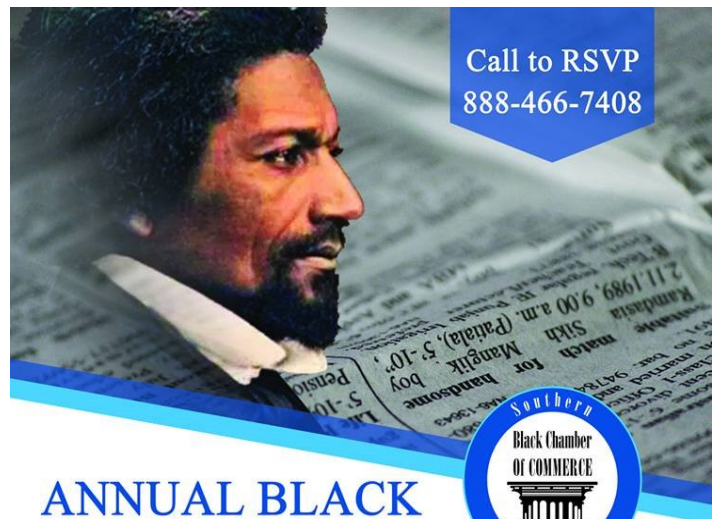
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www.calbcc.org

916.463.0178

Register Online At: www.calbcc.org/events



Call to RSVP
888-466-7408

ANNUAL BLACK HISTORY AWARDS

Awards Luncheon

This event is scheduled for
Saturday, February 10, 2018
from 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Located in the beautiful and
historic *Rezek Centre* at 2101 N.
Waterman Ave. San Bernardino,
CA 92404 on the St. Bernardine
Medical Center Campus.



**Tickets
\$25.00**

**IN HONOR OF
THE BLACK PRESS**

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blackchamberofcommerce.org



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Thursday March 15, 2018
3:30 P.M. to 5 P.M.
2069 W Slauson Ave,
Los Angeles, CA 90047

Come and Learn about the Tech Academy.
Free giveaways, Snacks, and Raffles!



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DIABETES SEMINAR

Exploring Alternative Treatments

Join us for a free dinner seminar with Dr. Sameer Ohri and learn how to improve your health, manage your diabetes, and enjoy more freedom through non-traditional treatments.



**MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2018
5:30-7:30pm**

Parkview Community Hospital
FOUNDERS CENTER
3865 Jackson Street • Riverside

RSVP: 951-688-2211 x3614
or rsvp@pchmc.org

with
Sameer Ohri, MD
Family Medicine





Southern California Black Chamber of Commerce

Presents

African Americans Press on Through Art & Media

February 1st - 25th 2018

Exhibit Hours 9:am to 5:pm

Exhibiting Artists:

**Charles Bibbs, Synthia Saint James, Aziz Diagne,
Bernard Hoyes, Aldonia R. Bailey, Gary V. Lett,
Heather Hillard Bonds, John Lloyd McClinton,
Roscoe Lee Owens.**

Opening Reception

Tuesday February 13th 6:pm to 8:pm

San Bernardino County Museum

2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands CA, 92374



Tax Problems – IRS Disputes???



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Owe the IRS large sums of money?

IRS threatening liens on your bank account, credit & property?

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ACCESS TO CAPTIOL

Moreno Valley Mixer the 1st Thursday

Mead Valley, Good Hope

Pomona Valley Mixer the 2nd Monday

Montclair, Chino, Upland, Pomona, Diamond Bar, West Covina,
Chino Hill, Claremont, San Dimas, La Verne

Palm Springs Mixer the 2nd Tuesday

Cathedral City, Palm Desert, Indian Wells, Laquinta, Indio

Barstow High Desert: 3rd Monday

Apple Valley, Victorville, Adelanto, Hesperia, Big Bear Lake,

Inland Cities West Mixer the 3rd Tuesday

Fontana, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga,

Hollywood Mixer the 3rd Thursday

Culver City, North Hollywood, Inglewood

Last Week of Month

Inland Cities East Mixer the Last Monday

Highland, San Bernardino, Redland, Loma Linda, Beaumont, Big Bear, Arrowhead

Inland Valley Mixer Last Tuesday

Temecula, Murrieta, Lake Elsinore, Wildomar, Perris, Menifee and Canyon Lake

San Gabriel Valley Mixer the Last Wednesday

Pasadena, Monrovia, Duarte, El Monte, Arcadia, Glendora, Covina, Azusa,

Riverside Cities Mixer the Last Thursday

Corona, Norco, Jurupa Valley, Mead Valley, Good Hope,

International Chapter Webinar

CHECK WEB SITE FOR UPDATES

Blackchamberofcommerce.org 888-466-7408

Council of Chambers & Business Affiliates

A/A Chamber Commerce of San Joaquin, Antelope Valley AACC, L.A. Black Business Association, Carson Black Chamber of Commerce, Central San Diego Black Chamber, Contra Costa Black Chamber Crenshaw Chamber of Commerce, IAAAACAME, Inc., Kern County Black Chamber, Fresno Metro Black Chamber, Greater Los Angeles A/A COC, Greater Watts-Willow Brook Chamber of Commerce, Monterey County A/A COC, Moreno Valley Black Chamber, North Bay Black Chamber Oakland AA Chamber of Commerce, Regional Black Chamber SFV, San Francisco A/A Chamber Silicon Valley Black Chamber, Solano County Black Chamber, U.S. Black Chamber of Commerce, Inc. Latin Business Association, Black Women's Network, The Hollywood Jewish Chamber of Commerce, The Asian Business Association, The Los Angeles Urban League

7 Habits of Successful Salespeople That are Being Ignored by the Average Sales Rep

Despite the obvious fact that marketing and sales professionals must work together to achieve the ultimate goal of increasing revenue, too many organizations' marketing and sales departments actually operate in silos, with misaligned metrics. According to Forrester Research, fewer than half of marketers indicate that they participate in pipeline reviews, and only about one-third say that their metrics closely align with sales'. Forward- thinking marketing and sales professionals align their metrics in terms of the number of MQLs needed to achieve revenue targets. It is vital to know this number for each segment, industry and geography. With this information in place, marketing professionals can begin to intelligently plan campaigns and budgets toward reaching revenue goals.





Legal Do's and Don'ts of International Trade

Presented by: DAVID J. HABIB, JR.
Lawyer, Mediator, and Educator

Tuesday March 13, 2018 9:00am—12:00pm
Hilton Los Angeles / San Gabriel Hotel
225 W. Valley Blvd., San Gabriel, CA 91776

No Cost to Attend
Continental Breakfast will be Served

*Making an international sale is a great achievement !
But carrying out the sale safely and successfully is "a business of details".
Some of the most important details are those which protect your business from a legal point of view.*

- This program will review important points in negotiating international sales contracts as well as steps to take to protect your intellectual property (patents, trademarks and copyrights).
- This program includes key points businesses should consider to ensure compliance with U.S. export regulations.
- In addition, how to reduce risk through the use of INCOTERMS

RSVP to: Jean Coronel at jcoronek@portla.org or register at: <https://tinyurl.com/SGV318>



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The
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presents its

ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

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Lifetime Achievement Award



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In Recognition of
Black History Month



**AFRICAN
AMERICANS
IN TIMES
OF WAR**

**SATURDAY
FEB 24
2018**

BLACK BUSINESS ASSOCIATION



INVITES YOU TO
SAVE THE DATE
FOR ITS 2018



IN CELEBRATION OF
NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

NEVERTHELESS, SHE PERSISTED:

Honoring WOMEN WHO FIGHT ALL FORMS OF
DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 2018

8:30 AM – 3:00 PM

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U.S. Senator Kamala D. Harris
Grand Marshal of
Martin Luther King, Jr.
33rd Annual KINGDOM DAY PARADE
Monday, January 15, 2018 ~ Los Angeles, CA



Los Angeles, CA — Adrian Dove, President and CEO, Kingdom Day Parade announced that California U.S. Senator Kamala D. Harris is the Grand Marshal for the 2018 Annual Kingdom Day Parade. ABC-7 will again broadcast the entire 2 Hour 33rd Kingdom Day Parade Live on Monday, January 15, 2018 from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

The 2.5 Mile parade route begins @ 10 AM on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd & Western Avenue, traveling west to Crenshaw, then South on Crenshaw, and ending at Leimert Park and Vernon.

The Kingdom Day Parade honors the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and has grown from its humble beginnings into the largest and longest running Martin Luther King, Jr. Annual Birthday Celebration in the nation! This year, 2018 would have been Dr. King's 89th birthday and is also the 50th Anniversary of his untimely Homegoing. Although he never reached the age of 40, his legacy will live forever. This year's theme, borrowed from First Lady Michelle Obama is: "When They Go Low, We Go High".

See complete Press Release here:



YOUR LINK TO AFRICAN AMERICAN BUSINESS OWNERS



TAX SEASON IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

Think About Making A Donation To The Black Business Association

The Black Business Association, Los Angeles headquartered in Los Angeles, the oldest, active, ethnic business organizations in the State of California has been in the business of helping people for over forty years. We are a 501(c)(3) non-political, charitable organization whose mission it is to provide economic empowerment and independence to African-American owned businesses and to be the voice of advocacy on behalf of those businesses.

As we enjoy this season of giving let's not forget that right around the corner lurks the taxman for his time of taking. At the top end of earnings, taxpayers can be liable for a combined tax rate as high as 51.9%.

Your generous donation will be acknowledged with a letter expressing our heartfelt thanks and the knowledge that you have made a difference in the lives of many of your Angelino neighbors.

For More Info: (323)291-9334 or mail@bbala.org



Kenneth I. Chenault recently announced that he is retiring from American Express in February 2018 after serving as the company's chief executive for the past 16 years. His departure reduces the ranks of black CEOs leading the largest publicly traded corporations, including Kenneth Frazier of Merck & Co.; Roger Ferguson of TIAA; Arnold Donald of Carnival Corp.; and Marvin Ellison of JCPenney.

When **BLACK ENTERPRISE** released its list of the 100 Most Powerful Executives in Corporate America in 2012, there were eight black CEOs of major publicly traded corporations. Over the last several years, there have been significant departures such as Ursula Burns stepping down from the helm of Xerox after the company completed its restructuring earlier this year. Burns was the first African American woman to be appointed as CEO of one of the nation's 500 largest corporations.

Ronald C. Parker, the president and CEO of The Executive Leadership Council (ELC), which champions the development of black executives around the world, says Chenault's retirement is bittersweet. "While we are excited about his success, we are also alarmed and disappointed that we have lost another iconic leader of a Fortune 500 company who is a black CEO," he told **BLACK ENTERPRISE**.

In fact, black CEOs at the largest publicly traded companies have diminished because African Americans are not being identified and groomed for these positions. "We have to get boards of directors and those who are responsible for succession planning of CEOs much more intentional in identifying talented individuals early on in their executive leadership career trajectory and getting them in position to be considered for the role of chairman and CEO of Fortune 500 companies," says Parker. He added that the problem stems from the lack of diversity in boardrooms at Fortune 500 companies, where African American men hold just 5.6% of board seats and only 2.2% of seats are held by black women, according to the ELC. "It's the responsibilities of the board of directors, which we know is not reflective of the population that companies serve. Almost 80% of boards are run by white males," says Parker. As a result, board directors are selecting leaders whom they look like and identify with.

Nonetheless, Parker praised Chenault for his contributions to the ELC and AmEx, where he worked for a total of 37 years. "We are so very proud of the legacy of leadership that Ken has demonstrated over his illustrious career," Parker said in a press release. "He guided the company through the difficult days of 9-11 as the new CEO of American Express, and once again during one of the most challenging global economic recessions of our time. Ken has always been a true model of courageous leadership, operating with the utmost integrity and distinction as demonstrated by his co-chairing and championing the fundraising efforts for the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C., and playing a vital role in the creation of the ELC's CEO Academy and board diversity initiatives." Chenault is slated to stay at Amex until Feb. 1. The 66-year-old corporate leader will be succeeded by Steve Squeri, 58, the current vice chairman of the company.

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LULA WASHINGTON DANCE THEATRE

January 11-13, 2018



Photo by Krystal Tordin-Barnard

Los Angeles-based company
Lula Washington Dance Theatre celebrates the legacy of
Martin Luther King Jr. by offering Wallis audiences three different
programs of dance over the MLK holiday weekend. Not to be missed,
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Dance @ The Wallis is made possible in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

*Tickets subject to availability. Offer not valid on previous purchases or in conjunction with any other discount or offer. Offer valid for all performances. Offer valid through January 13, 2018. Service fee and historic preservation fee apply to all orders. No refunds or exchanges.

Mission

The Southern California Black Chamber of Commerce (SCBCC) is a nonprofit 501(c)(6) business organization dedicated to improving the economic environment for the minority business community, and fostering business development and prosperity. The SCBCC focuses its efforts on four major areas:

- ☐ Economic Development
- ☐ Community Development
- ☐ Public Policy and
- ☐ Membership Services

The SCBCC invests financial and other resources to implement relevant programs for members and which affect the orderly growth and development of the community. It is the catalytic agency that brings together all of the forces, public and private, through which common goals can be resolved. The fundamental mission of the SCBCC is to create and promote a climate where minority businesses can operate in a productive and profitable manner. The SCBCC has served member businesses since 1993, and their enabling them to prosper through mutual cooperation and support.

Financial Strength and Stability

As in any business a sound financial base is essential for a chamber of commerce to perform its mission. A portion of the SCBCC's finances are received on a voluntary basis from chamber membership, through an annual dues investment. The amount a member pays to the chamber may be based on a fee formula, business classification, special negotiation or averaging. Increasingly over the last 10 years, dues make up a smaller percentage of chamber budgets, with the average being about 50 percent. The remaining portion of the budget is dependent upon income received through the sales of publications, charges for services, special projects and foundations. A well developed product and services program is the current trend for successful chambers of today.

Structure

The SCBCC is governed by Officers and a Board of Directors. The President of the Board appoints Committee Chairs to meet the needs of the Chamber. The staff is headed by the Executive Director.

Programs

The SCBCC's primary programs are created to provide the maximum benefit to business owners and professionals in Southern California. These programs include:

- ☐ **Contacts to Contracts** – The SCBCC actively engages in facilitating government and corporate contracts for minority businesses.
- **Business Development and Training** – Minority business owners, operators and their staff are provided a range of workshops, one-on-one training, peer mentoring, resources and referrals.
- ☐ **(Networking and Professional Development** – The SCBCC provides local and regional networking for all who wish to participate. Monthly mixers, local business conferences, seminars and workshops are provided for the purpose of unifying and connecting minority businesses with the resources, contacts and training needed to grow their businesses.



J. E. T. M. A. C., Inc.
Juneteenth Education Technology Mobile Arts Center
"Teaching Today Tomorrow's Leaders"

17TH MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. UNITY BREAKFAST

MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2018

ONTARIO AIRPORT DOUBLETREE HOTEL



222 N. VINEYARD BLVD.
ONTARIO, CA

DOORS OPEN @ 8:30 AM
BREAKFAST & PROGRAM 8:30-10:30AM
PANEL DISCUSSION 11AM-1PM

GENERAL ADMISSION \$36 ADVANCED SALE

GENERAL ADMISSION \$40 DOOR

VIP \$50 (RSVP ONLY)

TABLE OF 10 \$324

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The 20th Annual Celebrity Golf Tournament

Southern California Black Chamber of Commerce

20th Celebrity Golf Classic

"Remember Alzheimer's & Dementia" Campaign

July 2017





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Chamber of Commerce
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Mr. Aubry Stone**

**Los Angeles Black
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Association
President
Mr. Skip Cooper**

**Southern
California Black
Chamber of Commerce
President
Mr. Rich Wallace**

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17th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Unity Breakfast

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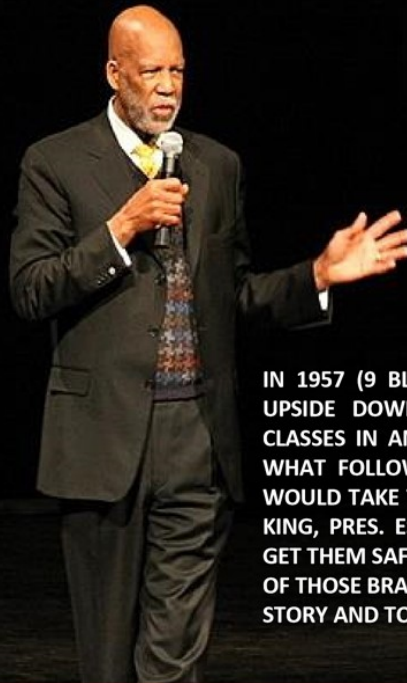
DR. TERRENCE J. ROBERTS

of

"THE LITTLE ROCK NINE"

MONDAY, JANUARY 15 2018
ONTARIO AIRPORT DOUBLETREE HOTEL
222 N VINEYARD, AVE. ONTARIO CA

DOORS OPEN 8:30 -10:30
EVENT PANEL 11:00 – 1:00



TERRENCE J. ROBERTS (1957)

IN 1957 (9 BLACK STUDENTS) TURNED THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN BY ATTEMPTING TO ENROLL FOR CLASSES IN AN "ALL WHITE SCHOOL" IN ARKANSAS. WHAT FOLLOWED CHANGED AMERICA FOREVER. IT WOULD TAKE THE JOINT EFFORTS OF THE NAACP, DR. KING, PRES. EISENHOWER & THE U.S. MILITARY TO GET THEM SAFELY ENROLLED. DR. ROBERTS WAS ONE OF THOSE BRAVE STUDENTS. COME AND HEAR HIS STORY AND TOUCH LIVING HISTORY.

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



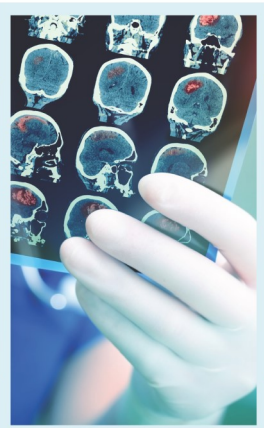
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PARKVIEW HEALTH SERIES 2018

Advances in STROKE TREATMENT and RESEARCH



MONDAY, JANUARY 29, 2018
5:30-7:30pm

LOCATION:

Parkview Community Hospital
FOUNDERS CENTER
3865 Jackson Street • Riverside

RSVP: 951-688-2211 x3614
or rsvp@pchmc.org

Presented By



Join us for a free dinner seminar with Dr. Byron Ford, Professor of Biomedical Sciences at UC Riverside School of Medicine. Dr. Ford and his team of researchers work with a recently discovered protein, NRG, that could prevent brain cell death and inflammation. Learn how this important research is leading to advances in the care of stroke patients.



Chris R. Holden
Assemblymember, 41st District

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ELEVENTH AND LOGAN
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Riverside Cities Chapter

Networking Mixer the Last Thursday
of every month



President Dee Goins
Riverside Cities Chapter
Riverside, Corona, Norco, Jurupa Valley, Mead Valley,
Good Hope

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Jeremiah 29:11

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Quarter Page	\$99
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Parkview Community Hospital Presents

OUR COMMUNITY OUR HEALTH

Understanding the OPIOID CRISIS



Join us for a panel discussion on opioid abuse in Riverside. You'll hear from health professionals and law enforcement representatives on current local drug trends, recent government legislation, root causes of addiction, and options for treatment and prevention.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Dr. Nikan Khatibi, *Inland Pain Specialists*

Rhyan Miller, *Program Administrator for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program/Riverside University Health Systems*

Mike Miller, *Group Supervisor Tactical Diversion Squad, Riverside District Office DEA*

General community members as well as educators, coaches, and parents will benefit from this presentation.

Monday, February 12

5:30 - 7:30pm

Free Dinner & Presentation

**Parkview Community Hospital
FOUNDERS CENTER**

3865 Jackson Street • Riverside

RSVP:

951-688-2211 x3614

or rsvp@pchmc.org



CBC, Judiciary Democrats Introduce Resolution to Censure Trump for Racist “Shithole” Comments

Currently, the Resolution has Nearly 150 Co-Sponsors

WASHINGTON – Today, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and the House Judiciary Committee – led by CBC Chairman Cedric L. Richmond (D-LA-02) and Ranking Member Jerrold Nadler (D-NY-10) respectively – introduced [a resolution to censure](#) President Trump for the racist “shithole” comments he made about Haiti and African countries during a bipartisan January 11, 2018, meeting on American immigration policy. The resolution currently has nearly 150 Democratic co-sponsors.

Specifically, the resolution censures President Trump for the following:

- Questioning whether Haitians needed to be included in the compromise. “Haitians, why do we need more Haitians? Take them out,” President Trump said.
- Referring to African countries as “shitholes” or “shithouses;” and

Suggesting that instead of accepting immigrants from predominately black Haiti and African countries, the United States should instead allow more immigration from predominately white countries like Norway.

Joint Statement from CBC Chairman Richmond and House Judiciary Committee Ranking Member Nadler:

“We were deeply disturbed and offended by President Trump’s remarks regarding Haiti and African countries. The countries he called ‘shitholes’ produce immigrants that are remarkable and make significant contributions to our country. A high percentage of those immigrants have college degrees and when they get here they create businesses and jobs.

“These remarks have compelled us to prepare a resolution of censure with our colleagues, to condemn President Trump for his racist statements. This censure resolution is important because America is a beacon of hope. We have to show the world that this president does not represent the real feelings of most of the American people which is part of the reason why he lost the popular vote.

“The President’s bigoted fearmongering is not acceptable and his remarks completely warrant total condemnation and censure from Congress. American immigration policy cannot and should not be guided in any way, shape or form by racism.

“We will be asking Republican Leadership to bring our resolution of censure up for swift consideration and approval. Congress must speak with one voice in condemning these offensive and anti-American remarks. There is no excuse for it.”

In addition to Chairman Richmond and Ranking Member Nadler, co-sponsors include House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer, Assistant Democratic Leader James E. Clyburn, House Democratic Chairman Joe Crowley, and Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security.





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The Victor Valley NAACP and National Action Network are planning a Nov. 10 protest outside Rancho Motor Company in Victorville, which since February has been embroiled in lawsuits alleging systemic bank and credit fraud and racial discrimination.

Victor Valley NAACP President Bill Thomas; the Rev. Jonathan Moseley, vice president of the National Action Network's Los Angeles office; and Clifton Harris, San Bernardino American News publisher, Victor Valley NAACP member and retired

sheriff's deputy, sent letters dated Sept. 8 to Victorville City Manager Doug Robertson and Victorville sheriff's Capt. Jonathan Schuller, informing them of the scheduled protest. They said 150 to 200 people plan to attend the protest, and inquired as to whether they would need a permit to hold the protest.

"The purpose of this gathering is to protest Rancho Motor's racist and predatory practices toward minority groups, specifically the African American community," the identical letters stated.

Since February, former Rancho Motor Company employees have [come forward](#) alleging a racist, sexist culture at the 46-year-old family-owned business, which they say engages in and encourages systemic bank and credit fraud to close more deals and rake in more profits. One former employee, Danny Braun, who is a retired San Bernardino County sheriff's sergeant, said he left the company but continued to stay on the payroll to keep quiet after he began complaining to company owner and president John Wilkins about the dealership's business practices, racism and sexism.

On Sept. 7, Rancho's former finance manager, Rene Williams, sued the company alleging he was hired in April as a "token black" employee in an effort to quell the negative publicity surrounding the company's legal issues and allegations of racism. Prior to going to work for Rancho, Williams was working at another auto dealership and was

contacted by Rancho General Manager Jason Wilkins, who asked him to apply for work at Rancho, according to the lawsuit. Williams was subsequently hired as Rancho's new finance manager.

"It did not take long for plaintiff to suffer discrimination and harassment from Jason Wilkins as a result of his race," according to the lawsuit, which stated Wilkins was often hostile to Williams, flying into a rage and throwing objects in his office, leading Williams to believe Wilkins was going to physically attack him. Wilkins often criticized Williams' work, yelling and cursing at him, slamming files on his desk, and accusing Williams of thinking he had "black privilege," the lawsuit claims.

When Williams complained to Wilkins' father and company owner and president John Wilkins, the senior Wilkins just "smiled and shrugged his shoulders and did nothing and rather, acted to protect his son," the lawsuit alleges.

Williams was fired in June, his attorney Tristan Pelayes said.

Neither Wilkins nor John Musella, a spokesman for the company, responded to requests for comment Friday. They have denied the allegations.

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