

# RICHMOND RESIDENT'S NONPROFIT HONORS AFRICAN AMERICAN CONTRIBUTIONS

Posted on January 24, 2024 by OAKLAND POST



When A.J. Jelani was growing up in project housing in San Francisco, his family couldn't afford Christmas gifts, so his sister found an old toy gun, rubbed Vaseline on it to make it shiny and new, and made it a gift from Santa. Jelani said he showed off the gift to his friends, but added, "I never want any child to feel the way I did." The post Richmond Resident's Nonprofit Honors African American Contributions first appeared on Post News Group.

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## Special to The Post

We respectfully request that you vote "No" on the City Council resolution regarding Tidewater Franklin Street development due to be scheduled on the Jan. 16 City Council agenda.

Tidewater's proposed development will harm Geoffrey's Inner Circle through its very construction, in much the same way that another nearby Black business, Uncle Willie's Original Bar-B-Que and Fish, was devastated by the construction of a 27-story hotel tower adjacent to the historic building that housed this venerated Black business.

Further, the Planning Commission made many errors in its approval process, including but not limited to the following:

1. Its members acknowledged that they were not even aware that the Black Arts Movement and Business District existed.
2. It ignored the fact that Geoffrey's was entitled to critical protections as a recognized historic resource.
3. It ignored the fact that Tidewater had not sought permits or permission to alter Mr. Pete's building, although such alterations are an integral part of Tidewater's proposal.
4. The Planning Department did not provide, in a timely manner, relevant Public Records Act information requested by the appellant.

In addition, the Planning Department staff has refused to meet with Mr. Geoffrey Pete throughout the appeal process. Sadly, it also appears that the City's own Department of Race and Equity has been bypassed on a matter with significant equity implications.

Trending

[Tyler Perry Lent Bobby Brown His Private Jet to Rush to Bobbi Kristina's Bedside: Details](#)

It should also be noted that there are dozens of studies indicating that residential construction like Tidewater's drives out live entertainment venues. Many cities have laws to regulate such potential conflicts.

Geoffrey's is a critical business to the Oakland community as a whole, and particularly to the African American community.

It has been a place of comfort and camaraderie for thousands of people who have listened to music, held celebrations, funeral repasts, and community meetings. And, Pete hosts an incubator program which has provided a haven for business owners who would not have had success if not housed in his building with below market-rate rent and other amenities, thus enabling them to survive in the ever-more costly downtown area.

The African American population in Oakland has decreased from 47% in the 1980s to 22% currently. A large part of the reason has been City policies which privilege the desires of wealthy developers

over the needs of the Black community.

There are questions about housing and other matters which are too lengthy for this letter; we would be happy to discuss all of these with you.

We urge you in the strongest terms to support Geoffrey's and refuse to vote in support of any measure presented to you that would allow Tidewater's construction next to Geoffrey's.

Signers (partial list):

### **Organizations**

*Black Women Organized for Political Action, Oakland Berkeley Chapter*

*Oakland East Bay Democratic Club*

*Block by Block Organizing Network*

*John George Democratic Club, Steering Committee*

*Niagara Movement Democratic Club*

*Everett and Jones Bar-B-Que*

*Uncle Willie's Bar-b-Que and Fish*

*Joyce Gordon Gallery*

### **Pastors:**

*Pastor Phyllis Scott, president, Pastors of Oakland*

*Rev. Dr. Lawrence Van Hook, Community Church*

*Rev. Dr. Jasper Lowery, International Outreach Ministries*

*Pastor Cornell Wheeler, Greater Whittington Temple, COGIC*

*Rev. Dr. Joe Smith, Good Hope MBC*

*Bishop Brandon Rheems, Center of Hope Community Church*

*Pastor Daniel Stevens, GreaterNew Life COGIC*

*Pastor Joseph Thomas, New Hope COGIC*

*Bishop Joseph Nobles, Dancey Memorial COGIC*

*Pastor Edwin Brown, Market Street Seventh Day Adventist*

*Bishop J.E. Watkins, Jack London Square Chapel COGIC*

*Rev. Kenneth Anderson, Williams Chapel MBC*

*Rev. Germaine Anderson, People's MBC*

*Bishop Marcel Robinson, Perfecting Ministries*

*Pastor K J Williams, New Beginnings Church*

*Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Captain, Glad Tidings*

*Bishop George Matthews, Genesis Worship Center*

*Rev. Dr. David Franklin, Wings of Love SDA Church*

*Bishop Anthony Willis, Lily of the Valley Christian Center*

*Bishop L E Franklin, Starlight Cathedral*

*Rev. Dr. Sylvester Rutledge, North Oakland MBC*

*Pastor Raymond Lankford, MSW, Voices of Hope Community Church*

*Minister Candi Thornton, Arsola House Ministries*

*Rev. Dr. Joseph Jones, Alpha and Omega Ministries*

*Superintendent Dan Phillips, Greater Grace Temple, COGIC*

**Individuals:**

*Walter Riley, Attorney at Law*

*Corrina Gould, Tribal chair of Confederated Villages of Lisjan/Ohlone*

*Zach Norris, Open Society Foundation Fellow*

*Raymond Bobbitt, Business*

*Doug Blacksher*

*Terryn Niles Buxton, business*

*Lauren Cherry, School Administrator*

*Allene Warren*

*Nirali Jani, PhD, Professor of Education*

*Frankie Ramos, PhD, community organizer*

*Henry Hitz, Educator*

*Sheryl Walton, Community Organizer*

*Vincent Tolliver, Musician*

*Eleanor Stovall, Educator*

*Kitty Kelly Epstein, PhD, Professor of Urban Studies, and Education*



## **Oakland Post**

**There are no comments yet.**