

**HRC Letter to Council, regarding the response to the  
current pattern of incidents of hate in Palo Alto**

**DRAFT ONLY**

One of the Human Relations Commission's leading roles is listening to community concerns—and then taking action. Over the past few months, the people of Palo Alto have brought to our attention several hate-based crimes, which have targeted churches, minorities, and those supporting the Black Lives Matter movement.

This year, our communities experienced:

- the desecration and vandalization of the University African Methodist Episcopal Church, the oldest black church in Palo Alto
- the unauthorized removal of First Congregational Church of Palo Alto's Black Lives Matter sign
- the posting of a "Wuhan Virus" sign in front of a popular coffee shop
- the posting of derogatory signs at three school properties this spring, referring to COVID-19 as the "Chinese Virus."
- the verbal assault of a Palo Alto Council Member because of his Asian ethnicity
- the defacement of a campaign poster of the only Black candidate for council with a White Lives Matter Sign
- the distribution of "White Matters" letters at private homes (see attached photo)
- the defacement of a student art Black Lives Matter project by an assailant wearing MAGA paraphernalia
- the vandalism and removal of at least ten BLM signs (see attached sheet)

These incidents in 2020, along with other incidents in recent years—including the unauthorized leaving of anti-LGBTQ materials at the library and antisemitic materials at Gunn High School—shows a disturbing trend. As a community, we need to address this problem at the root. We can no longer excuse these events as "one-off incidents" or pranks where "kids are just being kids." We see a repeated pattern of hate, and it is time for us to stand and actively address these issues.

In Washington last week, lawmakers, grandmothers, CEO's, and others stormed the Capitol. Several people from our area attended this insurrection and participated in violent activity. We need our council to state that we are a city that doesn't accept this. We need our city to arrest and prosecute individuals involved in hate crimes to the maximum extent of the law. We ask the council to direct staff to create programs that educate on hate crimes in our city.

In this critical time we need the City Council as the highest elected official in our city to lead and come out emphatically against the surge of hate in our community.

Human Relations Commission  
Rev. Kaloma A. Smith, Chair  
Valerie Stinger, Vice Chair





W H I T E L I V E S M A T T E R also

June 25, 2020

Oh ! Is someone offended ? Good ! They should be.

I t i s t i m e ..... yes high time indeed, for you  
to stand up and be strong in your mind. Be proud of your race  
and of the great achievements of your people.

Do NOT ever appologize and N E V E R accept blame.

Listen, you cannot remove the hatred that those three  
demonic spirits who made B L M have for you, or the evil they  
have planed to do to you ..... but you can be ready.

Those who pull down statues

will pull you out of your homes

with the egar help of your own children,

ignorant, stupid children

who have been brain-washed

in the schools you sent them to.

In a way it's your own fault. There's no time for self-blame  
though. You've been beaten up already enough, more than enough.

First things first. You must develop a certain mind-set.

Do not get down on your hands and knees to beg for the contempt  
from those ( YES THOSE ! ) who make the color of skin

the most important thing

that there can be..... and so therefore it is.

You did hope for peace, but you are not getting it.

If the police are gone, you'll be a goner too. They know that. You  
should too, but you have time..... enough to hire security patrols

to protect you and your family in your homes. G o o d l u c k

## BLM Lawn Signs

[REDACTED]  
Steven a few weeks back our BLM sign was trashed in the bushes 2x in one week, I didn't notify police. This problem is more prevalent than documented I believe.

[REDACTED]  
our BLM sign was removed from our lawn as well!

[REDACTED]  
Mine and at least one other flyer on our street 7/22. Reported.

[REDACTED]  
My BLM sign disappeared a week or two ago.

[REDACTED]  
This is the letter I got in response to me BLM sign in Palo Alto.

[REDACTED]  
I had a BLM sign stolen from my yard in PA a few weeks ago. Hopefully another one is arriving soon. If this one disappears, too, I'll start making my own from cardboard. Can't let the vandals win.

[REDACTED]  
My Black lives matter yard sign was posted over with a white lives matter poster -- which, ironically, said 'be proud of your race' (I'm a POC). Another paper with rants (which also made many presumptions about my race, gender, affiliations etc..) was stuck to the sidewalk. (I don't want to share pictures here to reduce publicity)

[REDACTED]  
A friendly and vigilant neighbour who had this happen to his sign, and others in the neighbourhood pointed this out to me. Clearly not an isolated incident.

Have you had this happen to you, and do you have suggestions on what we can do as a community?


Maybe put up more BLM signs to keep our friend busy (and hopefully someone with an outdoor camera may spot them in the act)?


Also given some of the language and logical inconsistencies in the poster - they may need mental health support?

I'm not concerned about safety (though they did need to come onto my property to do this) - Palo Alto remains a very safe and inclusive place. Maybe we can think of ways to demonstrate what a safe and inclusive community we are, to our hot and run poster?

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

 Well then inevitable has happened. Someone has removed my two black lives matters signs. They even took one of the wire stands, which was shoved deeply into the ground. I had them for one month. That's actually much longer than I thought I would be able to hold onto them. I take it as testimony of the importance of the message, and the challenge some experience in coming to terms with it. BLM!

4 days ago   Thank   Reply    3

[REDACTED]

Our signs and our neighbour's are within our property. Someone left a white lives matter flyer with tape near one of our signs and a neighbor's. One kind soul in the neighbourhood, took pictures of the white lives matter signs on his and our properties in the neighbourhood and reported the incident to the police, then removed those flyers. The flyers haven't appeared since. The flyers were placed on our respective properties and that is not done. In 20+ years of living in Palo Alto, I have not seen this and it is sad. I would suggest whoever had this happen, if the person's signs were placed on your property, please take a picture and report it.

[REDACTED]

They got a house in Greenmeadow last night. On Shasta. I saw the glued sign but I was driving and didn't see anything else.

[REDACTED]

Our two posters were stolen a week apart.

