



**@PROJECT**  
**eRacism**  
Empowering Equitable Awareness  
Investments & Racial Justice for All

# RACIAL JUSTICE *ACTIVIST* COALITION

San Quentin



INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE  
ALLIANCE

InternationalJusticeAlliance.org/racial-justice-activist  
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WRONGFUL CONVICTION IS A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE

# Racial Justice Act(ivist) Coalition

Equity & Unity Within Diversity @San Quentin Rehabilitation Center

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## MISSION STATEMENT:

As the world needs *equity and unity within diversity* more than ever, the Racial Justice Act(ivist) Coalition (RJAC) aims to identify, train, and collectively transform those who have been either victimized by and/or propagated, enabled racial discrimination into equality-equity oriented RJAC ambassadors. At the cusp of San Quentin Prison transforming into the San Quentin Rehabilitation Center, the residents of the institutions are ideal candidates transforming themselves and the culture itself through this pilot program.

## NARRATIVE:

### The What

The *Racial Justice Act(ivist) Coalition* is a first of a kind 12-week pilot program that has practical, dynamic inclusive modules that address the tribulations of and potential solutions to negative stereotypes. The program will also address biases around a person(s) appearance, where they come from, what they believe in and/or practice as a lifestyle. At its core the RJAC aims to enhance empathy, equality and equity for all. As the California Legislature acknowledged in passing the groundbreaking *Racial Justice Act*<sup>1</sup>, “the way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to speak openly and candidly on the subject of race.”

RJAC would be a de facto think tank working towards solutions to the epidemic of racial, religious, nationalistic, ethnic prejudices and discrimination. The program will focus on inclusive community building, gathering data on the above topics.

This will be accomplished through evidence based educational, self-help/cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), conflict resolution techniques, group mediation as well as dialog/ pro-social interface.

RJAC participants will also practice standardized mental health tools to recognize, control and override pre-conditioned negative stereotyping “priming” and “othering” misconceptions and biases.<sup>2</sup>

Identifying one’s causative factors, adverse associations and assumptions that fueled racial, religious, nationalistic, and or ethnic biases, are explored and subsequently replaced with more fact based, individualized assessments and inclusive belief systems.

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<sup>1</sup> Authored by Assembly member Kalra (San Jose), the RJA became law under Governor Gavin Newsom (Jan 2021), and retroactive as of Jan 2024.

<sup>2</sup> “Race” is primarily a “social construct” as Humans share 99.9% of their genetic make-up as per the National Genome Research (2018) *Genetics vs Genomics fact sheet*.

### The Where

RJAC can be conducted in any available room around the education department or the chapel area [where we already have an option on Tuesdays from 1130-1230 at the Chapel B prayer room, sponsored by the Chaplain Shleffar]

### Who It Benefits

As San Quentin Prison undergoes a transformation into a pioneering Rehabilitation Center, with substantial investments and expectation behind it, there is a unique opportunity for it's residents, the administration and society as a whole, to benefit from this program because there is no better location nor population to be the prototype for such needed equity and unity within diversity.

The RJAC trains participants to become (a) self-aware, (b) utilize objective analysis (c) detect overt, implicit as well as covert expressions prejudices. Over the 12 weeks the participants will learn to identify such biases against individuals or groups, and swap them with more constructive belief systems, attitudes and actions. The RJAC thus empowers participants with integral rehabilitative skills and attitudes towards reducing crime and recidivism.

The overall goal of this program will be to help reduce crime and recidivism through a commitment to non-violent conflict resolution, self-improvement, communication, cooperation and social activism.

### **RJAC FORMAT MODULES & ANNUAL FORUM:**

#### **MODULE:**

##### **Week 1**

- a) Definition of discrimination and it's various forms [racial/religious, ethnic, nationalistic] and manifestations [implicit, overt and covert]. Pre/post test to measure concepts in curriculum. Discussion on the significance and opportunity of the Racial Justice Act being passed and what we can do to be part of the solution? What is the socio-economic and legal impact of the above?
- b) *LiesBreaker* group activity to address and demystify popular misconceptions and negative stereotypes.

##### **Week 2**

- a) Self-assessment tool kit and techniques: Are you a victim and/or a propagator of racial/religious, ethnic, and nationalistic prejudice?
- b) Forming the RJAC *think tank*: Recognizing negative stereotypes, distorted belief systems, patterns and denial management.
- c) Tribalism and "Us vs. Them" Dynamics: Covert Covered-up Racism (CCR); Explicit Overt Racism (EOR) and Subconscious Implicit Racism (SIR)
- d) Team activity, walking in another "groups" shoes.
- e) Selecting theme for final project.

### Week 3

- a) *LiesBreaker* group activity
- b) Research and discussion on the history of racism part 1: The geography of color. The caste and class systems under the “divine right to rule” and feudalism.
- c) Research and medium for final project: Vanguard Justice written article 1 journaling your personal experience with Racial/Religious, ethnic, nationalistic discrimination. Winners will be announced week 7 and be published.

### Week 4

- a) *LiesBreaker* group activity
- b) Research and discussion on the history of racism part 2: Colonization and the commercial origins of slavery.
- c) Research and medium [writing; art, film, multi-media] proposals for final project.

### Week 5

- a) *LiesBreaker* group activity
- b) Research and discussion on the history of racism part 3: American Racism, invasion of the indigenous natives and empire building socio-economics.
- c) Research and medium [writing, art, film, multi-media] 3 people each team ups for final project.

### Week 6

- a) *LiesBreaker* group activity
- b) Research and discussion on the history of racism part 4: American Racism double standards after the civil war, legalized slavery under the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment and empire building socio-economics.
- c) Research and medium [writing, art, film, multi-media] first draft of final project.

### Week 7

- a) *LiesBreaker* group activity
- b) Research and discussion on the history of racism part 4: American White supremacy, plantation to “convict labor” economies and Jim Crowe laws.
- c) Research and medium [writing, art, film, multi-media] amended draft of final project.
- d) Announce winners of initial Vanguard Justice essay/ article.

### Week 8

- a) *LiesBreaker* group activity
- b) Research and discussion on the history of racism part 5: American Eugenics pseudo sciences, prison building & segregation laws against blacks, natives and Asians borrowed by

Nazi propaganda towards the concentration camps and “final solution” of the Jewish. Surge of Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

- c) Research and medium [writing, art, film, multi-media] final draft of final project.

### Week 9

- a) *LiesBreaker* group activity
- b) Research and discussion on the history of racism part 6: American civil rights movement and the profit politicized prison industrial complex targeting colored minorities. The end of overt colonization resulting in racial/religious divides in the Middle East and Indo-China sub-continent.
- c) Research and medium [writing, art, film, multi-media] submissions of final project.

### Week 10

- a) *LiesBreaker* group activity
- b) Research and discussion on the history of racism part 7: American pop-culture and racism, anti-immigrant sentiments post 9/11, minorities finding their voice and economy through entrepreneurship, hip-hop, blues and new laws. Economic and environmental consequences of the concentration of power and widening disparities of wealth.
- c) Research and medium [writing, art, film, multi-media] late submissions of final project.

### Week 11

- a) *LiesBreaker* group activity
- b) Research and discussion on the history of racism part 8: The bi-partisan “war on crime” and “Crime Bill” targeting blacks and minorities feeding the prison industrial complex pipeline. Rise of Asian hate crimes, police brutality leading to Black Lives matter and the Racial Justice Act being passed. The resurgence of white supremacy, and insurrections and role of technology and social media.
- c) Reviews and critique of final project.
- d) How to become a racial justice activist, what charities and organizations, externships and volunteer work can be done.

### Week 12

- a) RJAC *equity and unity within diversity* Forum and Graduation gala featuring guest speakers such as progressive prosecutors, activists and lawmakers, and best of show exhibition of final projects. Think tank studies and results. Pre/post test assessing comprehension of concepts.
- b) Panel discussion on the state of race/religion, ethnic and nationalistic biases, laws, environmental impact as well as opportunities/call to action.
- c) Winners of the final presentation on *equity and unity within diversity* will be part of and credited for creating the actual curriculum, the promotions and be ambassadors for the RJAC as an ongoing group and network.

## **WHO:**

In laying the foundation to equity and unity within diversity we also enhance empathy cultivation customized for the demographics. This starts with Phase (1) residents of San Quentin); Phase (2) adding correctional & rehabilitation staff and Phase (3) to use the valuable ethnographic studies, data and effective aspects towards applications into various institutions and industries that deal with people from various diverse backgrounds. The intrinsic value of the RJAC extends beyond the walls because any sustainable solidarity formulated by and for the carceral residents, who have extensive experience with such racial/religious ethnic, nationalistic challenges, is a formula that can be shared and adapted for virtually any demographic segment.

Participant factors: Open to all San Quentin Residents who are sincere about transforming themselves into RJAC ambassadors for *equity and unity within diversity* for all. The initial cohort will be limited to 12 and organized by 3 facilitators.

## **Enrollment:**

Credits: certificate of completion and display of final project at graduation and exhibition for participants who successfully complete the program with at least 80% attendance.

## **WHEN, WHERE & HOW MUCH?**

The RJAC is primarily self-awareness education, with mental health aspects but has extensive support from the religious leaders as well. It has already received the support of virtually every existing group, diverse races and religious leaders<sup>3</sup>.

There are no financial costs to San Quentin as there are 501 (c) charity sponsors including the Davis Vanguard and the International Justice Alliance expressed interest in arranging for donations [which will follow the CDCR protocol] such as suggested reading, writing, recording materials and instruments that enhance *equity and unity within diversity* for all.

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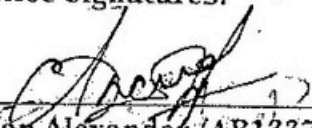
<sup>3</sup> SQRC Chaplains: Rabbi Shleffar, Islamic Imam Mohammed and Christian Pastor Nobles (The Prison Fellowship)

## RJAC Committee:


- Anand Jon Alexander (AB1337) Founder. Master's Degree Student at Cal State University HUN Master's 2023-2025 (with the California Department Of Rehabilitation), Intern at San Quentin Media Center; Graduate of Parson's School of Design/New School for Social Research (NYC); Film Intensive (USC); Alternative to Violence facilitator Project (AVP) facilitator, Creative Director, EcoKnowMix (environmental sustainability brands)
- Steven Rhashiyd Zinnamon (J95952) Co-Founder. Certified Alcohol and Other counselor, Co-Director/Producer/Music Producer UnHoused and Unseen Doc (with Berkeley School of Journalism students) Sound engineer, Ear Hustle award winning podcast, Youth Diversion Program mentor (Valley State Prison, VSP), Sound design for San Quentin Tv and co-host for The Pulse series.
- Tam Steve Nguyen, (V26301) Ear Hustle producer, Mentor: Youth Offender Program mentor (VSP), CGA facilitator Youth Diversion Program mentor (VSP), co-founder of The People in Blue.
- Lee Jasper, (K93684) Video Librarian - San Quentin Television, professional musician, producer, engineer, designer of teaching method for advanced melodic composition and chord construction, (supplement to Master's guitar program at University of California, Davis), Honorably Discharged guitarist for United States Air Force jazz band, committed to public service, education, and restorative justice.
- Anthony Tafoya, (AX0688) Inside Managing Producer, Ear Hustle, co-founder/secretary of The People In Blue
- Edwin E. Chavez, (K49549) SQ News Spanish Journalism Guild Chairman. Chavez is a facilitator for several self-help groups, aiming to serve a community that lacks the resource to effectively communicate due to language barriers. His leadership within the non-English speaking community has led him to making sure that the Spanish community inside prison has a voice and is afforded the same opportunities as English speaking individuals.

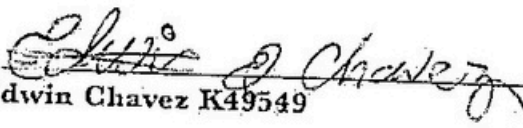
Community Co-ordinator: Pastor Nobles  
Tech counsel: Skylar Brown, San Quentin Television Specialist  
Administrative Liaison: Lieutenant. Mok (SQRC)  
Lamavis Comundoiwillla (J78113): Art consultant (Founder of the Artwork Initiative)

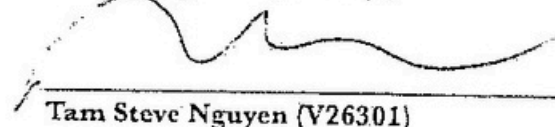
**Committee Signatures:**

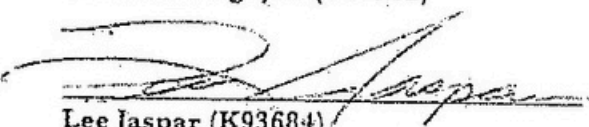
  
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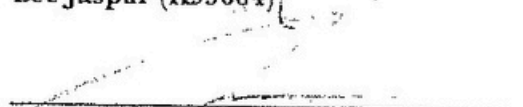
  
Steven Rhashiyd Zinnamon (J95952)

  
Dante D. Jones (G36944)


  
Edwin Chavez K49549

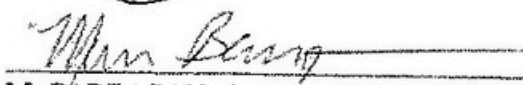
  
Tam Steve Nguyen (V26301)

  
Lee Jaspar (K93684)

  
Anthony Tafoya (AX0688)

Sponsor

  
Rabbi P. Shleffar, Jewish Chaplin (SQRC)

  
M. BARRAGAN, Community Resource Manager (SQRC)

APPROVED / DENIED