



55 S. Grand Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91105
626-584-7494
www.westernjustice.org

August 4,
2008
6:30-
8:30pm

PEACEBUILDING TOWNHALL: ACTUAL PRACTICES IN GANG INTERVENTION

CONFIRMED PANELISTS:



Robert "Bobby" Arias, *President, Communities in Schools, San Fernando Valley and Greater Los Angeles*

Mr. Arias was the Executive Director at USC's Learning Center from 1976-79 and the Director of Athletics at LMU from 1979-85. He has been with Communities in Schools since the 1980s, including serving as the Southwest Regional Director and President of Communities in Schools Los Angeles. Mr. Arias is a member of the Western Justice Center Foundation Board of Directors.



Aquil Basheer, *Founder, Maximum Force Enterprises*

Mr. Basheer founded Maximum Force Enterprises, a nationally distinguished Violence Prevention/Intervention consulting and training firm. He is often called to assist the experts in crisis situations involving gangs, and he trained all 26 schools involved in the Los Angeles Bridges Safe Passage program. Currently, Mr. Basheer is CEO of BUILD Youth Empowerment Academy.



Noreen McClendon, *Vice President/Executive Director, Concerned Citizens of South Central Los Angeles (CCSCLA)*

CCSCLA, among other things, has developed over 700 units of affordable housing, organized over 57 block clubs, and provided job training and placement assistance for more than 200 community residents. The organization has been involved in gang intervention since 2005 when it issued a janitorial contract to a company that hired gang members that wanted a fresh start. Ms. McClendon is an original member of the Steering Committee of the Cease Fire Committee, a founding member of the Watts Gang Task Force, and a member of the Community Engagement Committee to the Chair of the Los Angeles City Council Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development.

Ansar "Stan" El Muhammad, *Co-founder, Venice 2000*

Mr. Muhammad is currently serving a three year term on the Venice Neighborhood Council. His responsibilities at Venice 2000 include overseeing all operations as they relate to the organization, and building and maintaining relationships in regards to funding and resources that come into the organization. Mr. Muhammad has also been a small family business owner of a maintenance and janitorial company since October 1995.



William "Blinky" Rodriguez, *Executive Director, Communities in Schools, San Fernando Valley and Greater Los Angeles*

Mr. Rodriguez is recognized for his peacebuilding initiatives, including the Valley Unity Peace Treaty, brokered by CIS and signed by over 75 gangs with over 1,000 members. The treaty successfully reduced gang related deaths the following year from 52 to 2. He received the Medaille d'Excellence, presented in Switzerland in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Alex Sanchez, *Executive Director, Homies Unidos, Los Angeles*

Mr. Sanchez's expertise in gang culture and youth criminalization developed through his experiences as gang member. Deported back to El Salvador in 1994 after serving time in a California State Prison and targeted by Death Squads operating in his home town, he returned with a commitment to change his life for the better and to help other gang members do the same. In 2002, Mr. Sanchez won Political Asylum. He continues to educate the community on violence and to expand the reach of Homies Unidos into neighborhoods that are most underserved.

OBJECTIVE: Gang Interventionists from various Los Angeles communities will discuss their approach to intervention and the different practices and skills they use and engage in dialogue with participants about gang intervention work and practices.

Peacebuilding Town Halls are forums for the region focused on best practices for implementing violence prevention programs. The topics for these Townhalls have been identified at community-wide dialogues and trainings that WJC holds for parents, schools and community leaders.

Please RSVP to

Erin Moore at
erin@westernjustice.org
626-584-7494 ext. 21
(space is limited)

Event is free and open to the public. Parking is free at courthouse lot