



Orange County Human Relations Commission

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Commissioners

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Rabbi Rick Steinberg, Vice-Chair
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Commission Launches "Hate Free OC" Campaign (Orange County, CA)—

Over the past year rhetoric vilifying segments of our country have rubbed relationships between our diverse communities raw. Fear of losing jobs and scapegoating has divided our great country and recently spilled over into a spate of hate.

In Orange County over the last month the Commission has documented 29 hate incidents and 5 hate crimes targeting Latinos, Muslims, immigrants and other communities. In one hate crime a man grabbed a Muslim woman's hijab and tried to rip it off her head at a gas station while yelling at her. This weekend a Korean American Church was defaced with Swastikas, the week before Cota De Caza entry was vandalized with anti-Black and anti-Gay epithets.

“In the face of this hate, the Commission asserts that we are made strong by our diversity and we cannot let ourselves be pitted against one another based on race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, immigration status, disability, or politics.” expressed OC Human Relations Commission Chair Becky Esparza.

Therefore, the OC Human Relations Commission announces the **#HateFreeOC** public education and awareness campaign in order to:

- create a hate-free environment in Orange County,
- bring diverse communities together, and
- promote a peaceful and inclusive community where everyone can thrive.

The **#HateFreeOC** campaign promotes the value of RESPECT and how, as a community, we must **LEARN IT**, **LIVE IT**, and **LEAD IT**. The campaign will:

- educate about, and encourage reporting of, hate crime;
- share conflict resolution and mediation resources;
- invite people to make a pledge to promote respect;
- promote inspirational stories of residents who make up our richly diverse communities via social media;
- share a multicultural calendar of events; and
- feature educational resources, community engagement and dialogue opportunities online at www.ochumanrelations.org/hatefreeoc.

Commission Vice-Chair, Rabbi Rick Steinberg said, "The Commission commits to upholding our mission and condemns discrimination by promoting inclusion, cultural awareness, and mutual understanding. We invite the community to: join us in approaching each other's differences with curiosity and openness; embrace a sense of compassion for targeted groups and people; and respect each other's differences."

Commissioner Sean Thomas added, "We uphold our most important values and refuse to stand for homophobia, Islamophobia, racism, sexism, xenophobia, and other forms of discrimination. We ask for the community's help to build a **#HateFreeOC.**"

The **#HateFreeOC** Campaign will be a collaboration with the Commission, as well as schools, OC Human Relations, community organizations, businesses and others yet to sign-on. It is intended as a groundswell of unity in support of the core values of respect, inclusion, and support of diverse communities.

OC Human Relations Vice-President, Ken Inouye concluded, "through **#HateFreeOC**, we urge those who work in our communities and neighborhoods – law enforcement, places of worship, schools, businesses, community organizations, and leaders of all ages – to do their part to promote a safe community for ALL".

The Orange County Human Relations Commission encourages reporting of hate crimes and incidents so we may give voice to those victims and recognize the rights of all individuals to live their lives with dignity, free of discrimination, violence, and harassment.

About the Orange County Human Relations Commission

The **Orange County Human Relations Commission** was founded in 1971 by the Orange County Board of Supervisors in collaboration with the OC League of Cities. Over the last 25 years the Commission has documented, reported, and responded to hate crimes in Orange County. The Commission provides support for victims of hate crimes and trainings for the community, educators, students and law enforcement to increase the accuracy of reporting and decrease the number of hate-related crimes and incidents. To report a hate crime that occurred in Orange County, or learn more, contact Don Han at don@ochumanrelations.org or call 714-480-6576 or visit www.ochumanrelations.org/hatecrime.

Archived OC Hate Crime Reports can be downloaded at

www.ochumanrelations.org/hatecrime/hate-crime-reports