

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL**

February 28, 2023

**Recognizing Second District Black History Month Honorees**

Recognizing Black History Month in Los Angeles County (County) provides an opportunity to applaud the contributions, resilience, and influence of African Americans in the County historically and in present-day. Angelenos can look to this year's honorees and commemorate the work being done to uplift the community and improve the lives of all Angelenos. This year, the Second Supervisorial District honors individuals, and a small business whose contributions deeply empower their communities to overcome barriers.

Aqua Equity is a Black-owned social enterprise water bottle company located in the Second District. Their social impact work encompasses monthly donations to local nonprofit and community-based organizations also located in the Second District, in addition to proven commitment to sustainability as seen in their aluminum packaging. Since their establishment, they have amassed several corporate clients whose business contributes to their socially driven mission. Ultimately, their goal is to open a co-packing/bottling facility in the Watts area that will also serve as a beverage incubator for healthy beverages in sustainable packaging. For their socially driven work and commitment to sustainability, Aqua Equity is this year's Second Supervisorial District Black History Month Small Business Influencer Award honoree.

Charli Kemp is the founder of the non-profit organization, Change the Tune - that

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provides free after school programming to students in South Los Angeles. Through her organization, she seeks to reimagine the learning space by creating radical and transformational learning experiences in partnership with communities. Previously, Ms. Kemp worked for Green Dot Public Schools, where she developed the organization's first social-emotional learning framework. Before earning a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Southern California in 2014, Ms. Kemp was a Teach for America Fellow and taught middle school mathematics and science in New York City for five years. As a teacher, she built strong communal relationships while helping her schools reimagine their extended learning programming. Charli received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Spelman College and recently finished her Doctorate in Education Leadership program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. For her commitment to reimagining learning to benefit the youth of the Second District, Charli Kemp is recognized as the Second Supervisorial District's Black History Month Community Engagement Award honoree.

The Honorable Olivia Valentine is a graduate of the City University of New York and Fordham University School of Law. Throughout her distinguished career, Ms. Valentine worked as Federal Aviation Administration's General Attorney and developed expertise in corporation and municipal governments. With a strong Alternate Dispute Resolution background, she also served as a Mediator, Arbitrator, and an adjunct Professor of Law at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. In her role as a Councilmember for the City of Hawthorne, she advocated for Hawthorne's economic development, community safety, emergency preparedness, and promotion of the arts. During her tenure, she also worked tirelessly to arrange a mega-event called 2013 Taste of Hawthorne, assisted in the production of the Hawthorne Business Expo for the past seven years, and created various ordinances that helped constituents and businesses flourish before and during the pandemic. She also represented the City in other governing agencies across the South Bay. Ms. Valentine became the first African American woman to be the President of Black American Law Students Association at her law school, and she continued to build pioneer as the first African American woman to be elected to the Hawthorne City Council in 2011. Even after retiring, she continues to joyfully serve her community. For her pioneering contributions to law and public service in the County and

the Second District, The Honorable Olivia Valentine is recognized as Second Supervisorial District's Black History Month Trailblazer Award honoree.

La'Toya Cooper is a resident of the County and currently serves as my appointee on the Youth Commission where she focuses on the child welfare policy area. Ms. Cooper credits her participation in The RightWay Foundation and our first interaction during a California Youth Connection event as the two catalysts for her decision to lend her voice to the County's Youth Commission. Through this experience, she hopes to inspire other youth who have been impacted by the foster care system and is excited to bring her ideas and insight to conversations about youth participation in County affairs and policy development. For her enthusiasm and dedication to youth involvement and inclusion in County decisions that impacts them, Commissioner La'Toya Cooper is this year's Second Supervisorial District's Black History Month Young Leader Award honoree.

Randy Hughes is a veteran of the United States Army and active constituent in the Second District. Mr. Hughes served his country as a Military Police Officer and retired from Westinghouse Lighting Company as a Computer Technician Manager after 34 years of dedicated service. Since then, he has been involved in volunteer community service for over 17 years as the founder and CEO of the Friends and Neighbors Community Club (FNCC) serving areas of Compton, Watts/Willowbrook, and portions of the City of Los Angeles. Through this organization, he has dedicated numerous volunteer hours and resources to increase property values by implementing strategies to address the beautification and edification of community. His work has also addressed quality of life issues, such as resolving the Salinas Gang concerns by helping them strive toward a better way of life and finding viable means to end gang disputes. Mr. Hughes also served as a member of Mayor Aja Brown's Compton City Advisory Committee. He has announced that after nearly two decades of community engagement and volunteer work, he will retire and move out of the County. For his dedication to the residents of the Second District and his participation in public service roles in the City of Compton and with the County, Randy Hughes is this year's Second Supervisorial District's Black History Month Public Service Award honoree.

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

In honor of Black History Month in Los Angeles County, acknowledge and recognize Aqua Equity, Charli Kemp, Olivia Valentine, La'Toya Cooper, and Randy Hughes for their numerous contributions to the County.

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