

## ension

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of investment and poverty that exists."

Black activists like Sister Lita Herron, of the Youth Advocacy Coalition, were also there to show solidarity. Herron founded the organization 20 years ago to help kids who were falling victim to gang violence in her neighborhood.

"For us, looking as far back as the prison riots, the Jamiel Shaw killing, bus stop shooting and the 6-year-old boy in Harbor Gateway, when we look at campus fighting, all this is connected," said Herron. "The problem is, our children are living under tremendous pressure anyway because



Alex Sanchez, executive director of the organization Homies Unidos, addresses the crowd outside Jefferson High School. Activists are working together to curtail racial tensions.

Sentinel-Voice photo by the Los Angeles Wave

## Brooklyn

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Police suspect the attack followed reports that Black youths had pelted neighborhood homes with rocks. In May, residents say stones were hurled at a school bus carrying Jewish children.

Charles' mother is accusing police of having "a double standard," noting that they've made no arrest in her son's case while two Black teenagers were quickly charged with beating and robbing a Jewish 16-year-old riding his bicycle several weeks ago.

"My son's suspect is still at large almost a month after he was brutally assaulted!" said Charles' mother, Wendy

Craigg. The prosecutor's office said it could not discuss the details of a case under investigation.

Members of the Shmira, which means "to watch" in Hebrew, are quick to show that they protect both Blacks and Jews.

In early May, a Jewish man standing in front of the Lubavitcher headquarters was surrounded by four Black men who confronted him, cutting his hand. The Shmira chased down the four and called police, according to Yossi Stern, Shmira's director.

In another recent incident, Stern said, a young Black woman leaving the subway

was confronted by a knife-wielding man who forced her into an apartment building, where he tried to remove her clothing. Her screams were heard by a resident of the building — a Shmira member who pursued the assailant and called 911.

But NYPD spokesman Paul Browne said that the Shmira "does not cooperate with police like other community watch groups who are our eyes and ears." He said the group has not supplied police officials with the names of its members, as do other such groups in the city.

Still, the current tensions don't even begin to approach 1991 levels.

Reported crimes in the precinct that includes Crown Heights have dropped steadily since then — 77 percent in the past 15 years.

And Green says community residents now have an outlet: Various groups, like his, formed after the riots to encourage common activities — from sports to the arts — while bridging differences to avert future clashes.

"Race relations are absolutely better than in the '90s, when we were like two ships passing in the night, picking up each other's radar," said Green, 60, a Crown Heights resident and history professor at the City University of New York.

## Officers

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violated Cradle's civil rights and the case led to a 1979 lawsuit by the U.S. Justice Department.

In 1978, during the first MOVE confrontation in Powelton Village, Police Officer James J. Ramp was killed by gunfire.

Reporters at the scene managed to record MOVE member Delbert Africa being assaulted by three officers. They were charged with assault and in 1981 were acquitted by a Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Judge.

On Oct. 1, 1988, two Philadelphia police officers observed a car parked in the middle of the street with the engine running.

They found 19-year-old Donta Dawson in the driver's seat, who did not respond to their questions or get out of the car when asked.

Finally, one officer reached into the car and saw Dawson's arm move. Con-

vinced that he had seen a gun, the officer discharged his sidearm and killed Dawson with a shot to the head.

Later, the officers discovered that he was unarmed. A hearing found that the shooting officer had acted reasonably and dismissed the criminal charges.

"Clearly, there were officers in the May 5 incident who stepped over the line, but there were others who didn't," said Deputy Commissioner Richard Ross. "But what can't be dismissed is the fact that our officers have made a commitment to protect the community and sometimes pay the ultimate price. Not to overlook what happened two weeks ago, but you can't overstate that contribution. Police officers give their all every day, and we can't paint the department with a broad brush. There are hundreds of police contacts that go down every day without violence. It goes unnoticed and unappreciated. I'm

not excusing inappropriate behavior, but by the same token, we don't want to paint the community with a broad brush either. There are people who support us wholeheartedly. We're not an occupying

force. Law enforcement is really a partnership with the community. We need each other, and the onus is on both to work to rebuild trust."

Larry Miller writes for the Philadelphia Tribune.

## EMPLOYMENT



The Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada is currently recruiting for the following positions:

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they have to navigate through the gang arena every day, and all of these factors intersect in one location — and that's the school campus."

She added: "This is the skewed experience for our kids. It may have started over drug-dealing, but now it has evolved into just maintaining your turf. Now that's just too much for a young Black man to deal with. The Latino kids have the same dilemma, they have to go home and defend their communities against rivals warring with them and now another ethnicity."

Still, Herron sees hope. "The kids want out, and the beauty of our work is that we're infusing the elementary schools, weaning that next generation to shun the gang lifestyle, 'thuggism' and the murder of their friends and family," she said.

SCYEA youth leaders Mariela Martinez, who attends Fremont High School, and Jasmine Robottom, of Manual Arts High School, agree.

"Fremont is a majority Latino school, but we don't really see the tension," said Martinez, 15. "We are living and fighting the same struggle. One of our demands is to have more ethnic studies classes so that we can learn more about each other and see how we relate to each

other historically."

Robottom, also 15, said that Manual Arts is 75 percent Latino and most students get along fine. "If there's a problem, like the one at Locke, it's usually because of gangs," she said.

"They'll usually be all Black or all Hispanic — and if they back each other up, then it will look like a race thing."

Meanwhile, Project Islamic Hope Executive Director Najee Ali released pictures of Shaw sporting gang colors and flashing gang signs on his MySpace page. He said he did so as a warning to parents, as he and other activists have begun recanting their original contention that Shaw was targeted for death because he was African-American.

A coalition is also calling on the owners of social-networking websites to monitor, and remove, gang-related content. "It's a growing problem where we have rival gangs threatening each other in cyberspace," said Ali. "People told me there were pictures of Jamiel threatening rival... Latino gang members. He may have been a wannabe. But the terrible lesson is, even associating with them could get you killed."

Olu Alemoru writes for the Los Angeles Wave.

## LEGAL NOTICES

### ACE Resort Corridor Rapid Transit Study Public Meeting

## NOTICE OF CANCELLATION

**CANCELLED** - The ACE Resort Corridor Rapid Transit Study Public Meeting scheduled on Thursday, May 29, 2008, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., at the South Strip Transfer Terminal, 6675 Gillespie St., Las Vegas, Nevada, is **CANCELLED**. A notice rescheduling the meeting will be issued at a later date.

The Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) will continue to keep you apprised of the study's progress and the rescheduled meeting date. For more information, visit [rtcnsnv.com](http://rtcnsnv.com) or contact the RTC's Public Information Office at (702) 676-1606.

