



**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT SHANE HARRIS
PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION OF JUSTICE ADVOCATES
6125 Imperial Avenue, San Diego, CA 92114**

**NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH LOS ANGELES COUNTY ROUNDTABLE ON
DECREASING DISPROPORTIONALITY WITHIN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM**

Why is the roundtable happening?

Across California there are roughly 65,000 youth in the foster care system and nearly 14,000 of those youth are African American. Black, Latino and Native American children are disproportionately represented. Los Angeles County has the most children of any county in the state of California. There are roughly 30,000 children in Los Angeles County's foster care system currently with Black and Latino children overrepresented within the county's system versus being less represented in LA County's general population. This roundtable being hosted by the People's Association of Justice Advocates Office of the President Shane Harris and Los Angeles's Sanctuary of Hope seeks to be a space during National Foster Care Month for current and former foster youths, young adults, caregivers, social workers, community organizations, churches and mandated reporters among others to come together for a change driven conversation about how to expand prevention efforts in LA County and across California when it comes to decreasing the disproportionate placement of Black and Brown children in the foster care system.

Who is the convener and special guest Shane Harris?

Shane Harris is a national civil rights activist, the President of the People's Association of Justice Advocates a national civil rights nonprofit organization, community organizer, business owner and former foster youth who spent thirteen years in California's foster care system as a ward of the state after the losses of both of his parents. Harris is also an appointed member of the newly established California Mandated Reporting Taskforce and is only one of two African Americans represented on the taskforce that is tasked with reforming California's mandated reporting system and establishing stronger preventative efforts toward kids in foster care. **Harris appeared on Fox 11 Los Angeles earlier this month to discuss National Foster Care Month and that interview can be seen here:** <https://www.foxla.com/video/1460056>

Who is going to be around the table?

Harris the President of the People's Association of Justice Advocates will arrive in Los Angeles Tuesday May 28th for a roundtable discussion and is seeking to meet with lived experienced individuals such as current and former foster youth as well as biological families who have fought to get custody back of their children, social workers, mandated reporters, community organizations specifically working with foster youth, government staff and/or officials and religious organizations.

About Sanctuary of Hope: SOH eliminates poverty and dismantles racial and social injustices by promoting the value of education and stabilization, creating connections for youth and community, and empowering young people with the tools for personal transformation. We serve resilient Transition Age Youth (TAY), ages 16-25, who are child welfare or juvenile justice impacted, housing or economic insecurity, trafficking or domestic violence survivors, LGBTQIA+, continuing education, or gang impacted, or at-risk. We provide life coaching,

counseling and therapy, mentoring, character and leadership development, housing, education and employment support, family strengthening and reunification, crisis services, and financial assistance with the sole purpose of helping our young people to become self-sufficient. SOH was established in 2010 by a group of South Los Angeles professionals who were frustrated by the lack and unmet need of youth homelessness in the south area of Los Angeles, California. With very few or no alternatives for emergency and transitional housing and education services to intervene in their time of crisis, many of these youth were succumbing to street life – homelessness, gangs, unplanned pregnancies, substance abuse, and sexual exploitation. Since our inception, we have helped over 7,000 youth and young adults with housing, education, basic needs, and leadership development services. We have grown to a county-wide regional organization with program and services in South Los Angeles, South Bay, Compton, and Antelope Valley.

About the People’s Association of Justice Advocates: The People’s Association of Justice Advocates is a national civil rights organization & Policy thinktank founded to keep Dr. Martin Luther King's dream alive through direct action with a balanced standard of justice for all no matter what race, religion, criminal record, sexuality, gender status, or citizenship.

Date of the event: Tuesday May 28, 2024

Time of the event: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Location of event: Sanctuary of Hope 4003 W Adams Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90018 (Large 1st floor room)

Tentative schedule:

10:00 am – 10:45 am: Doors open, Coffee and Connect networking period, light refreshments provided such as croissants, coffee, water, fruit.

10:45 am – President of the People’s Association of Justice Advocates Shane Harris arrives

11:00 am – Kickoff of roundtable discussion by Shane Harris and Janet Kelly

11:05 am – Shane Harris provides overview of convening, the why, and makes announcements on efforts he plans to unveil including pushing for the County of Los Angeles to remove the use of the word “case” when it refers to its foster youth.

11:15 am – Engagement with Focus Group

11:45 am – Next Steps

12:00pm – Ending

Further schedule TBD based on roundtable guests and further topics.