

# Northwest Indiana African American Alliance, Inc.

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## Inside this issue:

|                                                         |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Black History Month                                     | 1 |
| Summertime Gathering in the Park                        | 2 |
| Do You Know your Rights                                 | 2 |
| Flea Market Event                                       | 3 |
| Here's How Many People Police Killed in 2018            | 3 |
| Continued: Here's How Many People Police Killed in 2018 | 4 |
| Mission and Vision                                      | 4 |
| Commentary on Article by Michael Harriot                | 4 |
| Award Appreciation Luncheon                             | 5 |

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

### WHY YOUR VOICE IS IMPORTANT

BY GREGORY A. JONES

It seems like just yesterday we began this process of attempting to organize within the Valparaiso African American community.

It has been an interesting journey. The brothers and sisters in Valparaiso, Indiana seem to be so busy. Yet the issues that plague our little Vale of paradise are very real. Here we sit in the midst of all this middle-class whiteness and issues for people of color still are prevalent and chronic in these small communities.

Police still seem to profile poor people of color and we still are affected by the behaviors of law enforcement police incidents throughout the region. However, we have progressed as an organization since 2011.

We now have a stable group of members. We need more involvement but those on board are doing a good job of presenting programs and projects. We present several community programs throughout the year and we are striving to get more members involved on the day-to-day work of education and presentation of concerns and issues affecting under represented community.

Throughout this past year 2018 we have worked together to instill the importance of having a voice in our community. The importance of people of color speaking to those issues that are important to the quality of life within our community. Through intentional programs of appreciation, interaction and education we have attempted to give voice to the concerns that are reflective of important issues among our residents of color.

Using the programs like the Summertime Fun the Park annual gathering and the Flea Market Fundraiser gathering of the community we reach out to those who are a visible but sometimes voice less within our city and region. Please join us as we gather to share information at our Black History month film festival as well as our forum on children of the incarcerated as well as the gathering and programs listed in this brief newsletter and on our Web sites and social Media. Thank you for your support and presence in our efforts throughout the past year and present opportunities to come.





## SUMMERTIME GATHERING IN THE PARK 2018

The Summertime Gathering in the Park is a community event designed to strengthen the relationship between the community and the Valparaiso Police Department. The event is organized and presented by Northwest Indiana African American Alliance (NWIAAA), Valparaiso Police Department, and the Valparaiso Boys and Girls Club of Greater Northwest Indiana.

There are numerous benefits associated with a strong community police relationship. Communication breaks down barriers because we get to know each other. Trust develops as the relationship strengthens and grows. The community is more likely to contact police when a crime occurs and are more likely to cooperate in the police investigations. One of the main advantages of the community police partnership is that it reduces fear in the community. The police understand what is going on in the community as they begin to better understand the feelings, attitudes and issues of the community. By getting the community involved, the police have more resources available to them to help in crime prevention. By familiarizing themselves with the members of the community, officers are more likely to obtain valuable information about criminals and their activities. We all want safe and friendly neighborhoods – good community police relations guarantee safer and friendlier neighborhoods.

The Summertime Gathering in the Park had approximately 75 attendees at the June 30, 2018 inaugural event. NWIAAA expects approximately 100 attendees at the June 29, 2019 annual event which will take place at Tower Park in Valparaiso, Indiana. The event runs from 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm and includes free refreshments, free activities, free raffle giveaways, and police and community fellowship. The Valparaiso Chief of Police, Assistant Chief of Police and several other Police officers participated and attended the event. We look forward to another fun and great Summertime Gathering in the (Tower) Park event.

## DO YOU KNOW YOUR RIGHTS?

### IF YOU ARE STOPPED FOR QUESTIONING

**Stay calm.** Don't run. Don't argue, resist or obstruct the police, even if you are innocent or police are violating your rights. Keep your hands where police can see them.

**Ask if you are free to leave.** If the officer says yes, calmly and silently walk away. If you are under arrest, you have a right to know why.

**You have the right to remain silent** and cannot be punished for refusing to answer questions. If you wish to remain silent, tell the officer out loud. In some states, you must give your name if asked to identify yourself.

**You do not have to consent to a search** of yourself or your belongings, but police may "pat down" your clothing if they suspect a weapon. You should not physically resist, but you have the right to refuse consent for any further search. If you do consent, it can affect you later in court.

### IF YOU ARE STOPPED IN YOUR CAR

**Stop the car in a safe place as quickly as possible.** Turn off the car, turn on the internal light, open the window part way and place your hands on the wheel. Upon request, **show police your driver's license, registration and proof of insurance.** **If an officer or immigration agent asks to look inside your car, you can refuse to consent to the**

**search.** But if police believe your car contains evidence of a crime, your car can be searched without your consent.

**Both drivers and passengers have the right to remain silent.** If you are a passenger, you can ask if you are free to leave. If the officer says yes, sit silently or calmly leave. Even if the officer says no, you have the right to remain silent

### IF YOU ARE ARRESTED

**Do not resist arrest,** even if you believe the arrest is unfair.

**Say you wish to remain silent and ask for a lawyer immediately.** Do not give any explanations or excuses. If you can't pay for a lawyer, you have the right to a free one. Do not say anything, sign anything or make any decisions without a lawyer.

**You have the right to make a local phone call.** The police cannot listen if you call a lawyer.

**Prepare yourself and your family in case you are arrested.** Memorize the phone numbers of your family and your lawyer. Make emergency plans if you have children or take medication.

**To learn more go to:**

<https://www.aclu.org/drug-law-reform-immigrants-rights-racial-justice/know-your-rights-what-do-if-you>





## FLEA MARKET EVENT



The NWIAAA will hosts an a Flea Market Fundraiser for our operational cost. This Vendors are invited to participate in this Fundraiser by purchasing a table for \$50 to sell their flea market items. Tables are rectangle 30 x 70 feet dimensions. The Flea Market Fundraiser will be held at the David Butterfield Pavilion (corner of Calumet and Evans) on September 29, 2019 from 11 a.m.—6 p.m. Applications are available at [nwiaaa.org](http://nwiaaa.org)

The NWIAAA will provide sandwiches for vendors. GET YOUR TABLE NOW!

### Here's How Many People Police Killed in 2018

By: Root writer, Michael Harriot

- In March 2018, cops in Sacramento, California, fired at least 20 bullets at 22-year-old Stephon Clark, killing him. He was unarmed and running away.
- In June 2018, a Pittsburgh police officer killed 17-year-old Antwon Rose, shooting him in the back. He was unarmed and fleeing.
- In November, a Hoover, Alabama, police officer killed 22-year-old Emantic Bradford Jr. He was shot three times, all from behind.

Police killed 1,165 people in 2018. There were only 22 days in all of last year where police didn't kill someone. Despite all the protests, marches, training seminars, thoughts and prayers, in 2018, cops killed 36 more people than they did the year before, according to Mapping Police Violence and the Washington Post.

And despite being 12.6 percent of the U.S. population, black people were 26.7 percent of the people killed by police where the race was known. The number of black people killed by police in the last year (215) was more than all the police who died in the line of duty (148), U.S. servicemen killed in action (2) and Americans killed by Islamic terrorists (0) combined. **Mapping Police Violence/Washington Post**

#### **Other startling statistics of the people whose race was known when they were killed by police:**

- In 2018, black people were three times more likely to be killed by police than were whites.
- More Americans died last year from police shootings (986) than mass shootings (84).
- 28 percent of the unarmed victims of police killings were black and only 48 percent were white.
- 34.9 percent of the people killed by cops—even though they were unarmed and not attacking—were black. Forty-four percent were white.

We know the race of 113 people who were shot and killed by police officers as they were fleeing the scene on foot. Thirty-five percent were black.

## North West Indiana African American Alliance Vision and Mission Statement

**Vision** To create a network that assists in the movement towards racial equity, social equality, and racial accountability within the region of Northwest Indiana.

**Mission Statement** We seek to engage public and private entities, through advocacy and education. Our goal is to find solutions to the prevailing issues that impede the progress and empowerment of

### Donate Now

Your donations will help with:

- Educational and Community Events and Functions
- Basic Administration Cost
- Community Forums
- Host Functions

#### Donate

NWIAAA is a non profit organization 501c3 Private Operating Foundation.

[mission and vision statments.](#)



### Here's How Many People Police Killed in 2018

**By: Root writer, Michael Harriot**

~ Continued ~

Violent crime rate has no correlation with police shootings. Some cities with high crime rates have low rates of police killings. Some cities with low rates for violent crime still kill a disproportionate number of citizens. Although non-Hispanic whites make up 62 percent of the population, most of the unarmed, armed, and fleeing victims killed by police in 2018 were people of color. There was no category of police shootings where police killed more whites. ***Mapping Police Violence, Washington Post, US Census Bureau***

If you took all the killings by gangbangers in Chicago, added all the deaths caused by Black Identity Extremists (0), threw in the deaths caused by NFL players kneeling (0), and multiplied that by all of the cops killed by members of Black Lives Matter (0), sworn law enforcement officers killed more than twice that total. Ninety-nine percent of the officers involved in the 1,165 police killings in 2018

### Commentary on Article by Michael Harriot

**Author Dr. Gregory A Jones**

Greetings brothers and sisters,

I am writing a brief commentary to the article attempting to address the murders of underrepresented community shared by Michael Harriot writer for the Root Website.

Please note the number of people killed by law enforcement during the 2018 year. This number of deaths by violence to young people of color is unacceptable. We must learn how to generate the kind of law enforcement that does not lead to violence or the threat of violence in our communities. Whether its police oversight, community policing, more diverse officers, community police monitoring, de-escalation training, or stronger psychological profiling of officers; whatever it takes we must find ways to identify behaviors within our community that deconstructs the common perspective that violence or the threat of violence is normal. We must gather our communities and defend the citizenry from the false assumption that all things can be resolved by violence. This is not normal nor is it acceptable in a civilized society for young people to be gunned down by the persons that are 4 hired by us to serve and protect our communities.

Please join in the efforts to address these outlandish and severely miss perceived assumptions that all thing are resolved by the use of violence and the threat of violence in our society. The future of this society is dependent on our ability to divest our behavior from the use of weapons and violence to solve our nations and communities problems. The health interest rights and needs of our community is at stake. As to this article it is stating the obvious , our young people of color are being murdered in large numbers right before our very eyes and we are becoming use to the "Statistic" God help us if we refuse to address the terrible plague within our society. Stop the violence!

## AWARD APPRECIATION



The Northwest Indiana African American Alliance, Inc. hosted a second annual Award Appreciation Luncheon at First United Methodist Church in Valparaiso, Indiana on April 27, 2019 to honor Valparaiso, Indiana community residents for their great work in the community. This year, the three awards were given to **Gladys C. Allen** as a Valparaiso Resident who has demonstrated a great impact in the community among residents, employers, and hosting a 4th of July annual community picnic. **Edwina and Alvin Shields** were honored for their great work in the community recognizing their efforts with Home away from Home, a private health care facility and employing various community members. **Jeffery Balon**, Valparaiso Chief of Police was honored for his great work in the Valparaiso Community, dedication to the VPD and support and participation to nonprofit organizations.

## LGBTQ FORUM

The LGBTQ Forum took place on November 10, 2018 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Valparaiso, Indiana. A special thank you to Rev. Dr. Timothy Leitzke for hosting and supporting this event. This event focused on the injustice that our LGBTQ citizens continue to endure. As Martin Luther King Jr. stated "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

The injustice against LGBTQ people is manifested in a large way by legal discrimination. In America, it is legal for an employer to fire a person for being LGBTQ, it is legal to not rent an apartment to a couple because they are gay, and it is legal for a business owner to refuse to serve a person because they are LGBTQ. "We don't serve your kind" is an injustice and a shameful part of American history. The presentation asserted that "all men are created equal" should include our LGBTQ citizens.

The presentation further noted the similarities in arguments supporting inequality against blacks and women with the arguments supporting inequality against LGBTQ people. Religious arguments such as the "Curse of Ham" was widely preached in the US southern states to support segregation or the Apostle Paul's scriptural writings which relegate women to a lower class than men.

The event noted the timeless words of truth spoken by President John F. Kennedy. President Kennedy addressed the nation on the evening of June 11, 1963 following Alabama Governor George Wallace's attempt to stop black students from entering the University of Alabama. The President said: "We are confronted primarily with a moral issue. It is as old as the scriptures and is as clear as the American Constitution. The heart of the question is whether all Americans are to be afforded equal rights and equal opportunities, whether we are going to treat our fellow Americans as we want to be treated."

The Equality Act, which recently was passed by the US House of Representatives, would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include protections that ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodations, public education, federal funding, credit and the jury system. All citizens deserve equality.

