



38TH ANNUAL ALL PEOPLES CELEBRATION

**CHOOSE
COURAGE**

MONDAY, JANUARY 19TH, 2026

alliance
SAN DIEGO



WELCOME TO THE 38TH ALL PEOPLES CELEBRATION

Alliance San Diego is excited to welcome you to the 38th celebration and commemoration of one of the world’s greatest visionaries, activists, and leaders, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. King would have turned 97 years old today and his legacy lives on in all of us. He believed that all people are created equal and all are part of the human family. This fundamental belief is a core principle of Alliance San Diego. It guides our work to build community power and bring human rights home.

When we act collectively to uplift human rights, we shape a present and future that honors the dignity of all people and grows the Beloved Community that Dr. King envisioned. At a time when the forces of division seek to separate us and create hierarchies of humanity, it is up to us to come together to see in each other our inherent dignity and work together to protect human rights. This will take courage.

At this year’s All Peoples Celebration, we invite you to Choose Courage; to decide, with intention, to do what is right even when it is difficult. Dr. King reminds us that “courage is an inner resolution to go forward despite obstacles” and he taught us the power of acting in solidarity.

Choosing to be courageous is a vital step to practicing compassion when the voices around us discourage it. With compassion, respect and understanding we can build the community power we need to drive change. We can build a society where human rights are respected and protected for everyone. We invite you to do this work with us and with each other, and along the way embrace joy, song, love and art as we hope to do today.

We have a great event for you, which includes keynote speaker B.A. Parker, the co-host of NPR’s Code Switch, as well as local artists and voices who will inspire us to move forward in the spirit of Dr. King. We are grateful to all who help make this event possible and we thank you for being a part of it.

LaWana Richmond, Ph.D
Board President, Alliance San Diego

Andrea Guerrero, Esq.
Executive Director, Alliance San Diego

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

Venue Sponsor

San Diego Parks & Recreation Department

Claiming Level

United Domestic Workers
American Federation of Teachers Local Guild 1931

Elevating Level

San Diego Community College District,
Miramar College & SD College of Continuing Education
Chris Ward
Samuel Lawrence Foundation

Community Partner Level

Port of San Diego
San Diego City College
San Diego Mesa College
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
San Diego City & Mesa College
The University of San Diego
KPBS
Monarch/Elevation
UC San Diego Labor Center

Dignity Defender Level

San Diego Foundation
Southwestern College
San Diego Community Power

Table Sponsors

Thanks to the generosity of the multiple table sponsors we were able to accommodate various youth groups, future leaders, and community members! We appreciate your support!

We are also grateful to the major supporters that fuel our mission all year long:

Dr. Bronner’s Family Foundation, Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund, Ford Foundation, California Wellness Foundation, Catalyst, Four Freedoms Fund, Satterberg Foundation, Tao Rising, Lawrence & Suzanne Hess, and our monthly donors.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

J’Nyka Faulkner
*Civic Engagement Coordinator, Alliance San Diego
& Kumeyaay Community Member*

“LIFT EVERY VOICE & SING”

Amari Michelle
Student & Youth Singer

OPENING INTENTIONS

Samuel Tsoi
The Nonprofit Institute, University of San Diego

WHO WE ARE

WELCOME & INVITATION

LaWana Richmond & Andrea Guerrero
*Board President & Executive Director,
Alliance San Diego*

“FREEDOM”

transcenDANCE Youth Arts
Alumni dancers, choreographer Ron Davis

THANK YOU

Omar Araiza & Miesha Rice
*Board Member & Advancement Director,
Alliance San Diego*



**LEO CARRILLO
CHANGE AGENT AWARD**

Isidro Ortiz & Ted Womack
*Board President Emeritus & Civic Engagement Manager,
Alliance San Diego*

**ASHLEY L. WALKER
SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARD**

Jack Shu & Christopher Wilson
*Board Member, Alliance San Diego
& United Domestic Workers*

I AM AMERICA

J. Pierre
San Diego Vocalist

INTRODUCTION OF KEYNOTE

Mallory Adamski
Communications Director, Alliance San Diego

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

B.A. Parker
Co-host, NPR CodeSwitch

CLOSING INTENTIONS

Olivia Mercedes
Poet & San Diego Slam Team Member

“WE SHALL OVERCOME”

FINALE

Bomba Liberté

LEO CARRILLO CHANGE AGENT AWARD



Leo Carrillo was an extraordinary change agent. As Alliance San Diego's first full-time organizer, he led with compassion and conviction to empower the community and build an inclusive democracy.

An alumnus of CSU San Marcos, Carrillo had fire in his belly and was eager to help us build Alliance San Diego, which back then did not even have four walls. He helped develop the nascent San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium (SDIRC), bridging organizations and catalyzing solidarity in the immigrant rights movement. Carrillo also supported our Education Consortium, ASD'S first coalition in the area of education, and drove our first successful policy campaign to extend the college readiness curriculum known as 'A-G' to all students at San Diego Unified. As a result, thousands of students enjoyed and continue to enjoy an unprecedented opportunity. This was a game changer and inspired him to pursue a Master's degree in education at Stanford and a counseling degree at San Diego State University.

As a transformational activist, Carrillo drew courage from his immigrant family and found joy in his LGBTQ family. He was a deeply committed and empathetic person who guided many through the complexities of this world. He gave generously of his talents, insights, and expertise. Long after he worked at Alliance, he came back to shepherd community conversations to talk about fears, anxieties, and hope in moments of political turbulence. He inspired people to find their strength and recognize that they were not alone.

In honor of his memory, Alliance San Diego has created the Leo Carrillo Change Agent Award to recognize a young activist and emerging leader who is working concretely to bring about social change in Leo's spirit and example.

LEO CARRILLO AWARD HONOREE DIAMOND BRANDON



Diamond Brandon is a movement builder, strategist, and unapologetic champion for working people, community power, and Black liberation. She has spent her career creating spaces where communities—especially women of color—can reclaim their power, demand equity, and lead lasting change.

Diamond's organizing roots were shaped through eight years at Alliance San Diego, where she led large-scale civic engagement efforts, community advocacy campaigns, and grassroots leadership development across San Diego County. She currently serves as Director of Community Partnerships at the California Federation of Labor Unions, AFL-CIO, supporting organizing institutes, labor policy strategy, rapid response efforts, and partnerships that expand worker power statewide.

She has also served in legislative leadership as District Director and Field Representative for California Assembly District 80. Beyond institutional spaces, Diamond is the co-owner of S&S Friendly Ranch, a Black-owned healing and learning space rooted in collective care, land stewardship, and joy.

A devoted mother, wife, poet, and mentor, Diamond leads with purpose, care, and a relentless commitment to justice.

THE ASHLEY L. WALKER SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARD



Ashley L. Walker is a lifelong social justice activist that has left an indelible mark on San Diego. In 2009, the City of San Diego's Human Relations Commission created the Ashley Walker Social Justice Award. In 2019, the commission passed the award to Alliance San Diego. The award recognizes an individual or group for their work in promoting peace, social justice, and human and civil rights in our community.

As a founding board member of Alliance San Diego, Ashley Walker helped create an organization dedicated to building the Beloved Community envisioned by Dr. King. Throughout her life, Ms. Walker has been a freedom fighter for the downtrodden. She is credited with institutionalizing comprehensive and compassionate domestic violence services in the county, creating a model for other cities across the nation through the Family Justice Center, among others.

She also shaped the City of San Diego's Human Relations Commission as its executive director for over 15 years, where she devoted countless hours to creating a more inclusive San Diego. Ms. Walker once described her purpose as follows:

"I try to live a nonviolent life that returns love for hate, defends the absent, includes the excluded, forgives without apology, gives without recognition, that accepts defeat without losing heart, and admits when I am wrong. I work each day to help create the 'beloved community' where those loved and hated, those feared and respected, those disdained and elevated are all present and cared for."

WALKER AWARD HONOREE VIET MAI (POSTHUMOUSLY)



Viet Mai (1981–2025) lived a life rooted in courage, connection, and love for community. Known to the youth he mentored as Mr. Viet, he had a powerful, heart-centered way of meeting young people where they were—seeing their brilliance and calling them into their fullest potential despite adversity. He gave fully of himself, spoke with conviction for justice and dignity, and formed instant, meaningful connections wherever he went through his openness and authenticity.

An educator, spoken word artist, and entrepreneur, Viet believed education should be accessible, equitable, and meaningful. This belief led him to co-found **Vincii**, transforming learning for students and teachers alike. As vKnowledge, he used poetry and performance to uplift narratives of empowerment, healing, and systemic change. A member of San Diego's **ELEVATED! Slam Team**, Viet represented the city at the National Poetry Slam and helped co-host and organize ELEVATED, one of San Diego's largest spoken word events.

Viet's service was deeply shaped by the **Aaron Price Fellows** and the **Village of Promise**, where he embodied cross-cultural connection, healing, and justice. He supported youth impacted by trauma and loss, creating joyful, safe spaces where hope could grow. A mentor and bridge-builder, Viet lived with the courage to love loudly, uplift youth relentlessly, and stand for inclusion and collective dignity. His spirit continues to inspire us to choose courage, build community, and lead with compassion.

Notable spoken word poetry:

- "Problem Solving (Math Poem)" — addressing societal inequities
- "Stolen Superheroes" — honoring children of incarcerated parents

SAVE THE DATE!

In The Tradition of the
"Martin Luther King and Cesar Chavez Breakfasts"



500 Hotel Circle N, San Diego, CA 92108

For Further Information (619) 241-5672



We are proud to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the 38th Annual All Peoples Celebration.



www.kpbs.org

KPBS is a public service of San Diego State University.

AFSCME LOCAL 3930
UDW

UDW is proud to support
**ALLIANCE
SAN DIEGO'S
38TH ANNUAL
ALL PEOPLES
CELEBRATION**

We are a union of home care and family child care providers. We are about more than just pay and working conditions. We are about revolutionizing care and transforming our communities so that we all thrive.

Fighting for Workers and Our Communities | UDW.org /UDW @UDW_Union

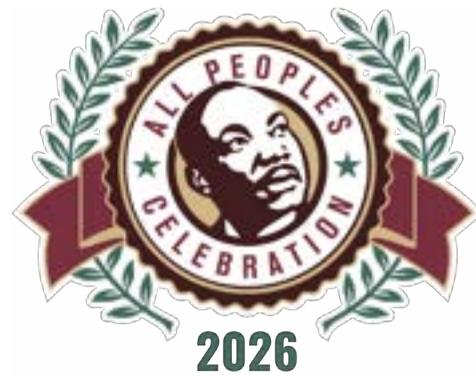
**SAN DIEGO
CITY COLLEGE**
YOU BELONG HERE!

San Diego City College celebrates the legacy of **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** by standing for justice, opportunity, and equitable access to education.

APPLY/REGISTER TODAY!
sdcity.edu/spring
**SPRING 2026 CLASSES
START FEBRUARY 2**

Scan the QR Code to Register

SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE | 1313 Park Blvd., San Diego, CA, 92101 | sdcity.edu



"Courage is an inner resolution to go forward despite obstacles."
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Guild

Local 1931 of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

**The American Federation of Teachers Guild
is a proud sponsor of Alliance San Diego**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



B.A. Parker is the Ambie award-winning co-host of Code Switch – the show about race and identity from NPR. Reporting stories such as the efficacy of protest, honoring her ancestors, and how to reclaim the banjo. Prior to joining Code Switch, she was co-host and lead producer of The Cut podcast with New York Magazine. During her time there, she interviewed Anita Hill, Maria Ressa, and himbos at SantaCon. In a previous life, Parker was a film professor at Morgan State University and Stevenson University, where she forced 19-year-olds to watch Point Break and Moonlight. She then found her way to a production fellowship with the Pulitzer Prize-winning radio show This American Life. She has also been a guest host of NPR's It's Been a Minute and has produced for NPR's Invisibilia, Gimlet's Heavyweight and WNYC's Nancy. Parker hails from Baltimore, and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York.

PERFORMERS



Amari Michelle

Amari Michelle is a bright, talented 10-year-old with a deep passion for the arts. An outstanding student and gifted singer, she also loves acting and dancing, bringing creativity and energy into everything she does. Amari enjoys writing and drawing, using her imagination to craft stories and illustrations that reflect her vibrant spirit. Above all, she cherishes time with her family, whose love and support guide her every step. With her enthusiasm, dedication, and big heart, Amari Michelle shines brightly in all she pursues.



Samuel Tsoi

Samuel Tsoi is the Director of Leadership and Professional Development at The Nonprofit Institute at University of San Diego School of Leadership and Education Sciences, where he designs and facilitates leadership and capacity-building programs for social impact organizations and leaders. Throughout his career, Samuel is a changemaker, civic catalyst and practitioner of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. He built coalitions in various local and state-level policy arenas, and consulted organizations on their equity journeys and projects across nonprofits, philanthropy and government. He was most recently the State Policy Manager at Alliance San Diego with a policy portfolio across reforms in housing, immigration, and democracy. He previously held leadership roles and created research, strategic and communications initiatives at the County of San Diego, Citizen University, and the 21st Century China Center at UC San Diego. He also co-founded Welcoming San Diego, a cross-sector initiative to advance immigrant inclusion and belonging.

PERFORMERS



Ron Davis x transcenDANCE (@omgitsron @tdyoutharts)

transcenDANCE is a nationally-recognized creative youth development organization that works with youth in under-resourced San Diego communities. Freedom, choreographed by Ron Davis to Beyoncé and Kendrick Lamar's powerful anthem, explores the journey of discovering one's authentic self through the support of friends and peers. It highlights how dignity and self-worth grow when we allow ourselves to lean on our community, revealing that freedom takes many forms for different people.



J. Pierre (Justin Bennett) (@welovej pierre)

J. Pierre (Justin Bennett) is a versatile and dynamic gospel and R&B singer with a powerful voice that has captivated audiences on some of the biggest stages in music. Throughout his career, he has collaborated with top-tier artists such as Justin Timberlake, Ariana Grande, Childish Gambino, Brent Jones (multiple albums & Italy tour 2022), John P. Kee, and Anderson .Paak. J. Pierre's impressive stage presence has led him to open for renowned acts including Kirk Franklin, Tina Campbell, and Case. In addition to his live performances, J. Pierre's vocals have been featured in high-profile TV shows and movies, including Netflix's hit series Tiny Pretty Things, Trolls: World Tour, and Guava Island. He has also contributed his songwriting talents to artists such as Cheesa and Jamar Rogers from the popular TV show The Voice. With a passion for both performance and songwriting, J. Pierre continues to make an indelible mark on the music industry, blending his rich vocal abilities with an ever-

PERFORMERS



Olivia Mercedes

Olivia Mercedes is a perpetually overwhelmed human who uses creative mediums to process the intensity of her conscious experience. Her poetry's been published, her artwork's been exhibited, her voice has been awarded, but her most beloved accolades are the moments of real-life connection in response to her authenticity. She finds hope in inspiring someone to feel, to question, to learn, to heal, to express, and ultimately to be more fully human. Instagram handle: @oliviamercedesart



Bomba Liberté

Bomba Liberté was founded in 2011 by San Diego bomberxs who have been studying and practicing bomba since the early 2000s. In gratitude to ancestral knowledges and to their many teachers, Bomba Liberté works to give continued life to and learn from the many lessons offered by the oldest music and dance tradition from the archipelago of Puerto Rico. Through performances and workshops, this group educates about Afro-Puerto Rican history and culture while also learning about links between culture, artistry and personal expression. Liberté is the French word for "liberty" and appears across the repertoire of traditional bomba songs reminding us of the influence of radical abolitionism from the neighboring French Antilles and of the collective struggle to be free in the face of racism and colonialism. "Bomba Liberté" refers to the way that bomba has and continues to be used as a way to liberate ourselves from historical and daily struggles. It also calls upon a shared history with other Afro-Caribeñxs and diasporic peoples, reminding us of how music and dance travel with the bodies that move across diaspora. To practice bomba in California is a daily reminder of this process.

GREETINGS FROM COMMUNITY SPACE SPONSORED BY United Domestic Workers and AFT Local 1931

Welcome to the 38th All Peoples Celebration! We invite you to visit the Community Space, which is open to the public. Learn how you can get involved with the many organizations below that are working alongside Alliance San Diego to build the Beloved Community.

- *Start With Dignity*
- *Alliance San Diego*
- *SDIRC*
- *SBCC*
- *KARAMA*
- *San Diego 4 Gun Violence Prevention*
- *San Diego350*
- *Our Lady of Guadalupe*
- *San Diego Veterans for Peace*
- *Community Review Board on Police Practices*
- *Port of San Diego*
- *SD City College*
- *San Diego City College*
- *Survivors of Torture International*
- *TransFamily Services*
- *World Relief Southern California*
- *CAIR - SD*
- *Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest*
- *United Church of Christ of La Mesa (UCCLM)*
- *Casa Cornelia Law Center*
- *California Teachers Association-San Diego County Service Center Council*
- *Project YANO*
- *Pilipino Workers Center of Southern California (PWCSC)*
- *BrightLife Kids*
- *Center on Policy Initiatives (CPI)*
- *Good For Others*
- *NAACP Youth Council*
- *Samuel Lawrence Foundation*
- *Black InGenious Initiative (BiGI) and The Karen and Tom Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness and Social Action (The Mulvaney Center)*

A special thanks to our vendors and partners:

AmeriCorps

BRIGHT

IATSE

Susana Martinez

EDCO

Vertex Safety & Protection, Inc.

M.A.N.D.A.T.E. Records

SD Catering Co.

Deaf Community Services

Irie Zepada

Futura, Inc

PERFORMERS



Irie Z. (IG: @irie_ije)

Irie Z. (IG: @irie_ije), local artist of table posters. A hand-carved stamp is more than a tool for making swag—it is a vessel of story and lineage. Each mark it makes carries the intentionality of the artist’s hands, honoring the tradition of grabado and printmaking deeply rooted in Mexican culture, where art has long been a way to document history, express resistance, and celebrate community.

This stamp will belong to Alliance San Diego forever, becoming a living artifact of our values. With every impression, it connects past to present—reminding us that justice work, like hand-carved art, is built with slow, collective, intention and care. The lotus symbolizes resilience, olive branches for peace, a flame for our dignity, and arches along the words to remind us that bridging creates belonging. Irie’s creative expression unifies people across generations.



Susana Martinez (@accusedofstitchcraft)

Community Space Art, ***Quilting the Courage***, is created by Susana Martinez.

An interactive timeline of activist movements in San Diego throughout the years. Each panel shares key movement phrases, a QR code with a brief history, and a visual component. The final panel will invite community members and attendees to write their own mantra/ saying/quote that makes them feel inspired and motivated to continue choosing courage. Please stop by and share your thoughts.



A Storytelling Series Featuring Immigrant Stories of Family and Belonging
Follow Us To Watch
@startwithdignity



START WITH
DIGNITY



alliance
SAN DIEGO presents

START WITH **DIGNITY**

A LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

- ✔ Customizable modules
- ✔ Schedule single session or three-part series
- ✔ Interactive, art-based modules!

ELEVATE

What human rights need to be elevated here at home?

CLAIM

How do we use human rights to claim dignity for ourselves and our communities?

PROTECT

What concrete steps can we take to protect dignity and human rights here at home?

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
STARTWITHDIGNITY.ORG/SWD-WORKSHOP



WE SHALL OVERCOME

We shall overcome,
We shall overcome,
We shall overcome, some day.

Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.

We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand, some day.

Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.

We shall all be free,
We shall all be free,
We shall all be free, some day.

Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!



SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE



alliance SAN DIEGO



Learn more at alliancesd.org



alliancesd



@alliancesandiego



@alliancesandiego

#APCSD2026