SOCIAL ACTION: IT'S IN OUR DNA

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This booklet focuses on the social action and justice legacy at San Jose State University, with a focus on students. The hope is that SJSU professors and staff will use this booklet to educate our students about this main thread that runs through our campus history.

There are 10 short chapters in the booklet. They include:

1. Edwin Markhum, "The Man With the Hoe", and Tower Hall
2. Japanese American Internment at the Men's Gymnasium
3. Chicano Commencement
4. Tommie Smith, John Carlos, and the Statues
5. Gaylord Nelson's Earth Day and the Burying of a New Ford Maverick
6. Re-establishment of the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP)
7. Raise the Wage in San Jose
8. Students for DMH and the Fight for Air Conditioning
9. Donald Williams Jr. and Students For Racial Equality
10. Social Action and Justice Today
11. Appendix: A Living Document - Possible Additional Chapters

The readings include an overview of the major SJSU social action and justice events that have occurred on campus, as well as videos that can be used when teaching this material. The booklet's themes focus on issues raised by Spartans, such as: American identity, economic rights (e.g., right to a living wage and a good education), environmental degradation, equality, human dignity, intersectionality, oppression, racism, and the role of protest in a democracy. With this legacy, it is not surprising that we have buildings named the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library and Yoshihiro Uchida Hall, and such monuments as the César E. Chávez Monument: Arch of Dignity, Equality and Justice and the Tommie Smith and John Carlos Sculpture Garden. Social action and justice is in San Jose State's DNA.

The above chapters do not include every social action that has taken place at SJSU. The hope is that if someone wanted to add a chapter to this booklet, they would write it up in a similar format as the above chapters, and submit it to the office of Dean Walt Jacobs in the College of Social Sciences. The Dean's office would approve well-researched chapters, and they would be added to the above chapters. In fact, several faculty have already put forward possible future chapters, and they appear in the appendix. Thus, this booklet becomes a living document of the social action and justice legacy at San Jose State.

1. Edwin Markham, "The Man With the Hoe", and Tower Hall

Historical Background

Charles Edward Anson Markham, an 1872 graduate from the California State Normal School in San Jose, the predecessor of San Jose State Univerty, wrote “The Man With the Hoe”, a poem that has been described as “the battle-cry of the next 1,000 years”. After his graduation, Markham lived in a small house at 432 South 8th Street, just off campus, and it was there that he penned “The Man With the Hoe”. The poem was inspired by Jean-François Millet’s painting “L’homme à la houe”, and it was one of the most successful poems of the early 20th century, earning Markham’s over $250,000.[1]

Over the years, Markham stay connected to the school. In 1904, Markham wrote a poem for the student publication, “The Normal Pennant”, and in 1915, he returned to San Jose to give a lecture to over 400, where President Morris Daily described him as "the most distinguished graduate" of the school. In 1928, Markham served as a judge to a student poetry contest, and in 1932, our campus celebrated his 80th birthday by hosting an assembly. Today, Edwin Markham is recognized with a plaque on the front of Tower Hall. However, the highlighted poem “Outwitted” is on the plaque, which focuses on the less controversial themes of forgiveness, love, and inclusion.[2]

Poem: "The Man With the Hoe"

Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.

Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over sea and land;
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;
To feel the passion of Eternity?
Is this the Dream He dreamed who shaped the suns
And marked their ways upon the ancient deep?
Down all the stretch of Hell to its last gulf
There is no shape more terrible than this—
More tongued with censure of the world’s blind greed—
More filled with signs and portents for the soul—
More fraught with danger to the universe.
What gulfs between him and the seraphim!
Slave of the wheel of labor, what to him
Are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?
What the long reaches of the peaks of song,
The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?
Through this dread shape the suffering ages look;
Time’s tragedy is in that aching stoop;
Through this dread shape humanity betrayed,
Plundered, profaned and disinherited,
Cries protest to the Judges of the World,

A protest that is also prophecy.

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
is this the handiwork you give to God,
This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quenched?
How will you ever straighten up this shape;
Touch it again with immortality;
Give back the upward looking and the light;
Rebuild in it the music and the dream;
Make right the immemorial infamies,
Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
How will the Future reckon with this Man?
How answer his brute question in that hour
When whirlwinds of rebellion shake the world?
How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
With those who shaped him to the thing he is—
When this dumb Terror shall reply to God
After the silence of the centuries?[3]

2. Japanese American Internment at the Men's Gymnasium

Historical Background

Two months after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which ordered the Secretary of War to create military areas within the United States where "any or all persons may be excluded." This exclusion led to the internment or incarceration in prison camps of 120,000 Japanese, two-thirds of which were U.S. citizens.[4]

This Executive Order was part of a century-old government policy at the city, state, and federal policies that discriminated against Asian Americans. For example, in 1860, San Francisco enacted a law to deny Chinese students admittance into K-12 schools, and in 1870, denied jobs to Chinese on public projects. At the state level, discrimination was written into California law in 1851, with the enactment of the Foreign Minter's tax, which charged a tax on Chinese and Mexicans to discourage them from mining. Moreover, the new California Constitution of 1879 stated that, "No Chinese shall be employed by any State, county, municipal or other public work" and that "No corporation now existing or hereafter formed under the laws of this State, shall under the adoption of this constitution, employ directly or indirectly, in any capacity, any Chinese or Mongolian." The federal government wrote discrimination into the law with the passage of the 1870 Naturalization Act, which denied citizenship rights to the Chinese since, and once again in 1882, with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which prohibited all immigration of Chinese skilled and unskilled workers.[5]

As the federal government passed these racist policies, U.S. businesses, which still needed cheap labor, turned to other Asian countries for workers, including Japan and the Philippines. In response to the anger among many Whites about Asians working in the U.S., the federal government responded with the Immigration Act of 1924, which banned immigration from all Asian nations. When World War 2 broke out, this anti-Asian sentiment, which had been part of the fabric of life for 100 years, was directed towards people of Japanese ancestry, regardless of whether they were US citizens.

The Event

On Saturday, May 23, 1942, Civilian Exclusion Order No. 96 was issued by Lt. General L.J. DeWitt, US Army, to all "All Persons of Japanese Ancestry" living in Santa Clara County. A responsible adult, preferably the head of the households, was told to report to the "Men's Gymnasium, San Jose State College, 4th and San Carlos Streets" on May 24 and 25, where they were given more information about the "evacuation" (or forced removal), which was to be completed by the following Saturday, May 30. Over the next several days, approximately 6,000 people, mostly American citizens, reported to the Men's Gymnasium (also known as Spartan Complex West), and were given more detailed information about the removal. They were told to bring only what they could carry, which resulted in the loss of almost everything they owned. The Men's Gymnasium, which was built in the early 1930s for sport, now turned into the beginning point for the incarceration of Japanese Americans living in Santa Clara County. Upon leaving San Jose, people were sent to Pomona or the Santa Anita racetrack in Los Angeles where they lived in horse stalls, and then on to the prison camps in Tule Lake, California, Poston, Arizona, and Heart Mountain, Wyoming, where they would be imprisoned for the next three years. At the end of World War 2, they were released into a hostile and racist society.[6]

Today, the Men's Gymnasium has been renamed Yoshihiro Uchida Hall. Yosh Uchida, who began his education at San Jose State College in 1940 (the name had been changed in 1935), was the son on an immigrant farm worker, and was a student when World War 2 began. While Uchida joined the U.S. Army (and served in a segregated unit), Uchida's family members were processed at the Men's Gymnasium and imprisoned at Poston and Tule Lake internment camps. After the war, Uchida re-enrolled at San Jose State and completed his degree in Biology in 1947.

Yosh went on to become the Judo coach, leading the Spartans to 45 National Championships in his 60 plus years as coach. He also served as the Judo coach for the 1964 U.S. Olympic Team.[7]

In 2013, a group of students created Students for Public Art as Social Justice, with the goal of creating a free-standing memorial to recognize that Uchida Hall served as the starting point for the imprisoning of Japanese Americans in Santa Clara County during World War 2. As part of this campaign, they worked with Dr. Wendy Ng, whose dissertation focused on the internment. Students for Public Art as Social Justice put forward a proposal to build a free-standing memorial, including drawings of the design of it. The proposal made it's way to an Administrative committee, but no action was taken on the student proposal. Eventually, the students graduated, and the memorial was never built.

Videos

- "Return of the Valley: Japanese American Experience After the WWII", Dir. Scott Gracheff, *KTEH Public Television*, 2009. www.returntothevalley.org (accessed February 4, 2018)

3. Chicano Commencement

Historical Background

In the late 1960s, Mexican American students were frustrated that there were hardly any Chicano students at San Jose State, even though the larger community had a large population. In San Jose, Mexican Americans comprised 17% of the population, but were less than 1% of the student body. The students that did attend school struggled financially, and they lacked the necessary support structure to be successful.[8]

Upset by the lack of representation on campus, the Student Initiative, a Chicano student organization, developed a proposal to recruit more students. The student plan, which was endorsed by President Clark, included recruiting Chicano students at local high schools, with a particular interest in the East Side Union High School District. The district was hostile to this recruitment plan. After several confrontations between the students and principals, the Community Service Organization (CSO)–a non-profit organization committed to the empowerment of Mexican Americans, and who had trained Cesar Chavez and Delores Huerta–convinced the district to allow the students to recruit during lunch and after school.[9]

In addition to recruiting, the student plan also was focused on having San Jose State accept more Mexican American students. In the spring of 1967, the Student Initiative worked with President Clark on a plan to admit 12 Chicano students using a special admissions program of the CSU system, which allowed schools to admit 2% of all students as "special admission". The dominant culture thought that the program had been created to let students of color into college, but in reality, it had been created by the state of California for athletes and wealthy students who had low GPAs, as well as any other person the school wanted to admit.[10]

After all of the 12 Chicano students completed the fall semester of 1967 with a 3.0 GPA or higher, the students advocated for President Clark to increase significantly the number of Mexican American students admitted under special admissions. After reviewing the students' proposal, President Clark agreed to admit 250 Chicano students. However, the proposal needed the approval of Chancellor Glenn Dumke of the California State University system, which he refused to give. In response, the students began educating the Mexican American and the community about Chancellor Dumke's refusal to provide access to more Chicano students.[11]

The Event

To draw attention to the injustice of having so few Chicano students at San Jose State, and to the decision by the Chancellor to reject the students and President Clark's plan to not increase the number of Mexican American students for the incoming class of 1968, the students decided to walk out of the university graduation. Out of a graduating class of 2,000 students, only 29 had Spanish surnames, with eight of these being athletes from other countries who had been recruited to San Jose State. Despite being just a few students–not by their fault but rather by a system that had excluded them–eleven Chicano students, along with about 15 white students and 7 white professors, walked out of the commencement just as President Clark was to address the graduating class.[12]

The university and city was so nervous the disruption would lead to violence, 200 campus and city police officers surrounded Spartan Stadium. There was no violence. The students just peacefully walked out of the stadium. President Clark responded by telling the audience that he was sympathetic to the students' peaceful demonstration since the California State University (CSU) system and society in general needed to provide more justice to Mexican Americans. After walking out of the graduation, the students walked across 10th Street to an open part of the track field, where they held one of the first Chicano Commencement celebrations in the United States. Greeting the students and their families was Luis Valdéz, a San Jose State alum, and his Teatro Campesino, as well as Dr. Octavio Romano from the University of California, and over

200 supporters. The Teatro Campesino put on a play entitled Chicano Commencement, there were passionate speeches, and each student had the opportunity to speak. Juan Garcia, a first-year student who attended the event, and who went on to become a professor at Fresno State, thought to himself, "Hey! We should have a separate commencement every year. I was that inspired." This protest lead directly to the creation of the Equal Opportunity Program the following year, which was initially developed to help recruit and graduate Chicano and African American students.[13]

A second Chicano Commencement was organized three years later by the students, and was held at the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in San Jose, which was where Cesar Chavez worshipped and where he held many of his community organizing meetings. This time, the students did not protest, but rather held their own separate commencement so as to recognize the accomplishments of the graduates, to honor their parents and the sacrifices they had made, and to inspire the sisters and brothers of the graduates to get a college education. Thirty people showed up for this 2nd Chicano Commencement. Chris Jimenez, one of the students leaders stated that, "The highlight for me was the families jumping up and down and shouting when the graduates went up for their diplomas. It became a shouting match between families, they were so proud and happy." A few year later, Mexican American student leaders abandoned their separatist perspective, and decided to encourage students to attend both the main graduation ceremony and the Chicano Commencement. Soon after, the university embraced the event. Chicano Commencement is closing in on its 50th anniversary, and today, over 2,000 people attend this celebratory event. However, not all are happy with the decision to not make a political statement with Chicano Commencement. Armando Valdez, a student who had participated in the first Chicano Commencement and who would go on to become a behavioral scientist in Mountain View, believes "It became a celebration and not a political occasion…. I would rather have seen continued protest. The reality is, little has changed for Chicanos in this society." Gabe Reyes, a student organizer of the 1971 event and who later became the SJSU Special Assistant to the President for Campus Diversity, wondered whether if by joining the institution they wanted to change, they became co-opted by it, and changed little to nothing. Gabe would go on to lead the effort to build the SJSU César E. Chávez Monument. Gabe wanted to recognize Chavez, since he started his community organizing in San Jose, he was the co-founder of the United Farm Workers, and he was a frequent speaker on campus. Interestingly, it was a group of SJSU Sociology students that first connected Cesar Chavez to Fred Ross, who was the founder of the CSO, and who helped train Cesar to be an organizer.[14]

4. Tommie Smith, John Carlos, and the Statues

Historical Background

In 1966, Tommie Smith and John Carlos were students at San Jose State, recruited here by the legendary track coach Bud Winters. Tommie Smith was from rural Texas and California, and he was studious, religious, and not initially interested in the Black protest movement. John Carlos was from Harlem, and he was talkative, loud, and was immediately drawn to the protest movement. Both would eventually become connected to Harry Edwards, a Sociology instructor, who taught a class on racism, and who had decided to call for a boycott of the Olympic Games.[15]

At that time, San Jose State had a student population of 24,000 students, with 72 African American students on campus, 60 of which were athletes. These students had experienced racism when they tried to find housing off-campus, while black and white athletes were recruited differently, with white recruits being treated to large fraternity parties and dates, while black recruits were matched with a "negro" faculty and given $20 for dinner. Harry Edwards and Ken Noel, who was a graduate student and former track star, began talking (right where the Smith and Carlos statues are today) about the need to change this for the next generation of students. This led to a "Rally on Racism at San Jose State" on September 18, 1967, where hundreds participated, including President Robert Clark. At the rally, the United Black Students for Action made nine demands to end racism at SJSU, including punishment for students and landlords who discriminated against blacks, and equal treatment of prospective athletic recruits. If the demands were not met, the students were going to stop the home opening football game "by any means necessary." When a bomb threat was made, President Clark cancelled the game.[16]

It was in this intense atmosphere, that Edwards put forward the Olympic Project for Human Rights, which called on athletes to boycott the 1968 Summer Olympic Games in Mexico City unless their demands for racial equality were met. And while the boycott didn't transpire, as many athletes did not want to give up the opportunity to compete, the black athletes did decide to protest individually, but what form the protest would take was left up to the individual athletes.[17]

The Event

The athletes arrived in Mexico City in a frenzied atmosphere, as the Mexican military and police killed over 300 students who were protesting for more democracy in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas just 10 days before the opening Olympic ceremonies. Sixteen days later, on October 16, 1968, Tommie Smith ran a world record time of 19.83 seconds to win the 200 meter race, with Peter Norman from Australia finishing second, and John Carlos finishing third. Now, it was time to protest. During the playing of the national anthem, while standing on the Olympic podium, Tommie and John raised their black-gloved fists, which represented power and human rights, bowed their heads to demonstrate that their action was non-violent and prayerful, and took off their shoes to represent the poverty African Americans experienced as a result of racism. In addition, John wore beads, which represented the lynching that blacks had experienced. Both men wore the button of the Olympic Project for Human Rights. Before walking out for the podium ceremony, Peter Norman asked to wear an Olympic Project for Human Rights button, as he wanted to stand in solidary with Tommie and John. The backlash was immediate. Smith and Carlos were suspended from the Olympic team, expelled from the Olympic Village, and banned from life from the Olympics. When they returned to the USA, they received death threats, were denied jobs (e.g., Smith applied to be a San Jose police officer and was told by the police that they didn't take "traitors"), and were followed by the FBI. Peter Norman also suffered, as he was not given the opportunity to compete in the 1972 Summer Olympics, even though his qualifying times were good enough to make the team. And even though Peter is considered one of the greatest sprinters in the history of Australia, he was not even invited to take part in the festivities for the 2000 Sydney Olympics. But Tommie and John never forgot about Peter's decision to

stand in solidarity with them on the Olympic podium, and when Peter died suddenly of a heart attack in 2006, they flew to Australia and carried his casket.[18]

Thirty-five years after the actions in Mexico City, Eric Grotz, a white student at SJSU was in Dr. Coby Harris' Political Science class. In the class, Eric learned about how African Americans do not get recognized in the same way that whites are recognized. After learning about the story of Tommie and John, Eric became so motivated that he led an effort by the Associated Students to build a statue so that students would know the true history of these two students. Incredibly, the student body, through the Associated Students, put up most of the almost $300,000 for the statue. The students wanted a statue that looked like Tommie and John, while a University committee in charge of art on campus pushed for a statue that could take any form. The students' position won out. Then, the students wanted the statues to be placed in front of the office of the Associated Students on Paseo de San Carlos since the statues focused on student activism. The University said that they didn't want to have the statues on Paseo de San Carlos since it would block fire trucks, and they preferred the statues to be placed off campus in front of the Spartan sports complex by the football stadium, arguing that this was an appropriate place because Tommie and John were athletes. The students fought against this idea, so a compromise was struck. The statues would be on the grassy area in front of Clark Hall. Not only was this a central spot on campus, it was somehow appropriate since Robert Clark, the President of SJSU in 1968, was one of the few white voices strongly defending the actions of Tommie and John.[19]

On October 16, 2006, on the 38th anniversary of when Smith and Carlos' raised their firsts, the statues were dedicated in front of several thousand people, including Tommie, John, Peter Norman (the Australian sprinter who finished 2nd in the 200 meter race in Mexico City), Harry Edwards, and Ken Noel. Ethel Pitts Walker, a theater art's professor, gave the keynote address, where she stated: "Wherever there is discrimination and injustice, someone must raise a fist, for Martin said, 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.' Wherever there is indignity and hatred, someone must stand up straight; for on another occasion Martin said, 'When evil men shout ugly works of hatred, good men must commit themselves to the stories of love.' Wherever there is poverty and ill-treatment, someone must go without shoes, for the old ancestors sang, 'I got shoes, you got shoes, all God's chillun got shoes.'"[20]

Today, the Tommie Smith and John Carlos Sculpture Garden continues to inspire its students, staff, faculty, and the larger community to take a stand for social justice. Importantly, they provide "public space" for current social justice activities.

Videos:

- *Fists of Freedom, The Story Behind the '68 Summer Games,* Dir. George Roy, HBO Sports, 1999.

- *Salute: The Story Behind the Image,* Dir. Matt Norman, Matt Norman Films, 2008.

- Tommie Smith and John Carlos, received the Arthur Ashe Courage Award, *ESPN*, 2008, www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNe5uxccDj4 (accessed February 4, 2018).

5. Gaylord Nelson's Earth Day and the Burying of a New Ford Maverick

Historical Background

In 1934, Gaylord Nelson graduated from high school in Clear Lake, Wisconsin. After graduation, he tried two small colleges in Wisconsin, but realized he didn't yet have the skills to be successful in college, and wasn't yet ready to commit to studying. Gaylord decided to work for a year on road construction for the Works Progress Administration (WPA); at the end of the year, he decided to try college again, and this time he was ready to focus on his studies. Gaylord decided to attend San Jose State College, as his two sisters had also attended, and his Aunt Gertrude was a voice teacher on campus. San Jose State was 2,000 miles from home, and the student population was five times the size of Clear Lake. While in school, Gaylord focused on his studies, and he graduated with honors in political science degree.[21]

Gaylord returned to Clear Lake, where he decided to become a politician, first as a State Senator, then as Governor of Wisconsin, and finally, as a U.S. Senator. His passion was the environment, and as governor, he led the effort to pass a model conservation program to preserve wildlife habitat, open space, and recreational land with a one-cent sales tax on a pack of cigarettes. As a U.S. Senator, Gaylord continued promoting environmentalism, as he was the first senator to propose the banning of the pesticide DDT, and he worked tirelessly to ban phosphates in detergents.[22]

In 1969, Senator Nelson was touring the west coast, and came up with his biggest idea yet to protect the environment. He had just toured a horrific oil spill in Santa Barbara, and he was flying to San Francisco, when he read an article focusing on how college students were using "teach-ins" as a way to educate the public about why it was important to oppose the war in Vietnam. He thought to himself, why not have an "environmental teach-in" to educate the public on the environmental threats to the planet. He knew there were already plans at San Jose State and several other colleges to have campus protests in 1970 focusing on the environmental crisis. He thought, "If we could tap into the environmental concerns of the general public and infuse the student anti-war energy into the environmental cause, we could generate a demonstration that would force the issue onto the national political agenda." In Seattle, Senator Nelson decided to announce a call for college campuses to hold environmental teach in the following spring, and he choose April 22nd as the day.[23]

The Event

In the spring semester of 1969, students from Humanities 160 created a class project that shocked the nation. Dr. John Sperling had encouraged his 19 students in Humanities 160 to learn about a social problem, and then to take action to correct it. His students became interested in the environmental crisis facing the nation and world, and they came up with the idea of burying a brand new Ford Maverick to help solve the crisis. Their goal was to create a symbolic message, similar to the Boston Tea Party, that would galvanize the nation to end the production of millions of gasoline engines that were polluting the planet. In the month leading up to the first Earth Day, the students put their plan into action, raising $2,500 by selling shares of the car. Then, the students bought the new Ford Maverick from a Los Gatos dealer, and they pushed it all the way to campus. Once on campus, they put the car on display next to a prototype BART car, with one representing the past, and the other the future. As the day for the burial approached, local and national TV and newspapers took notice. So did some campus advocates for the poor, including students for the Black Student Union, who argued that the money going toward the car should be used to help people of color and the poor. A professor was so moved by the BSU that he committed to raise $2,500 in a week for the Equal Opportunity Program.[24]

On the day the Ford Maverick was to be buried, the students held a parade, pushing the car through downtown San Jose. The students walked as if in a funeral, along with three ministers

and the San Jose State marching band playing in dirge style. Students had dug a twelve-foot "grave", right where the Cesar Chavez Plaza is today. With the press watching, the brand new Ford Maverick was rolled into its grave, symbolically marking the death of gas engine and car.[25]

Final Notes: A year later, the car was exhumed with the hope of being crushed into a small block in order to serve a cornerstone of the first rapid transit station in Santa Clara County. In 1970, 20 million people participated in Earth Day. Today, 1 billion people participate in Earth Day in almost 200 countries.[26]

6. Re-Establishment of the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP)

Historical Background

The Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) was founded at San Jose State in 1969 with the goal of helping marginalized communities achieve a four-year degree. As stated in Chapter 3, the Chicano student walkout helped push the university to create the EOP. The program began with 200 students, but in two distinct parts, with the "Black EOP" serving the African American students and the "Brown EOP" serving the Chicano students. By the early 1970s, the two programs were merged, and by the 1980s, EOP was flourishing, with more EOP students admitted to San Jose State University (the name changing once again in 1974), and with EOP becoming a comprehensive program, which included recruiting, pre-admission advising, a summer bridge program for incoming students, tutoring, grants, and career counseling. Yet, in late 1990s, California changed the way it funded higher education, moving away from line-item funding to providing the campus with a block grant, which gave each CSU the ability to choose where to spend its money. Some CSUs decided to maintain EOP funding at current rates, while other CSUs increased EOP funding. This was not the case at SJSU, where EOP funding was continually cut, and by 2002, there was no funding for EOP. In 2004, there were 2,000 EOP students but only one part-time staff member to support them.[27]

The Event

In 2008, Students for EOP, along with faculty, led a campaign, to re-instate EOP at SJSU. The main student leaders were Chris "Timbo" Temblador and Diana Victa. The students held marches and rallies, and spoke in front of the Associated Student government. As part of the campaign, Timbo decided to take a bold action before the student government voted on whether to support the demand that the university president re-establish the Equal Opportunity Program. The night before the meeting, Timbo shaved his head (he had had very long, black hair) and phoned his friends to see if they had any handcuffs. The following day at school, Timbo walked around campus with his head shaved and hands cuffed, with tape covering his mouth. His t-shirt read, "Budget Cuts, Fee Hikes, No Student Services, No EOP, No Education". As he walked around campus, people were stunned to see Timbo this way. When a student took interest, Timbo didn't speak— he couldn't as his mouth was taped shut—rather, he just passed out a note asking people to attend that day's board of directors meeting to support the Students for EOP's demand.[28]

Many students were so moved by Timbo's individual act of courage that the board of directors meeting was packed, which most likely helped the board to support the resolution unanimously. The faculty union passed a similar resolution, and together the students and faculty formed a task force, which demanded a director, an EOP Council with representatives from the students and faculty, and a designated space. After meeting with the students and faculty, President Kassing agreed to the demands. In 2010, the restoration of EOP began, and today, EOP serves 2,000 first generation, low-income students by providing five academic advisors, a tutoring center, a summer bridge program, workshops and professional development, a Guardian Scholar program for foster youth, and an EOP graduation ceremony and honors luncheon.[29]

Videos:

- "EOP Program at San Jose State", *Filmtwist Productions*, October 9, 2013, www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sDrei9653M (accessed February 4, 2018).

7. Raise the Wage in San Jose

Historical Background

In 2010, the cost of living in the U.S. was going up, while wages for the working class were stagnant. In Silicon Valley, rent was $1,600 for an apartment, gasoline was $4 a gallon, and the cost of tuition had gone up 141% over the past several years. At that time, minimum wage was $8 an hour in San Jose, which if working full-time, wasn't even enough to rent an apartment. Since the majority of SJSU students work during their college-years, and with about one-quarter of them making minimum wage, and many more making just above minimum wage, it was the perfect storm.[30]

It all began with Marisela Castro, an SJSU student and daughter of farmworkers, who was working at an afterschool program, and it was there that she saw kids taking snacks and putting them into their backpacks. When Marisela talked to the kids about why they were taking food, the students disclosed that they did this because they didn't have enough food at home, and their brothers and sisters were hungry. Marisela asked them if their father and mother were working, and the kids told her that both of them were working, and their dad was working two jobs, but they were at minimum wage, so there wasn't enough money to buy food sometimes. In addition, she learned that parents had to work two jobs, making it difficult to provide the necessary support structure for their children to be successful in school. Marisela was outraged. In her Wealth, Poverty and Privilege course, she told Professor Myers-Lipton the story and said, "Profe, we have to do something. This can't continue for another generation!" In the course, the students had read about raising the minimum wage at the local level, and after class, she came up to the professor to discuss the possibility of doing this in San Jose. Dr. Myers-Lipton told her that there was no action component in the Wealth, Poverty and Privilege course, but there was an action component in Social Action, and that she should considering taking it the following semester, which she did.

The Event

At the beginning of the next semester, Marisela presented her idea of raising the minimum wage to the Social Action class, and three students–Leila McCabe, Saul Gonzalez, and Heather Paulson–decided to join her campaign. First, the students reviewed the literature and found that the research showed that three cities had already significantly increased their citywide minimum wage: San Francisco ($10.24 an hour), Santa Fe, New Mexico ($10.29 an hour), and Washington, DC ($8.25 an hour), and that they raise in the wage did not increase the unemployment rate or had little to no negative impact on small businesses because they generally passed on the cost by raising prices slightly. In fact, the researchers argued that there was a positive impact on businesses since minimum-wage workers stayed in their jobs longer.[31]

After several meetings, these four students decided to put forward a city ballot measure to be voted on by the people to raise the minimum wage from $8 to $10. Their main target was the voting population in San Jose, with a secondary target being the City Council, since they had the power to enact the measure once the students and their allies had gathered the 36,000 signatures. Hundreds of meetings later, and with students from three consecutive Social Action classes working on this issue–including Elisha St. Laurent and Diana Crumedy–and with the help of their allies in the labor, faith, and non-profit communities, San Jose voters passed the minimum wage increase by 60% to 40% in November of 2012. This increase to the minimum wage was one of the largest one-time increases in the history of the nation, and it won easily, even though the students and their allies were outspent 10 to 1.[32]

In the years since the implementation of San Jose's $10 minimum wage, the results were that the numbers of businesses had grown, unemployment had been reduced, the number of minimum-wage jobs had expanded, and the average employee hours remained constant.[33]

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8. Students for DMH and the Fight for Air Conditioning

Historical Background

On the campus of San Jose State sits Dudley Moorhead Hall (DMH), a building that hosts four departments, many faculty offices and lecture classrooms, and serves over 3,000 students a day. DMH was constructed in 1957, and it was done so without air conditioning. With its west-facing side exposed to direct sunlight, temperatures in DMH on some April through October days would reach 90 degrees and above. For the past 50 years, stories had been told about the intolerable conditions of DMH, but little was done to fix the problem. For at least 20 years, the University told students and faculty that there was no need to get air conditioning in the building because it was going to be knocked down and replaced. Unfortunately, there was never enough money in the budget to build a replacement building.

The Event:

Things came to a head when several students fainted in the building on hot days, while several students missed class due to the heat. The Chair of the Psychology Department wrote a letter to the University complaining about the conditions in DMH, which was followed up by a formal complaint lodged by the California Faculty Association. Then, Amanda Adalma, class of '14, decided that she had enough, and she started to organize students in the fall of 2013 under the name Students for DMH.

Over the next two and ½ years, the students held rallies, met with administrators, conducted student questionnaires, handed out hand-held fans with Students for DMH on them, passed out water and popsicles out front of DMH, did a cost estimate to install air conditioning, all with the goal of getting the University to agree to their demand of air conditioning in DMH. When they spoke to students, their opening line was "Are you hot in DMH?" As part of their research, the students had learned that schools with a large population of working class students of color were twice as likely to have buildings built in the 1950s, and that many of them were without air conditioning. This information provided them with the frame that they were being treated unfairly due to their social class and race and ethnicity.[34]

On April 16, 2014, the students held a "faint in", which was a theatrical event, calling on students to faint in the hallways of DMH to draw attention to the unbearable conditions in the building. As classes were getting out, and with TV cameras rolling, about 100 students fainted in the hallways. After ten minutes, the students got up and walked through the building chanting that "DMH is too hot" and that it needed air conditioning now. After chanting, the students marched to the president's office, where they attempted to meet with the president. The "faint in" made it on the local television stations and on the front page of the campus paper.[35]

After continual pressure by the students through the spring and fall semester of 2015, President Susan Martin decided to approve a $3 million air conditioning plan for DMH. The students celebrated with a news conference, which again received local media attention. After the end of the spring semester in 2016, DMH was shut down for installation of the air conditioning, and then at the beginning of the spring 2017 semester, DMH was re-opened with a fully functioning air conditioner.[36]

Videos / Mp3

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9. Donald Williams Jr. and Students For Racial Equality

Historical Background

San Jose State has been dealing with racism for a long time. Historically, SJSU was a white institution. However, the demographics of the study body began to change in the mid 20th century, which of course led to deep reflection about what kind of University was SJSU going to be. In this guide, several of the chapters have dealt with how SJSU and the larger society has wrestled with racism, including the chapters focusing on Chicano Commencement, Tommie Smith and John Carlos, and the Re-establishment of the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP). In addition, issues of race, as well as social class, were also connected to the minimum wage campaign and Students for DMH. Race continued to be a central issue at SJSU in the late part of the 20th century, as the decision to acquit the Los Angeles police officers that beat Rodney King rocked the campus on April 29, 1992. On the campus, two student groups, Striving Black Brothers & Sisters and Students United for Accessible Education, led over 300 predominantly Black and Latino students through campus and the streets of the city. Students shouted "No justice, no peace", with some calling for peaceful protests, while others broke windows and glass doors on campus (over 60 windows and glass doors were broken).[37]

The campus exploded again on April, 1995, when an Administrator, Michael Day, from the Department of Admissions and Records, allegedly called Wesley Flowers, an SJSU student, a "stupid "n---er". Fifty members of the Black Student Union confronted the new President, Bob Caret, and insisted that he implement their eight demands. The BSU was so outraged that they shut down a meeting that President Caret was having with KSJS, the student-run radio station, grabbing the microphone, and not allowing the meeting to continue. The BSU protest lasted 45 minutes. President Caret's response was to appoint a Special Assistant to the President for Campus Climate, create a Campus Climate Office and Advisory Committee, and to develop a University Campus Climate Plan.[38]

In 2002, Maribel Martinez was running for Associated Student (AS) president, and the person she ran against created a racially charged poster, and put them into the men's bathrooms. The Campus Climate Committee called on the SJSU President to denounce this racist action, and after several weeks, President Caret released a statement condemning this racism.

In 2011, Dr. Susan Murray, a Sociology professor at SJSU, conducted a study, upon request of the Campus Climate Committee, focusing on the experience of various student groups, which included: African American students; gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender students; international and immigrant students; Latino/a students, Vietnamese students, and White students. The report highlighted in rich terms how students of color negotiate the negative stereotypes from faculty, staff, and other students, the feeling of disenfranchisement due to being ignored, unwelcomed, and the desire for more acknowledgment, and the hope to have their culture included in the diversity celebrations. The report also discussed how homophobia and transphobia exist on campus, and how this negatively impacts gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students. Unfortunately, the Murray report was not acted upon; in fact, President Mohammad Qayoumi disbanded the Campus Climate committee.[39]

The Events

In the fall semester of 2013, Donald "D.J." Williams Jr. was a 17-year-old freshman student living in Joe West Hall. D.J. was living in an eight-man dormitory suite, and he was the only African American. Over the course of the semester, his roommates displayed the Confederate flag and swastikas in the suite, forcibly wrestled D.J. to the ground and collared him with a bicycle U-lock around his neck, locked him in his bathroom, called him 3/5ths (in reference to the 3/5th compromise in the U.S. Constitution over how African Americans were going to be counted as 3/5ths of a white person according to the census).[40]

D.J. responded to these attacks by asking his roommates to remove the Confederate flag, which they did for a short time. D.J. told them to never jump him again with a bike lock, but they did it again later in the semester, and he fought them off, receiving a cut lip in the process. In addition, D.J. asked them to not call him 3/5ths, but then they started calling him fraction. On October 13, 2013, D.J. and his parents returned to his dorm room to find the Confederate flag on display again, and a racial epitaph on the white board. D.J.'s parents contacted the campus housing officials to complain about these behaviors. Finally, San Jose State took action, by first removing the racist roommates from the suite, and eventually expelling them. Three of the students were charged with a hate crime and battery. Incredibly, the three students were found not guilty of committing a hate crime, but were convicted of misdemeanor battery, and were sentenced to probation and community service. Many students at SJSU, and the African American students in particular, were outraged by this decision, and they held an emotional rally on campus to denounce the verdict.[41]

It was in this environment, that Wanda Ginner, a board member of the SJSU Tower Foundation, the university's fundraising unit, made a racist comment at a campus meeting, stating "I contribute to this University because these little Latinas do not have the DNA to be successful." A university vice president, and member of the President's Cabinet was present at the meeting, but remained silent. This was particularly shocking since San Jose State had responded to the D.J. Williams case by implementing a "See Something, Hear Something, Say Something" campaign to combat racism. A Latina staff member was present at the meeting, and she made an informal complaint to the University, but no action was taken. Then, she made a formal complaint to the University. However, many months went by and nothing was happening.
At this point, the students became involved. The students responded by organizing a new group, *Students for Racial Equality*, and they developed three demands: (1) the removal of Wanda Giner from the Tower Foundation Board, (2) a letter of apology from the university to the Latina staff member who was present at the meeting and who had made the formal complaint, and (3) mandatory anti-racism trainings for administration, faculty, staff, and students. *Students for Racial Equality* targeted the university President Qayoumi, and all actions were focused on him. Within three days of the group's kickoff event, which was attended by media from all the major TV networks, President Qayoumi was pushed to act, with the president announcing that the board member was stepping down. At this time, the president also announced the resignation of the vice president who was present at the meeting but did not challenge the racist comment. Within the year, the second demand was met, as the president apologized in a letter to the Latina staff member who had filed the informal and formal complaint.[42]

In response to the DJ Williams case, the issues raised by Dr. Murray's study, and the rising racial discord, the University responded in 2014 with a Special Task Force on Racial Discrimination, composed of faculty, staff, students, and chaired by Judge Ladoris Cordell. The task force would make 54 recommendations to the University. One of the key recommendations, which was to hire a Chief Diversity Officer, which occurred in April of 2016, with the hiring of Kathleen Wong(Lau). Importantly, Wong(Lau) has implemented a five-hour Freshmen Diversity experience, which trains more than 5,000 students a year, and the University recently has created the African American/Black and Chicanx/Latinx Students Success Centers, which could be a game changer for the campus.[43]

10. Social Action and Justice Today

Today, SJSU students are involved in many actions on campus. In the fall of 2017, *Students Against Sexual Harassment* (*SASH*) won their demand to force the resignation of a professor who had sexually harassed a student, but after a two-week suspension and diversity training, had been allowed to return to his faculty position. In addition, students have slept out in early November for the past 11 years as part of "Poverty Under the Stars" to draw attention to the fact that Silicon Valley is the homeless capital of Northern California.[44]

Moreover, Dreamer students have been actively defending former President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. This work dates back to 2010, when *Collective Voices for Undocumented Students* won their campaign to allow AB 540 (undocumented) students to use computers from Clark Hall and to receive certain SJSU scholarships. Lastly, there is a group SJSU faculty who are meeting to discuss how to include social action into their classes. If you are interested, please contact Dr. Scott Myers-Lipton at smlipton@sjsu.edu.[45]

APPENDIX: A LIVING DOCUMENT

Possible Additional Chapters

Possible Ideas:

1) In the basement of the Normal School, Principal Allen instituted vocational training.

2) The students of the Normal School established public education in the region in the period of 1880-1900.

3) During World War One, there were a number of student relief committees on campus. For example, there was an Armenia relief committee as early as 1916.

4) During the Depression and World War II, students most likely were involved in relief work.

5) During the Viet Nam War, there were major protests on campus focusing on Dow Chemical. Check out https://ww2.kqed.org/news/2017/09/12/vietnam-war-inspires-a-lifetime-of-political-activism-in-san-jose/ and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOfs8iJNTeE&feature=player_embedded

6) Students involved in the women's movement and the creation of women's studies on campus: http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt8199s37q/entire_text/

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