This historical timeline attempts to capture, in one place, many significant moments, events, controversies and victories that have defined the racial landscape since the turbulent days following the LAPD/Rodney King beating verdict over two decades ago. When communities in Los Angeles rebelled, “race riots” exploded the commonly held myth that our nation had progressed from the explicitly unjust conditions that had defined earlier generations. And in the decades since, the history chronicled in this timeline belies the notion that the U.S. is a “post-racial” society.

For funders seeking to understand and provide resources in support of racial justice work, this timeline also includes some of the key events in philanthropy that were shaped by the incidents, policies and cultural manifestations of race and racism during these years.

Though this timeline starts in 1992, it is important to recognize that obviously there was significant pioneering work for many decades around racial justice and philanthropy before this starting point – including before and during major movements such as the civil rights movement and the Chicano workers movement. In addition, all the current racial identity-based affinity groups (Association of Black Foundation Executives, Hispanics in Philanthropy, Native Americans in Philanthropy and Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy) formed before 1992. In fact, the Association of Black Foundation Executives was formed in 1971 to protest the lack of any African Americans on the board slate of the Council on Foundations, and became the first of any formal affinity group to be established in philanthropy. Additionally, more than 100 “population-focused funds” were founded before 1992. There has been significant growth in the two decades since, with more than 400 now – too many to include here.

Our intent in creating this timeline is to highlight significant developments over the past two decades that have created momentum in philanthropy towards advancing racial justice.1 We also want to ensure that the lessons learned, even in relatively recent times such as these, are not lost – particularly in a field such as philanthropy where the ability of funders to resource their own ideas with little challenge can lead to reinventing the wheel.

The timeline is strictly focused on the U.S., with only rare references to cross-border issues, though we are keenly aware that there have been numerous international events tied to race that were significant here as well as globally. We considered including global events that resonated and impacted racial activism within the U.S., such as the first democratic elections in South Africa that brought Nelson Mandela into the presidency in 1994. In the end, with limited time and space in this publication, we realized it was not possible to do a serious treatment of the many racialized issues around the world in the past 20 years, such as extreme cases of genocide and ethnic cleansing; ongoing discrimination of Roma in Europe, and xenophobia globally; as well as the many global examples of critical resistance such as anti-apartheid efforts, Afro-Brazilian anti-racism campaigns, or advocacy efforts to counter Islamophobia in Europe. While admitting the geographic limitations of this timeline, it should in no way feed possible misperceptions within philanthropy that racialized struggle and resistance are strictly U.S. phenomena. PRE has and continues to engage with colleagues seeking to strengthen their approach and understanding of structural racialization in other countries, including past work with the European Foundation Centre’s Diversity, Migration and Integration Interest Group.

It is our hope that thinking critically about the relationship between the history of racism and resistance, and the history of racial justice funding, will generate productive questions and discussion. To that end, we offer this set of questions as we reflect on the past and consider the philanthropic field’s actions and strategies for the present and into the future.
1. How did particular moments contribute to an understanding of race and racial justice? How did foundations learn and shift? How did they communicate that learning and shifting? How did foundations’ responses make grantees more able or less able to respond to critical crisis and opportunity?

2. What dimensions of structural racism were present in a given moment or situation? Did foundations help elevate the structural dimensions and potential responses? How can they do so today?

3. How embedded was a racial justice commitment in the strategy and program of foundations as moments and situations arose? How did this readiness, or lack thereof, impact foundations’ ability to respond effectively? What lessons could help inform future actions?

4. How was a particular funding approach or strategy informed directly by racial justice groups deeply engaged in the issue? What are some practices that worked well and could be replicated? What are the lessons?

5. Did funding strategies include conducting a structural power analysis? Have grantmaking practices been reviewed to assure they are not contributing to inequity or unintentionally having a racialized impact? Who is defining success?

6. How did the media shape interpretation of particular moments and situations? What racial justice media efforts have foundations supported that help shape meaning at a given time? Did the messages communicated by foundations provide structural context of the issue?

7. How could foundations have collaborated or leveraged resources in a given moment or situation? What were the barriers to the funders’ collaboration (e.g., branding, turf issues) that might need to be addressed in the future?

Despite the many limitations of this timeline, our purpose in recounting history is to place current U.S. racial justice work in context. It is to remind us of the myriad connections between and among communities, and how actors from different spheres have come together and fought for racial justice. From Native American protests at the Super Bowl to the Million Man March, to the struggle of home health care workers in Wisconsin and Missouri, the history of racism and resistance – and the work of foundations on these issues – is rich. From the tragic and dramatic murders at the hands of those sworn to protect, the equally high-profile court trials and verdicts, to the less visible local struggles against environmental racism and immigrant detention, there is both racism and resistance, a necessary balance to counter the other side of the false post-racial narrative – the post-movement narrative. While we pay deep respect and homage to countless men and women who struggled, won or even died to advance us to this point, we are heartened that today’s movement work is more varied, more creative than ever.

We invite funders and activists to reflect upon some of this history to perhaps learn more about work that might have taken time to take hold, or perhaps recognize missed opportunities that nevertheless might still inspire future work for racial justice. We look forward to you sharing them with us. “The great force of history,” James Baldwin wrote, “comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and history is literally present in all that we do.”

This history remains present with us. Here is our attempt to remember it.
1992

A day before the Los Angeles police/Rodney King case verdicts, gang leaders from the Bloods and Crips meet publicly with South Central community activists to announce a cease-fire and gang truce.

On April 29, four White LAPD officers are acquitted of the 1991 beating of Rodney King, triggering five days of civil unrest leaving more than 50 people dead and more than 2,000 injured.

A series of widely publicized incidents at Denny’s restaurants across the country leads to a class-action lawsuit filed by thousands of Black customers who had been refused service, and were forced to wait longer and pay more than White customers.

Presidential candidate Bill Clinton’s widely replayed critical comments of rapper Sister Souljah appears to be a calculated move to attract White voters back to the Democratic Party, signaling a new direction in mainstream Democratic Party politics.

During a month of heated protest, nine UCLA students and a professor launch a dramatic 14-day hunger strike, galvanizing widespread attention to the underfunding of Chicano Studies and resulting in the establishment of the Cesar Chavez Chicano Studies Center.

Asian Immigrant Women Advocates organizes a multiyear campaign of boycotts, picket lines and ad campaigns against Jessica McClintock Inc. in support of seamstresses who were laid off and owed back wages. Their eventual victory helps rewrite industry standards.

Spike Lee’s film “Malcolm X” is released to theaters across the country after more than a year of controversy over its production. The movie grosses over $50 million and is nominated for Best Picture at the Academy Awards.

New community formations such as Action for Grassroots Empowerment and Neighborhood Development Alternatives (AGENDA) rise up in response to the Los Angeles civil unrest, waging successful campaigns for jobs, police accountability, public safety, and quality health care in South Los Angeles.

A half dozen national foundations begin to develop more intentional programs around race and diversity. A larger number of funders at the community level are supporting individual projects aimed at improving local race relations.

1993

A joint “Apology Resolution” (Public law 103-105) regarding Hawaii is passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton, marking the first time in American history that the United States government officially apologizes for overthrowing the legitimate government of a sovereign nation.

A study by the National Science Foundation finds that 51% of White respondents have racist attitudes toward African Americans, regardless of political affiliation.

The Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) forms to inject an Asian-Pacific Islander (API) perspective into the environmental justice movement and work in API communities.

The Farmworker Network for Economic and Environmental Justice forms to support the struggle of 50,000 workers in nine independent farmworker organizations.

The Northeast Environmental Justice Network forms after the West Harlem Environmental Action leads the fight over the North River Sewage Treatment Plant, drawing in activists across 12 northeastern states.

The Joint Affinity Groups (JAG) is founded as a coalition of grantmaker associations that engages the field of philanthropy to reach its full potential by supporting diversity, inclusiveness and the principles of social justice through a more equitable distribution of resources.

The Ford Foundation launches its Diversity Initiative for Community Foundations.

GCIR releases its first publication, Newcomers in America, which frames immigration issues for funders.

The Council on Foundations (COF) creates the Taskforce on Inclusiveness.

“The critical part of the L.A. experience was the early efforts of a set of small-scale yet committed and visionary funders who were willing to place bets on new experiments in organizing – and were also willing to educate larger funders as the experiments began to work out and change lives for the better.”

1994

- The Bus Riders Union leads popular protests against a massive fare hike and increases its organizing capacity to represent the civil rights of 400,000 daily bus riders in Los Angeles County – the majority of whom are people of color and low-income women.

- The University of Massachusetts issues a study funded by Waste Management Inc. that challenges ciling demographics, triggering the first wave of attacks on the environmental justice movement.

- Amendments to the American Indian Religious Freedom Act guarantee protection of religious rights and sacred sites for American Indians.

- In Baltimore, alliances among labor unions, community organizations and faith leaders lead to the first of many successful living wage organizing campaigns. Similar alliances spread across the country.

- The U.S. Border Patrol signals a massive increase in spending on immigration enforcement as it implements Operation Gatekeeper, essentially militarizing the San Diego-Tijuana border crossing. Within a decade, thousands of deaths are discovered in the desert region between San Diego and Nogales.

- Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein co-author the controversial book *The Bell Curve*, which argues in part that racial differences in IQ scores are not necessarily the result of environmental factors alone.

- By a wide margin, California voters pass Proposition 184 (popularly known as “three strikes, you’re out”), the nation’s toughest mandatory sentencing law.

- California voters also pass Proposition 187, which denies undocumented immigrants public services like education and health care. A week before the vote, organizers across California mobilize 70,000 people in Los Angeles to march against the proposed law.

- Republicans win a majority of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and push their ‘Contract with America,’ a series of reactionary measures designed to make tax increases difficult to pass into law, creates massive cuts in social spending, while increasing spending on law enforcement.

- Multiracial organization Pushback Network forms to secure social, economic and racial justice for women of color and low-income families in the state of New York through new models of political engagement.

- The Ford Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the C.S. Mott Foundation develop fatherhood initiatives focused particularly on African-American families.

- COF develops its *Statement of Inclusiveness* requiring a commitment to inclusiveness and diversity as a fundamental operating principle.

1995

- The U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission concludes that Asian Americans are paid less than Whites in almost every job category, even when they share identical educational levels and other variables.

- The terrorist bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma City kills 160 people. The convicted bombers later identified as having extreme anti-government political views and are linked with White supremacist groups.

- O.J. Simpson is found not guilty of double murder. Widely reported opinion polls indicate tremendous differences in the reactions to the verdict between Whites and African Americans.

- The Million Man March gathers in Washington, D.C., answering the call “to unite in self-help and self-defense against economic and social ills plaguing the African-American community.”

- American Indian Movement activists protest the Cleveland Indians and Atlanta Braves at the 1995 World Series for both clubs’ continued use of offensive mascots and other imagery.

- The Environmental Justice Fund is founded by six networks to promote the creation of alternative funding strategies to support grassroots environmental justice organizing.

- AAPP, GCIR and Hispanics in Philanthropy (HIP) co-publish *Reweaving Our Social Fabric: Challenges to the Grantmaking Community after Proposition 187*, which focuses on funding for immigrant communities.

- The COF annual conference includes the session “Sustaining Diversity in the Workplace.”

1996

- The U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals rules in Hopwood v. Texas that the University of Texas law school’s use of affirmative action in their admission process is invalid.

- In White Pine, Michigan, Ojibwe activists at the Bad River Reservation blockade railroad tracks and stop the transportation of chemicals used in mining that pollute tribal food sources.

- Living up to his pledge to “end welfare as we know it,” President Clinton signs into law the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, which dramatically cuts welfare payments and sets time limits for recipients.

- Under sponsorship of the Seventh Generation Fund, with Indigenous Environmental Network and affiliate support, the Indigenous Anti-Nuclear Summit brings together a network of indigenous peoples from North America and the Pacific.
The Orwellian-named California Civil Rights Initiative (Proposition 209) is passed into law by California voters – ending the use of affirmative action in public higher education, employment and contracting.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation supports the Emerging Funds in Communities of Color, and Cultures of Giving.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation establishes The National Task Force on African-American Men and Boys, and releases the publication Repairing the Breach: Key Ways to Support Family Life, Reclaim Our Streets, and Rebuild Civil Society in America’s Communities.

A co-sponsored luncheon “Affirmative Action, What’s At Stake” by Women and Philanthropy, with JAG, at the COF annual conference draws a broad audience.

Mary Francis Winter’s book Include Me! Making the Case for Inclusiveness for Private and Family Foundations is published by COF.

1997

A decade into SEIU’s “Justice for Janitors” campaigns, 4,000 janitors organize in Washington, D.C. Contracts follow in Denver, Philadelphia and New Jersey, representing a reinvigorated labor movement.

Seeking to promote a “national conversation” on issues related to race and racism, President Bill Clinton announces the Initiative on Race during an address to graduating students at University of California, San Diego.

African-American farmers file a lawsuit charging the USDA with discrimination in access to loans and subsidies.

Activists call for demonstrations after Abner Louima, a Haitian immigrant, is beaten and sodomized with a broom handle by New York City police after being arrested outside a nightclub in Brooklyn.

Teamsters organize successful strikes against United Parcel Service (UPS) tackling issues and demands of part-time workers, a growing majority of whom are people of color.

One year after the passage of the welfare reform law, nine out of ten New York City soup kitchens and food pantries report an increased demand for services. Other major cities report similar increases, even as the national economy remained relatively strong.

The Providence-based Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE) organizes and wins the “Home Daycare Justice” campaign, making Rhode Island the first and only state to provide insurance for day care providers.

The minor league Canton-Akron Indians rename themselves the Akron Aeros and boost their merchandise sales from $60,000 to $1.2 million, the largest merchandise income of any minor league team.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation fully funds the Center for Living Democracy’s effort to catalogue a number of interracial dialogue groups around the country and produce a directory entitled Bridging the Racial Divide.

The C.S. Mott Foundation Board approves a $2 million annual grantmaking objective “aimed at addressing the institutional and societal causes of racism, and improving understanding and appreciation of racial and ethnic diversity.”

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation launches the Village Foundation, the first foundation focused solely on the needs of Black boys and men.

Hawaiian sovereignty; Native American, Native Hawaiian and Asian-Pacific Islander issues; and the “Myth of the Multiracial Paradise,” which addressed issues of institutional racism within Hawaii, are featured sessions at the COF annual conference in Honolulu.

1998

Congress reauthorizes a modified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program as part of President Clinton’s “mend it, don’t end it” approach to affirmative action.

Four months after its formation, the New York Taxi Workers Alliance (NYTWA) organizes nearly 40,000 taxi drivers to strike for 24 hours in a protest against new regulations that would dramatically increase insurance costs and fines.

California voters pass Proposition 227 (“English for the children”) effectively banning bilingual education programs in public schools.

African-American James Byrd Jr. is chained to the back of a pickup truck and dragged for three miles in a brutal murder by White supremacists. His lynching leads to the passage of new hate crimes legislation in the state of Texas.

The Black Radical Congress is formed in Chicago, bringing together over 2,000 participants.

California Gov. Pete Wilson vetoes the “Driving while Black or Brown” bill, which would have required law enforcement to document demographic information on the race of motorists pulled over by police. The issue is also debated in state houses from New Jersey to Illinois.


The C.S. Mott Foundation and the Ford Foundation join forces with five community foundations and one local foundation to launch the Community Foundations/Intergroup Relations Program.

“Almost from its inception in June 1997, the body, formally the Advisory Board to the President’s Initiative on Race, was plagued by a lack of organization, a youthful staff with few policy experts, a lack of political experience and continued interference by White House officials who feared the political consequences of its work.”

– Clinton Panel on Race Urges Variety of Modest Measures, by Stephen A. Holmes
“Historically and continuing into the modern era, the Indian policies of the federal government have been aimed either at dismantling tribal governments and assimilating Native people or at paternalistically isolating tribes to misappropriate their assets. By all accounts, these mixed and often misguided efforts resulted in the devastating social conditions found on many reservation communities today.”

– Sherry Salway Black, National Congress of American Indians

**1999**

- **Critical Resistance: Beyond the Prison Industrial Complex** is launched as a national campaign at a conference and strategy session at University of California, Berkeley.

- Plainclothes NYPD shoot at Guinean immigrant Amadou Diallo 41 times, killing him. The criminal trial for the officers is moved to Albany where they are acquitted, leading to demonstrations that call attention to police violence and racial profiling.

- African-American farmers win a class action lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture for racial discrimination in its allocation of farm loans and assistance.

- The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights reports to the President, “The U.S. government’s failure to recognize and eliminate [racial] differences in health care delivery, financing and research presents a discriminatory barrier that creates and perpetuates differences in health status.”

- The first annual White Privilege Conference is launched by Dr. Eddie Moore Jr. at Cornell College in Iowa.

- Southeast Asian community members in the Bronx challenge New York City’s failed welfare-to-workfare programs. Their efforts are chronicled the next year in the documentary “Eating Welfare.”

- A group of civil rights attorneys launch The Advancement Project, an innovative racial justice organization working to strengthen grassroots efforts to eradicate structural inequities.

- COF publishes the study Cultures of Caring, which describes the philanthropic interests and traditions of donors in communities of color.

- The W.K. Kellogg Foundation provides major startup funding for the Network of Alliances Bridging Race and Ethnicity (NABRE), a project of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

- “Beyond Identity” (multi-issue organizing) conference sessions take place at several venues: the COF annual conference, the National Network of Grantmakers (NNG) conference and the COF community foundations conference.

**2000**

- In a dramatic reversal of its past policy, the AFL-CIO calls for an immediate amnesty for undocumented immigrants, and an end to sanctions on employers who hire them.

- California voters pass Proposition 21, the Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention Act, deciding to treat juvenile offenders as adults. The new law expands criminal penalties for youth, extends the legal definition of gang affiliation, and lowers the age to 14 by which youth can be charged and prosecuted as adults.

- With California’s draconian Proposition 21 legislation, a new generation of youth leaders and organizations emerge, initiating a new wave of racial justice organizing.

- South Carolina is the last state in the U.S. to make Martin Luther King Jr. Day a paid holiday for all state employees.

- The Navajo Nation organizing group Dine’ CARE leads a national organizing effort with a multiracial and multistate coalition to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act legislation.

- The Applied Research Center (ARC) conducts a “conceptual mapping” of the variety of approaches emerging to address racism, funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation. The resulting report, Confronting the New Racisms: Anti-Racist Organizing in the Post-Civil Rights Era, provides in-depth case studies of six different programs.

- The Colorado Trust launches the Supporting Refugees and Immigrant Families Initiative that would grant a total of $11 million over seven years.

- HIP launches the Funders’ Collaborative for Strong Latino Communities after a three-year planning process, bringing together local and national funders to build the capacity of small- to mid-sized Latino nonprofits through grants and technical assistance.

- COF publishes Opening Doors: Pathways to Diverse Donors, giving nonprofit organizations resources and strategies to understand the philanthropic traditions of diverse communities and to build effective outreach efforts.

**2001**

- Welfare rights activists disrupt Charles Murray, conservative author of The Bell Curve, during his speech at the “New World of Welfare” conference held in Washington D.C. The foundation-sponsored conference is targeted because it fails to include a single welfare recipient or grassroots advocate.

- The city of Cincinnati convulses with four days of civil unrest following the fatal shooting of Timothy Thomas, a 19-year-old Black male, by White police officer Steven Roach. It is the largest urban rebellion in the United States since the Los Angeles riots in 1992.
The ruling in South Camden Citizens in Action v. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection states that compliance with environmental laws does not equal compliance with civil rights laws, and determines that New Jersey has violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It is the first environmental justice case to prevail under this theory, but the decision is later overturned.

Organizers form Human Solidarity in Long Island, New York, in response to the attempted murders of two day laborers. They fight for workplace justice and battle the racist harassment of workers by citizens in the suburban town of Farmingville.

The increase in hate crimes and other acts of harassment targeting immigrant workers prompts the formation of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network.

On 9/11, Al Qaeda terrorists aboard four hijacked passenger planes carried out attacks against the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and a thwarted crash in Pennsylvania, killing nearly 3,000 on the ground and in the air.

In Durban, South Africa, the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance attracts racial justice activists and organizers from around the world in September. The U.S. and Israeli government delegations walk out over a draft resolution that criticizes Israel and equates Zionism with racism.

Reports surface of acts of violence and harassment against Muslim and Arab Americans after the Sept. 11 attacks. Four days after 9/11, Balbir Singh Sothi, a Sikh gas station owner in Mesa, Arizona, is shot and killed by Frank Roque.

The ACLU of Northern California creates the Racial Justice Project, which focuses on racial profiling by law enforcement. Originally established to focus on affirmative action, the project shifts its attention after input from racial justice leaders.

With very little debate, Congress passes the USA PATRIOT Act, expanding the powers of law enforcement. This leads to an increase in racial profiling, immigrant detentions and deportations.

The Bush Administration implements the “No Child Left Behind” policy, which financially penalizes schools that underperform based on standardized testing standards.

In the wake of 9/11, comprehensive immigration reform, which seemed likely to pass in Congress, stalls and is eventually abandoned.

The Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers publishes Engaging Diverse Communities for and through Philanthropy, a handbook for organizations interested in reaching out to diverse donors.

Rainbow Research publishes Improving Race Relations and Undoing Racism: Roles and Strategies for Community Foundations, funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation.

Diversity Practices in Philanthropy: Findings from a National Study is the release of a preliminary JAG-sponsored report and session presentation at the COF annual conference.


Penda Hair, with support from the Rockefeller Foundation, publishes Louder than Words: Lawyers, Communities and the Struggle for Justice, an important report on innovative civil rights strategies.

California voters pass Proposition 40, the largest resource bond in United States history. It provides $2.6 billion for parks, clean water and clean air with an unprecedented level of support among communities of color and low-income communities.

The first North American Indigenous Mining Summit is held. Working groups develop action plans to address coal, uranium and metallic mining activities on Native American lands.

The Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York (ROC-NY) is founded after the Windows on the World restaurant was destroyed in the World Trade Center attacks. The center wins back wages and new jobs for displaced “back-of-the-house” workers and others. ROC quickly grows into a national organization with over 10,000 worker-members in over two dozen locations.

Three key national organizations with strong racial justice lenses – the Praxis Project, the Center for Social Inclusion and the Opportunity Agenda – are all officially launched with a variety of research, technical assistance and communications tools.

The newly created Department of Homeland Security requires thousands of immigrant men from countries with large Muslim populations to report to federal authorities under a special registration program. The ensuing practice leads to a major wave of detentions and deportations.

Japanese-American community leaders, many of whom had been held as prisoners with their families during World War II, organize rallies and teach-ins to draw parallels between the history of internment and the racist treatment of Muslims, South Asians and Arabs in the wake of Sept. 11.

JAG sponsors a comprehensive national study that provides practical recommendations for foundations to address the growing diversity of the communities they serve: The Meaning and Impact of Board and Staff Diversity in the Philanthropic Field: Findings from a National Study.

The C.S. Mott Foundation launches the “Leading by Example” program, which works with four community foundations on racial equity and inclusion issues.

Public Interest Projects (PIP) launches The Racial Justice Collaborative, a partnership of 25 foundations and individual donors that support innovative racial justice advocacy and makes grants to collaborations between lawyers and community organizations using legal and non-legal tools to combat structural exclusion.

The Dellums Commission, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and chaired by Congressman Ron Dellums, is formed to research conditions faced by young men of color and produce policy recommendations for reducing disparities.

“Is Philanthropy Keeping Pace with our Diverse Communities?” takes place at all three COF conferences, including the annual conference, and conferences for community foundations and family foundations.

Institute of Medicine’s (IOM) landmark study, Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care, is published. The study helps broaden the base of health philanthropy to consider racial and ethnic disparities in quality of health services.

The Funding Exchange adopts “Principles of Unity,” including a renewed commitment to be anti-racist organizations and work for racial justice.
“Those who are racially marginalized are like the miner’s canary; their distress is the first sign of danger that threatens us all. It is easy enough to think that when we sacrifice this canary, the only harm is to communities of color. Yet others ignore problems that converge around racial minorities at their own peril, for these problems are symptoms warning us that we all are at risk.”

– Lani Guinier & Gerald Torres, The Miner’s Canary: Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy

COF hires a director of Affinity Groups and Inclusive Practices, and the internal staff task force is reinstated.

Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres publish The Miner’s Canary: Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy, with support from The Ford Foundation and the C.S. Matt Foundation. It discusses how to diagnose systemic injustice and organize to resist it.

AAPiP launches the Asian-American Women’s Project with support from the Ford Foundation, including a national book tour for Asian American Women: Issues, Concerns and Responsive Human and Civil Rights Advocacy by Lora Jo Foo.

2003

The largest coordinated protests in recorded history converge on cities all over the world as people express outrage at the imminent U.S. invasion of Iraq. Reports of racist harassment and other hate crimes increase sharply in the weeks leading up to the invasion.

Racial justice activists circulate An Open Letter to Activists Concerning Racism in the Anti-War Movement.

Both Grutter v. Bollinger and Gratz v. Bollinger concerning the University of Michigan’s affirmative action admissions policy reach the Supreme Court. In the first case, the court upholds the law school’s admissions policy, while it rules in the second against the university’s undergraduate admissions policy.

The Color Lines Conference sponsored by Harvard University’s Civil Rights Project gathers over 1,100 academics and activists to discuss segregation and resegregation of the U.S.

Proposition 54, The Racial Privacy Initiative, is rejected by California voters. The proposed law would restrict state and local governments from collecting or using information on a person’s race, ethnicity, color or national origin for the purposes of public education, public contracting, public employment and other government operations.

Joining the ranks of other newspapers that have also adopted similar guidelines, the Nebraska Journal Star newspaper amends its style, and along with other related changes, will no long print the “redskin” racial slur.

The Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity (PRE) is officially launched in January with the goal of increasing resources aimed at addressing institutional and structural racism.

Developed by the Mid-South Commission to Build Philanthropy, with initial Ford Foundation support, Where Hope and History Rhyme: Reflections and Findings provides a set of philanthropic recommendations for advancing racial and social equity in Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

The Funding Exchange raises funds for a national “Peace and Racial Justice” grantmaking initiative to support anti-racial profiling and anti-Islamophobia actions.

The Schott Foundation for Public Education begins its Black Boys Initiative with the goal of creating a movement to improve the educational experiences of Black boys, and to ensure that they graduate high school with confidence to become successful members of society.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation supports the American Psychological Association’s initiative Valuing Diversity Project, with the Association for the Study and Development of Community (now Community Science). The study seeks to enhance the capacity of professional psychology to promote and support community efforts that value diversity.

The COF community foundations conference includes “Affinity Group Collaborations with Community Foundations in Diverse Communities.”

GCIR convenes a communications strategy meeting to discuss concerns over the connections between immigration and terrorism. Programs look at African refugees; Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians; farm workers; and immigration in new gateway states.

The Four Freedoms Fund is founded by PIP to secure the full integration of immigrants as active participants in our democracy, and provides over $31 million in grants to 81 organizations in 27 states in its first seven years.

2004

President Bush announces a new temporary “guest worker” plan that would allow undocumented immigrants working in the U.S. to apply for temporary status.

The box office hit “Crash” wins the Academy Award for Best Picture. The film highlights racial and social tensions in Los Angeles.

In wide-ranging remarks about the U.S. presence in Iraq, President Bush says, “People whose skins … are a different color than White can self-govern.”

The Center for Third World Organizing celebrates the 20th year of its signature organizer-training program for people of color. Since 1984, the Movement Activist Apprenticeship Program (MAAP) has graduated several hundred interns.

The Bush Administration announces new rules that allow U.S. Border Patrol agents the ability to deport undocumented immigrants without a hearing before an immigration judge.

The first-ever national African-American summit on AIDS is held. “Shedding Light in the AIDS Blackout” considers the record numbers of African Americans contracting the disease.

The American Indian Forum on Racism in Sports and Media is held at Black Bear Crossing, St. Paul, Minnesota.

A group of scholars and practitioners form the Structural Racism Caucus to emphasize the role of structural analysis in the battle against racial hierarchies and social, economic and political inequities.
Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity

Short Changed: Foundation Giving and Communities of Color is published by Will Pittz and Rinku Sen. This study uses Foundation Center data to track foundation giving to racial justice issues and to communities of color, including minority-led organizations, noting a steady decrease in giving to communities of color post 2001.


The Race Matters Toolkit is developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. This toolkit is designed to help decision makers, advocates and elected officials get better results in their work by providing equitable opportunities for all.

PIP manages the Fulfilling the Dream Fund, a grantmaking collaborative catalyzed by Ford to defend, support and expand affirmative action and other efforts to promote full inclusion of people of color and women.

The COF Family Foundations Conference includes the session “Can Family Foundations Become Leaders on Diversity and Inclusiveness?”

The COF Annual Conference and the NNG conference both include the session “Intersectionality: Diversity at a Crossroad.”

GCR and AAPPI launch a joint report Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim and South Asian (AMEMSA) Communities in the Bay Area: An Introduction for Grantmakers, highlighting some of the issues, challenges and concerns facing these communities post 9/11.

2005

Border activists organize against the anti-immigration Minuteman Project as a “citizen’s neighborhood watch program on the border.” The organization is denounced as a vigilante force, but nonetheless attracts support from anti-immigrant forces including many White supremacist groups.

Hurricane Katrina devastates New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region in the deadliest natural disaster in American history, claiming over 1,800 lives. Institutional racism and the neglect of poor communities become central issues as low-income African Americans are among the most affected.

By 2005, four states in the U.S. have a majority-minority population: California, Texas, New Mexico and Hawaii. Mid-census data projects that the U.S. will have a majority of people of color within the next forty years.


The African American Leadership Project outlines the Citizen Bill of Rights to guide the rebuilding, reconstruction and recovery process in New Orleans, and presents it at the Congressional Black Caucus 2005 Annual Legislative Conference.

Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The monograph focuses on community and foundation partnerships, analyzing community building through the lens of White privilege and racism.

The Funders’ Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities release Signs of Promise: Stories of Philanthropic Leadership in Advancing Regional and Neighborhood Equity.

AAPPI launches the National Gender & Equity Campaign to leverage, mobilize, and activate philanthropic and community resources towards achieving more justice and equity for communities.

The COF annual conference includes “Lessons Learned: Adopting a Human Rights Framework for Domestic Grantmaking.”

Race, Culture, Power and Inclusion in Foundations: A Report Conducted for the Annie E. Casey Foundation is produced by Marga Inc., scanning a range of practices in philanthropy with respect to race, ethnicity and various forms of diversity.

Jiannbin Lee Shiao writes Identifying Talent, Institutionalizing Diversity; Race and Philanthropy in Post-Civil Rights America.


Berkeley-based Greenlining Institute generates a “diversity report card,” Fairness in Philanthropy, examining the 2002 grantmaking of 49 foundations to minority-led organizations.

2006

Millions participate in protests that contribute to the defeat of anti-immigrant legislation. Hundreds of thousands mobilize in Chicago and Los Angeles. Marches take place simultaneously in 102 cities across the country.

After a five-year campaign in Oakland, California, APEN and the Stop Chinatown Evictions Committee successfully save 50 units of affordable housing while securing funds to build 50 additional low-income senior apartment rental units.

A historic coalition of community, labor and faith organizations in Oakland, California, wins a landmark Community Benefits Agreement issued from the city to ensure stringent environmental cleanup of a brown-fill site, resulting in 465 new units of affordable housing and open space for surrounding communities and its residents.

“Instead of prioritizing efforts led by people who are from the communities most affected, we have seen millions of dollars that was advertised as dedicated towards Gulf Coast residents either remain unspent, or shuttled to well-placed outsiders with at best a cursory knowledge of the realities faced by people here.”

– Letter from the People of New Orleans to Our Friends and Allies, by New Orleans-based activists
A coalition of more than 70 environmental justice, social justice, public health, human rights and workers’ rights groups launches the National Environmental Justice for All Tour to highlight the devastating impact of toxic contamination on people of color and in poor communities across the United States.

Plainclothes and undercover NYPD cops shoot at three African American men a total of 50 times, injuring two and killing Sean Bell on the day before his wedding. The trial of the officers results in not guilty verdicts.

The Indigenous World Uranium Summit drafts and approves a declaration calling for a ban on uranium mining, weapons testing and deployment, and nuclear waste dumping on indigenous lands.

In Jena, Louisiana, six Black high school students are arrested after a school fight and charged with attempted murder and conspiracy to commit attempted murder. The fight took place not long after nooses were found hanging on a tree in the schoolyard where White students typically sat after a Black student had sat there.

Forum for Regional Associations of Grantmakers publishes *Racial, Ethnic and Tribal Philanthropy: A Scan of the Landscape*.

HIP launches its transnational program in 2006. It was a combination of two major initiatives: Promoting Diaspora and Local Support for Productive Initiatives; and Building Transnational Bridges, Remittances, Diaspora and Opportunities in Mexico.

The Twenty-First Century Foundation develops the 2025 Network for Black Men and Boys, a national network of advocates for Black men and boys.

The “Catalyzing Our Resources for Equity” program is launched, seeking to expand Resource Generation’s constituency to include more young people of color with wealth and to promote racial equity within the field of philanthropy.

AAPiP and other San Francisco Bay Area foundations establish the Civic Engagement Fund for AMEMSA communities, the first organized funding mechanism to support and empower local communities most affected by post 9/11 backlash.

**2007**

Right to the City emerges as a national alliance of community organizations responding to escalating gentrification and the displacement of low-income people, people of color, marginalized LGBTQ communities and youth of color from their historic urban neighborhoods.

The Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act is sponsored by Sens. Ted Kennedy and John McCain. The bill would have provided legal status and a path to legalization for an estimated 15 million undocumented immigrants, but it dies before the national election cycle takes over.

Thousands of activists gather at the U.S. Social Forum in Atlanta, Georgia, under the banner “Another World is Possible”.

The National Domestic Workers Alliance is founded to fight for the rights of domestic workers and succeeds in passing a Domestic Workers Bill of Rights in New York.

Decisions in Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1, along with Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education, prohibit assigning students to public schools solely for the purpose of achieving racial integration and declines to recognize racial balancing as a compelling state interest.

Approximately 20,000 people march in Jena, Louisiana, to protest the arrest and zealous attempts to convict six African-American teenagers of attempted murder in the alleged 2006 assault on a White, fellow student at their high school. The case of the “Jena 6” gains widespread attention.

The subprime lending crisis escalates.

Grantmaking with a Racial Equity Lens is published by PRE and GrantCraft. It includes tools to help grantmakers deepen their understanding and actions regarding race, ethnicity and racial equity.

Profiles in Foundation Giving to Communities of Color is produced by the Race and Equity in Philanthropy Group, and Marga, Inc. The report profiles efforts by The Annie E. Casey Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation, the Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and The California Endowment.

The Diversity in Philanthropy Project is launched as a three-year initiative. The project seeks to expand diversity, equity and inclusion in board and staff representation, grantmaking, and contracting.

Greenlining Institute publishes *Funding the New Majority*, examining grant giving to minority-led organizations in 2005 by the 25 largest independent foundations and the 10 largest California foundations.

200 participants attend the JAG Unity Summit, the first national gathering of members of the various identity-based foundations independent of the COF conference.

The Ford Foundation publishes *Why We Can’t Wait*, which indicates that 75 percent of the effective and promising organizations profiled by the Urban Institute in 1995 no longer serve Black males.

The Association of Black Foundation Executives, the Casey Family Programs, the Ford Foundation and Open Society Foundations host the National Funders’ Dialogue on Black Males to discuss how to generate more explicit grantmaking strategies for Black males.

Philanthropy in a Changing Society: Achieving Effectiveness through Diversity is published by Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, which was awarded a grant from the C.S. Mott Foundation to conduct a field scan of programs primarily focused on staff and board composition.

**2008**

Presidential candidate Barack Obama delivers his “A More Perfect Union” speech in Philadelphia. The address touches on themes ranging from Black resentment to institutional racism.

Fifty Chicago ministers led by Sen. James Meeks call for a boycott of the first days of school to protest long-standing funding inequities.

As the larger economy slips into a major recession, the effects of the subprime mortgage scandal are felt disproportionately by new Black and Latino homeowners who see their small share of total wealth relative to Whites shrink even further.
“Today’s institutions no longer need to intend discrimination in order to create inequality — they are programmed to reproduce and reinforce historical patterns. Those of us crafting solutions, however, must be deliberate about the racial impact because the role of institutions and policies in perpetuating the racial divide is hidden from the gaze of most Americans.”

– Letter to the Editor in the Chronicle of Philanthropy, by the Structural Racism Caucus

Near the end of the Bush Administration, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency pilots a new program called Secure Communities. The program is designed to promote cooperation between federal immigration authorities and local law enforcement in the arrest, detention and deportation of “dangerous criminal aliens.”

Barack Obama is elected 44th President of the United States of America.

Colorado is the first state to defeat Ward Connerly’s anti-affirmative action initiative through legal advocacy and electoral organizing.

Environmental Health Coalition celebrates the conclusion of the historic, binational toxic site cleanup at Metales y Derivados, an abandoned battery recycler in Tijuana.

PRE publishes Critical Issues Forum, Volume 1: Measuring What We Value, a critique of California Assembly Bill 624, which calls for foundations to report racial and ethnic composition, including foundations’ responses.

The Council on Michigan Foundations launches Transforming Michigan Philanthropy through Diversity & Inclusion (TMP), a six-year initiative designed to increase the effectiveness of organized philanthropy in Michigan.


William Schambra of the Conservative Bradley Center writes the article, “Philanthropy’s Jeremiah Wright Problem” in the Chronicle of Philanthropy, questioning specific foundations’ funding to “advance a structural racism critique of America” – stating that addressing racism was a racist act. This letter drew a barrage of critical responses from foundations and advocacy organizations.

Funders for LGBTQ Issues publishes the Racial Equity Report Card and launch a multiyear racial equity campaign to increase giving to LGBTQ communities of color and to advocate for a stronger structural racism lens in grantmaking strategies.

Unlocking the Promise: Transformational Grantmaking, focusing on the intersection of race and class, is produced by the People, Opportunity and Place (POP) Working Group, of the Funders’ Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities.

The Bay Area Social Justice Infrastructure Group (now the Bay Area Justice Funders Network) is formed as an alliance of funders working to strengthen grantmaking for social justice movements in the Bay Area and beyond.

2009

Oscar Grant is shot and killed by a Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) police officer on New Year’s morning, leading to massive demonstrations in Oakland. The protests renew the spotlight on police violence against people of color and result in the arrest of the transit officer who was later convicted.

African-American residents of Mossville, Louisiana, win a hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on charges that the U.S. government had violated their rights to privacy and racial equality by allowing local chemical plants to pollute.

President Obama proposes allotting $1.25 billion in the fiscal year 2010 budget to settle discrimination lawsuits by thousands of Black farmers against the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Former Seattle Police Chief Norm Stamper says the war on drugs has been “an abysmal failure ... and the most destructive and damning social policy since slavery.”

Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr., one of the nation’s pre-eminent African-American scholars, is arrested at his own home by Cambridge police investigating a possible break-in.

Judge Sonia Sotomayor becomes the first Latina on the U.S. Supreme Court.

Following unprecedented national voter engagement efforts and success in 2008, conservative attacks and manufactured scandals against the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) end in the demise of the 40-year-old organization.

President Barack Obama signs the Matthew Shepherd and James Byrd Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

The North Carolina Racial Justice Act passes, requiring that courts enter a life sentence for any death row defendants who are able to prove that race was a factor in the imposition of their sentences. Later in 2013, Gov. Pat McCory repeals the landmark legislation.

Under intense pressure from organizations like Presente.org and its “BastaDobbs” campaign, CNN’s anchor and leading anti-immigration voice Lou Dobbs is forced to resign.

PRE publishes Critical Issues Forum, Volume 2: Whose Capacity Needs Building?, a critique of the deal made to drop California Assembly Bill 624, which called for racial and ethnic composition reporting by foundations.

PRE and ARC publish Catalytic Change: Lessons Learned from the Racial Justice Grantmaking Assessment, which describes the process in piloting ARC’s assessment tool by the two foundations.


Funders for LGBTQ Issues launch the Racial Equity Online Toolkit and host a retreat on racial equity to identify the opportunities, barriers and avenues for increasing funding support for LGBTQ communities of color.
Moving Forward on Racial Justice Philanthropy

The Proteus Fund creates the Security and Rights Collaborative to build the national security and human rights field in response to a dramatic increase in profiling, discrimination and surveillance of Muslim and South Asian communities.

Funders for LGBTQ Issues launch its Racial Equity Regranting Initiative to enhance the grantmaking practice of community funders to support LGBTQ communities of color.

2010

The Obama Administration denies BART $70M in stimulus funds, citing civil rights failures. Title VI violations were found in the investigation spearheaded by civil rights, transportation and environmental advocates.

Home health care workers in Wisconsin and Missouri, most of whom are immigrants and women of color, join workers in 10 other states to organize a union.

Arizona Senate Bill 1070 is passed into law, making it the broadest and strictest immigration measure in the country. Officially titled The Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, the bill is seen as legally sanctioned racial profiling.

Boycotts of Arizona are introduced in the wake of Arizona SB 1070. Hundreds of thousands of immigrants, families, activists and allies nationwide demand that President Obama tackle immigration reform immediately.

Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer signs into law House Bill 2281, effectively banning the teaching of ethnic studies in public school classrooms. Conservative state officials contend the Mexican-American Studies curriculum in Tucson high schools teaches racial resentment and the overthrow of the government.

Shirley Sherrod is pressured to resign from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and immediately thereafter receives an apology when it is discovered she was inaccurately accused of being racist towards White Americans.

Volunteers with No More Deaths, an organization that seeks to prevent deaths of people crossing the border, are fined for littering. The organization left one-gallon jugs of water in various Sonoran Desert locations.

Multiyear campaigning by organizations such as the Sentencing Project win passage of the Fair Sentencing Act, a bill that reduces the disparities in sentencing for crack and powder cocaine offenses.

PRE publishes Critical Issues Forum, Volume 3: Marking Progress: Movement Toward Racial Justice, which synthesizes the ways evaluation can be most effective when measuring the progress being made towards achieving racial justice as defined by the field.

2011

The Akonadi Foundation publishes From the Roots: Building the Power of Communities of Color to Challenge Structural Racism.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation implements a $75 million, five-year “America Healing” initiative to combat structural racism and heal the wounds of racism.

NCRP launches the Philanthropy’s Promise project, celebrating funders that apply two high impact strategies in their grantmaking: target grant dollars to address the needs of underserved communities; and empower those populations by funding advocacy, organizing and civic engagement.

AAPIP and Native Americans in Philanthropy (NAP) celebrate their 20th anniversaries, including a joint site session in Denver.

The American Values Institute, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and Open Society Foundations host the “Black Male Re-imagined” conference to encourage the media industry to transform how Black males are portrayed in popular culture and public discourse.

AAPIP launches the Queer Justice Fund after research and outreach with LGBTQ AAPI groups and leaders in 2009.

High school students in Tucson, Arizona, organize to defend the popular Mexican-American Studies program after Arizona politicians vote to ban ethnic studies.

Millions view UCLA student Alexandra Wallace’s YouTube video where she mimics an Asian accent and rants against the “hordes of Asians” at the university who “don’t use American manners.”

The first and only universal health care law is passed in Vermont after organizers take a proactive and uncompromising stand against racist divide-and-conquer tactics, and build partnerships between low-income organizing groups and Latino immigrant organizations.

Alabama legislators pass House Bill 56, the Beason-Hammond Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act, which criminalizes undocumented immigrants. It is viewed as even more punitive and far-reaching than Arizona’s SB 1070.

Following an Associated Press series revealing undercover police surveillance tactics in New York City’s Muslim communities, Muslim leaders hold teach-ins to help members of the community diagnose the problem and understand their rights.

A federal jury convicts five New Orleans police officers of charges related to the cover-up and deprivation of civil rights related to the shooting of unarmed African Americans on the Danzinger Bridge in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Nationwide organizing contributes to the blocking of a proposed merger between AT&T and T-Mobile. The campaign calls attention to the merger’s disproportionate negative impact on communities of color.

“SB 1070 has become synonymous with anti-immigrant fervor, with racial profiling, with being brown, with being Latino – with being “the other” – as a crime in a demographically changing America. The law has also galvanized the growing immigrants rights community like nothing else before it. … The case before the high court may be titled “United States v. Arizona.” But more accurately, it’s really “United States v. United States” because what’s at stake is American identity itself – how we define American.”

– Jose Antonio Vargas, founder, Define American
A federal judge approves a $1.25 billion settlement in the Pigford class-action lawsuit filed against the U.S. Department of Agriculture by thousands of Black farmers. Plaintiffs successfully argue that they suffered widespread racial bias.

Generations Ahead releases the report Forensic DNA Database Expansion: Growing Racial Inequities, Eroding Civil Liberties and Diminishing Returns, outlining the practice of DNA collection in 50 states and by the federal government, and its impact on communities of color.

After years of organizing and information gathering by immigrant and human rights groups, the U.S. Department of Justice accuses the Maricopa County (Arizona) Sheriff’s Office of engaging in a pattern or practice of unconstitutional policing, including racial profiling in traffic stops, immigration operations, and discrimination against Spanish speakers in the county jails.

D5 Coalition’s first State of the Work report, an effort to map philanthropy’s work on diversity, equity, and inclusion, is published.

Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter and New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu launch “Cities United” to eliminate violence-related deaths of Black males. Partners include the Casey Family Programs, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and Open Society Foundations.

With support from The Atlantic Philanthropies, HIP launches the Latino Age Wave Initiative, which strengthens Latino aging programs and advocacy efforts in key states where the Latino older adult population is large and growing.

2012

Four states – Hawaii, California, New Mexico and Texas – as well as the District of Columbia, have populations that exceed 50 percent residents of color.

Law professor and social justice advocate Michelle Alexander publishes The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, energizing a growing movement to confront the war on drugs and the crime policies that have had devastating racial impacts.

17-year-old teenager Trayvon Martin is shot and killed by neighborhood-watch volunteer George Zimmerman in Sanford, Florida. Zimmerman is not charged in the shooting until national outrage forces city leaders to arrest him.

Over 100 civil rights, faith, community and advocacy groups sign a letter urging the Department of Justice to commence a prompt investigation into the NYPD’s surveillance of Muslim Americans in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

Undocumented youth (DREAMers) take over President Obama’s Denver campaign office and initiate a hunger strike, the first of a series of actions at Democratic campaign offices across the country. Organizers win a huge victory as President Obama announces a deportation relief program for young undocumented immigrants.

The Obama Administration implements Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, allowing people who immigrated to the U.S. without papers before they were 16 years of age to request two years to avoid deportation. Upon approval, they would then be eligible for work authorization.

Several thousand people march from Harlem to the Upper East Side townhouse of Mayor Michael Bloomberg to protest New York City’s notorious “stop-and-frisk” police procedure, which almost exclusively targets young Black and Latino males.

U.S. Army veteran and avowed White supremacist Wade Michael Page shoots and kills six people and wounds several others at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin.

Barack Obama is elected to his second term as president.

Lawsuits and community-based pressure challenge a host of voter ID laws and other efforts, by Republican-controlled statehouses across the country, to curtail registration and voting in the upcoming elections.

PRE publishes Critical Issues Forum, Volume 4: Marking Progress: Mobilizing Community Power to Address Structural Racism, which discusses the supports that are needed to strengthen the integration of community organizing with a structural racism analysis to improve outcomes for all.


Open Society Foundations, in partnership with Root Cause and PolicyLink, launches the Leadership and Sustainability Institute, a national network ensuring the growth, sustainability and impact of leaders and organizations working to improve life outcomes and create systemic change for Black men and boys.


2013

A report by the Asian Law Caucus and the Asian Pacific American Legal Center finds the number of Asian-Americans living below the poverty line in California increased 50 percent. While Asian-Americans are broadly thought to be high achieving, high earning and highly educated, Hmong-, Cambodian-, Laotian-, Vietnamese- and Fijian-Americans face significant barriers to education and have some of the lowest college attendance rates in the country.

After more than 10 years, the “Drop the ‘I’ Word” campaign achieves success as the Associated Press eliminates the term “illegal immigrant” from its widely influential style guide.

“Racial fear creates a kind of exclusion that is life threatening for Black men and boys. ... Rational laws that recognize that we need police and laws that protect us all, including Black men and boys, could help create a new optimism in this country for what we all want it to be – a fair one where we all have a chance to grow up and thrive. Then, we can rejoice.”

– Maya Wiley, former executive director, Center for Social Inclusion
Leaders of 26 foundations gather in Chicago and pledge to form a national alliance addressing issues facing boys and men of color.

AAPIN releases the report Widening the Lens on Boys and Men of Color: California AAIP and AMEMSA Perspectives, and holds funder briefings in Oakland and Los Angeles.

2014

A mistrial is declared on the count of murder in the shooting death of 17-year-old African-American Jordan Davis by Michael Dunn, a 45-year-old White male, at a gas station in Jacksonville, Florida. The jury fails to reach a unanimous verdict even after Dunn admits to shooting Davis during an argument about loud music coming from the car Davis and his friends were in.

Three U.S. presidents commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act at the LBJ Presidential Library. That same day, Pro Publica previews the findings of a yearlong investigation concluding that public schools have regressed – and disparities between Black and White students have widened.

Former Black Panther Party leader Marshall “Eddie” Conway, one of the longest-held political prisoners in U.S. history, is released from prison. His is one of over 500 cases that were challenged in Maryland due to flawed instructions given to juries.

The U.S. Justice Department launches the National Center for Building Community Trust and Justice to collect and analyze data on racial profiling in order to reduce racial bias in the criminal justice system.

The Supreme Court turns back the clock on hard-won civil rights by upholding the University of Michigan’s ban on considering race as a factor in university admissions. In her powerful dissenting opinion, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote, “This refusal to accept the stark reality that race matters is regrettable ... We ought not sit back and wish away, rather than confront, the racial inequality that exists in our society.”

Protests held in 62 cities to urge President Obama to stop the deportation of undocumented immigrants. The Obama administration reached its two millionth deportation in April. The New York Times reports two-thirds deported had committed minor infractions, such as traffic violations, or no criminal record at all.

HIP releases The Right to Dream: Promising Practices Improve Odds for Latino Men and Boys.

President Obama launches My Brother’s Keeper, an initiative aimed at improving life outcomes and expanding opportunities for boys and young men of color. Ten foundations announce investments totaling $200 million over the next five years.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation releases a comprehensive report, Race for Results, which goes beyond the broad racial groupings and examines children’s opportunities by region, tribe or family’s country of descent.

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, president of the state chapter of the NAACP, leads 100 people in protest against the demolition of voting rights, in North Carolina senate chambers. “Moral Mondays” has now grown to tens of thousands in towns across the state; and has been replicated in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and Alabama in response to Republican legislation regarding Medicaid, gun control and immigrant rights.

In response to years of youth-of-color organizing, Los Angeles Unified School District votes to eliminate “willful defiance” policies that have resulted in disproportionate expulsion of boys and men of color.

The U.S. Supreme Courtinvalidates a key section of the 1965 Voting Rights Act allowing several (mostly Southern) states to modify their election laws without federal approval.

The U.S. Supreme Court reverses a key part of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, allowing the adoption of a young girl to White parents in South Carolina, away from her Cherokee father in Oklahoma.

George Zimmerman is found not guilty of the murder of teenager Trayvon Martin.

Protests spread through more than 100 cities across the country in support of the family of Trayvon Martin after Zimmerman’s not guilty verdict. Student activists, the Dream Defenders, drew national attention for the longest sit-in demonstration at the Florida capitol. Gov. Rick Scott rejected their demand for a special session on the “stand your ground” law.

90,000 individuals and organizations take part in the “Campaign for Prison Phone Justice,” a nationwide effort that succeeds in ending price-gouging of families who accept phone calls from incarcerated loved ones.

Activists with the Arizona DREAM Act Coalition stop an ICE bus in Phoenix. Six protesters sit in front of the bus for more than two hours. Similar actions in California show immigrant rights activism taking on a more direct-action strategy.

Building on public outrage over the Trayvon Martin killing, Color of Change and allies mount a campaign that eventually gets more than 69 corporations to withdraw membership and support from the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), the conservative public policy group that engineered “stand your ground” gun laws and sweeping voter ID requirements that effectively disenfranchise minority voters.

In New York, a broad coalition of diverse grassroots groups wins major police accountability reforms. A federal court rules that the NYPD’s practice of “stop and frisk” is unconstitutional, and the City Council overrides a mayoral veto to establish an inspector general for the NYPD.

NAP and the Common Counsel Foundation launch Native Voices to support organizing and advocacy in American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian communities.

“Bold, courageous, inspired investments in racial justice will be a game changer for every issue on the progressive agenda because – try as we may – we can’t have real justice without racial justice. It is a critical building block, an essential element of democratic architecture for a world that truly works for everyone.”

– Makani Themba, executive director, The Praxis Project