

# Reaffirming Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for All

## East Bay Regional Park District

### Nomination Description:

The year 2021 was a year of immense change for the East Bay Regional Park District. They welcomed their first female General Manager, Sabrina Landreth, and enacted several new policies that promoted a culture of justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Although many organizations and corporations released DEI statements following the nation's call for racial and social justice, the District reaffirmed its commitment and redoubled their efforts to ensure regional parks were safe, welcoming, and could be enjoyed by all. They sat down and listened to those who have felt overlooked and unheard, and they enacted changes in policy and procedure to make working at the Park District more equitable and inclusive.

### Challenge...

The Park District's challenge in 2021 was to raise awareness of our 73 parks, increase access, and expand park usage while continuing to provide a welcoming experience. We supported this effort by providing DEI training to our employees. Additionally, our goal was to continue to encourage diversity within our workforce by creating spaces of belonging for communities, and ensure the racially and ethnically diverse communities of our region can access and enjoy our parks while feeling safe and welcome.

In recent years, calls for racial equality, gender equity, and social justice permeated nearly every sector of our nation; and parks are no exception. From climate justice and a sense of belonging to education and accessibility, public agencies can make a significant impact on how a region is addressing DEI.

The Park District continues to work to redefine how parks and recreation can affect positive change, not only for the environment, but for society as a whole. In order to meet these challenges, we reaffirmed and expanded our commitment to DEI by increasing outreach, building new relationships, listening to and making efforts to identify the needs of our employees and the public, and addressing those needs in meaningful and impactful ways.

### Execution...

The Park District recognized the need to enhance outreach methods and reevaluate existing approaches to DEI by organizing listening sessions. After providing 681 employees with implicit bias training in 2020, we held a 2021 DEI summit with 85 staff and volunteer staff, and conducted employee trainings that included *Tools for Inclusive Spaces* with up to 95 employees participating. In talks with community organizations – [along with trends in our newly-conducted UC Davis Center for Regional Change survey](#) – we learned the connection between representation and sense of belonging, and between education and participation in nature. With the goal of creating a communal sense of belonging and togetherness, we created strategies to educate the public about the contributions and sacrifices of the diverse people in our region by highlighting untold stories and unsung heroes.

To increase participation and engagement, we created education programs that were expressly inclusive while collaborating with students, teachers, seniors, and veterans to broaden outreach to those who generally do not engage in regional park activities. These strategies were executed through both online/digital programming, as well as in-person events and community listening sessions.

Through the continued use of our award-winning *Parks to People: Digital Learning Program*, we served 1,638,415 people in 2021 through more than 2,263 virtual programs and shared across YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. In an ongoing series, Black Diamond Mines naturalists conducted [Facebook Live programs on untold history, including that of Chinese immigrant miners](#) who were coveted for their labor until racial resentments resulted in laws – including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 – which declared Chinese immigrants ineligible for naturalization.

The interpretive video, [A Legacy of Civil Rights](#), brought the Park District and National Park Service together to highlight Thurgood Marshall and the national civil rights history that took place in the Bay Area. Coyote Hills also hosted the [Seeds in the Ground: Ohlone Traditions event](#) which hosted members Ruth, Ramona, Sabrina, Mariah, Brenda, and Freddie – members of the [Ohlone Tribe](#).

Additionally we partnered with local community organization [East Oakland Collective \(EOC\)](#) on three in-person events at MLK Shoreline that provided a forum for African American senior citizens to share untold stories of the community and its unsung heroes, while our [U.N. International Day of Peace event at Lake Chabot](#) featured the unveiling of a 31-language Peace Pole before 300 attendees and presenters.



**East Oakland Collective** @EOakCollective · Jul 10, 2021  
 Join us on July 31st for Untold Stories of Oakland's Black Elders—a live, outdoor storytelling event. This event is free with lunch and childcare provided.

RSVP at [bit.ly/3wcGWBy](https://bit.ly/3wcGWBy).

Hosted by EOC in collaboration with the East Bay Regional Parks District.



**East Oakland Collective** @EOakCollective · Sep 28, 2021  
 Join us October 9, 11 am-2 pm for a group bike ride from Liberation Park, San Leandro creek clean up, and party in MLK Jr. Regional park. There will be a resource fair, games, music, food, and fun.

Register for this free event at [bit.ly/CleanAirEOC](https://bit.ly/CleanAirEOC)



14

### CA CLEAN AIR DAY 2021

**October 9, 2021**  
 Thanks to EBRPD, and community based organizations Higher Ground, Scraper Bike Team, Cycles of Change, Camp Mobility, Brower Dellums Institute for Sustainable Policy Studies, the Black Cultural Zone Collaborative and the 81st Library staff. We engaged 35 residents at this event.



BRAC Presentation

### KAYAKING THE MLK JR. SHORELINE



## Accomplishments...

The Park District's efforts to enhance justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion resulted in outreach, education, training, policies and procedures affecting meaningful change.

After community surveys and public engagement, on June 1, 2021, [the District named their newest park Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50](#). This park name is significant to the Black community for its history, acknowledgements, and representation.

As we learned from our public outreach, the Port Chicago 50 are heroes within the Black/African American community for standing up against racial discrimination. Despite the Port Chicago 50 not having yet to receive justice through government exoneration, the Park District agreed that these courageous Black sailors were worthy of recognition and admiration, and made the unprecedented decision to grant these men justice by naming the newest regional park in their honor.

[The naming of Thurgood Marshall Regional Park – Home of the Port Chicago 50](#) acts to uplift this long-suppressed history for future generations, while sending a message to the region and nation: the Park District values all stories of the land and is committed to providing safe and welcoming outdoor spaces for black, brown, indigenous, and people of color.

The digital learning program exceeded expectations for scope and reach, and is providing DEI cultural education and enlightenment that can be shared in perpetuity.

On April 6, 2021, the [Park District officially denounced xenophobia, racism, and violence against Asians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders and reaffirmed the District's commitment to a safe, welcoming, and inclusive workplace and park system.](#)

On June 1, 2021, the month of June was officially designated as [Pride Month to celebrate and support all LGBTQ+ employees and members of the public.](#)

The Park District collaborated with employees to make [Juneteenth an official Park District holiday.](#) On June 15, 2021, the District announced educational Juneteenth programs and waived entrance and parking fees for the general public to commemorate Juneteenth.

Throughout 2021, the Park District demonstrated their commitment to protecting and uplifting the beauty and diversity of both the land and the people of the region. We hope to lead by example in working to affect positive change in our region through land preservation, education, public outreach, and listening to the diverse communities of our region in order to ensure our parks and open spaces are enjoyed by all.

Sumbitted by  
Yulie Padmore and Nellie Cazares  
Interpretive and Recreation Services  
Tue, Feb 15, 2022