

CITY OF SAN JOSÉ
OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY PRESENTS



IMMIGRATION SPOTLIGHT SERIES

HONORING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

We'll be speaking with the African Advocacy Network (AAN) and the Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI), two organizations at the forefront of serving Black immigrant communities in our region. Join us to learn about their work around immigration legal services and advocacy efforts.

BAJI Spotlight Presentation

**Aron Berhane, Community Educator
Maraky Alemseged, Los Angeles Organizer
February 9, 2022**

Agenda

- **Issues Affecting Black Migrants Nationally**
 - Stories of Black Migrant Families
 - Crimmigration
 - Anti-Black Immigrant Policies
- **Issues Affecting Black Migrants in Big Cities**
 - Access to Resources
 - Gender Justice Report
 - Visions of Liberation
- **Calls-to-Action**
 - Stop the Deportations
 - Demand Permanent Protections
 - Racial Equity for Black Migrants

NATIONAL ISSUES

Stories



Criminalization & Crimmigration



Criminalization is the process by which behaviors and individuals are transformed into crime and criminals.

Crimmigration refers to the intersection between two areas of law: criminal and immigration.

Racially Biased Enforcement Procedures

Trump, early in his presidency, gave police more powers reinforcing the myth of Black criminality.

The same **racist policing** that incarcerates Black people in America also affects Black people who are immigrants.

Local police are some of the **biggest feeders** into the detention and deportation systems.

Black immigrants **are more likely** to be incarcerated by ICE because of racial profiling by local police. **76 % of Black Immigrants** are deported because of over-policing and racial profiling in Black communities. Black Immigrants who have any encounter with local police may be at risk of deportation.

MPP 2.0

The Biden administration recently restarted and expanded the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), also known as the “**Remain in Mexico**” program.

This means that asylum seekers coming from to the southern border of the U.S. will be **forced to remain in Mexico** while they wait out their asylum claims.

This policy **increases the risk of violence** against Black migrants in Central American countries, as noted in personal testimonies.

Abuse and Mistreatment of Black Immigrants in Detention

- BAI and AIC filed suit to secure FOIA requests with regard to **extensive mistreatment of Black immigrants** in eight immigration detention facilities in Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.
- The complaint describes disturbing instances of abuse in the context of **systemic anti-Black racism** in the detention system.
- Black immigrants receive **degrading treatment** such as racial slurs and attacks by guards; medical neglect; physical coercion to give signatures before deportation.
- At Winn Correctional Center, Cameroonian asylum seekers reported being assaulted, choked, and beaten while guards **physically manipulated their hands** into providing their fingerprints to 'consent' to deportation.

REGIONAL ISSUES

Issues Affecting Black Migrants in Metropolis Cities



- Criminalization
- Need for Universal Representation
- Lack of access to city/county resources
 - Language Access
 - COVID-19 Relief
 - Health & Wellness
 - Rent/Housing Assistance
 - Equal Opportunity



Gender Justice: Stories

- Responsibilities, Support, and Needs
- Confronting Discrimination in Schools and the Workplace
- Criminalization
- Sexual Assault and Harrasment
- Religious and Spiritual Practices
- Experiences with Healthcare Practitioners

VISIONS



Gender Justice: Visions

- Self-Care
- Community Care
- Blueprint for Liberation
 - Provide healthcare and housing
 - Opening a free mental health center staffed by Black immigrant therapists
 - Supporting the sustainability of Black-led and Black-centered grassroots organizations already doing the work
 - Develop a hotline that Black immigrants can access for support

Closing

- Calls-to-Action
 - Stop the Deportations
 - Demand Permanent Protections
 - Racial Equity for Black Migrants

THE STATE OF BLACK IMMIGRANTS

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African Advocacy Network

Serving the Diaspora of African and Afro-Caribbean immigrants in the Bay Area since 2009



Who We Are

The African Advocacy Network (AAN) is a San Francisco-based nonprofit founded in 2009 to serve the fast-growing community of African and Afro-Caribbean immigrants in a culturally and linguistically competent environment.

AAN couples these programs with experienced and trained linguistic capacity in many languages that span the African continent including Amharic, Arabic, Bambara, English, French, Haitian Creole, Kru, Senufo, Spanish, Tigrinya, Wolof, and more.



Who We Serve

AAN serves African and Afro-Caribbean immigrants - with a focus on low-income community members, refugees, and asylum seekers throughout the greater Bay Area.



Our Mission

Our mission is to provide immigration and social services as well as community engagement and language support to the fast-growing community of African and Afro-Caribbean immigrants in the greater Bay Area.

Our Vision

To lift the social veil of invisibility often suffered by our community members and work to integrate and support them as they strive to build new lives.



Our Impact

On annual basis AAN provides about **400** unduplicated cases to our constituents-Black immigrants- African and Afro-Caribbean immigrants located in the Greater San Francisco-Bay.

We have served over **5,000** clients with more than **30,000** units of service since 2009.



Our History

- 2009: After a community focus group, AAN officially launched its activities as a project of the Dolores Street Community Services (DSCS)
 - 2014: AAN became a program of DSCS
 - 2017: AAN obtained its 501c3 status
 - 2018 AAN moved to its premises at 3016 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94110 with its own board of directors
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Our Team





Our Services

- Direct Immigration Legal Services
 - Translation & Interpretation
 - Social Service Referrals
 - Education & Outreach & Community Building
-



Our New Focus

Our new focus is on community building and community leadership training for better civic engagement.

Concurrently, as we are building and increasing our capacity to become a strong and sustainable organization closer to its constituents, we believe that the time has come to resolutely and intentionally take on building our community and endowing it with a trained and committed leadership, that will be the face and voice of the fast-growing African and Afro-Caribbean immigrant community.



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