

Trayvon

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Zimmerman was Hispanic.

Hill and Pastor Friday were two of many speakers who called for community unity. Pastor Friday said he will play Community Unity concerts this summer in Peninsula Park. Others called for men to attend a meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday March 27 at Self Enhancement Inc. 3920 North Kerby Ave., to build support for young men in Portland.

Rep. Lew Frederick and Midge Purcell of Portland's Urban League urged the crowd to make their voices heard in Salem when laws and policies are made that hurt minority communities. They joined Hill in asking the crowd to lobby the Oregon Legislature by visiting Salem in person, and to make their votes count at the ballot box.

Other speakers talked about the problem of youth violence in the Black and Hispanic communities. Speakers urged those in the audience to mentor and support youth, and to work for better education and employment opportunities. Forty percent of young people in Portland are unemployed, noted Pastor Friday.

"Every man, whether you have a son or not, should be mentoring some young man," he said.

Several speakers also remembered Yashanee Vaughn, who disappeared one year ago, March 19, 2010. Her body was found months later on Rocky Butte. She was just 14 and a student at Helensview High School. Parrish Bennette, 16 at the time, is accused of murdering her and currently is in custody awaiting trial.

Vaughn's mother, Shaquita Louis and family supporters were present in the park,



Speakers connected the shooting to similar events in U.S. history – the murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till during the Civil Rights era – as well as to more recent shootings in Portland. The deaths of Kendra James, Keaton Ofis, James Chassie and Aaron Campbell were among those remembered.

handing out flyers. They believe that Bennette must have had help to hide his crime and transport her body, which was discovered in a wild area of Rocky Butte.

Portland is one of many communities

across the country to hold demonstrations demanding justice for Trayvon Martin. Police in the small Florida town of Sanford made no arrest. Lawyers for the family contest Zimmerman's claim of self-defense

citing 911 tapes and cell phone records as well as Zimmerman's past conduct. The Department of Justice is investigating.

Marriage

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watershed accomplishment achieved through identifying Black and Latino community leaders, grooming them as spokespeople against gay marriage, "fanning the hostility," then waiting for the gay community to attack the communities of color – literally dividing and conquering communities to win their political goal.

The section about how to organize within the Black community, entitled "Not a Civil Rights Project," says in part: "Consider pushing a marriage amendment in Washington, D.C.; find attractive young Black Democrats to challenge white gay marriage advocates electorally."

Further in this section, the document says, "We also need to accomplish a sophisticated cultural objective: Interrupt the attempt to equate gay with Black, and sexual orientation with race."

The Skanner News spoke about the new development with Khalil Edwards, co-founder of the first Black chapter of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, and a staff member of Basic Rights Oregon.

The Skanner News: What has happened with this leaked document?

Khalil Edwards: The Human Rights Campaign just publicized a document that came from NOM, the National Organization for Marriage. It's basically their national strategy for winning the marriage battle – it's an internal document created in late 2009 outlining their total strategy for defeating marriage equality around the country and their overall anti-LGBT movement strategy.

TSN: What did the document say? Why is it important?

KE: So the document really outlined in detail the way that they planned to drive

wedges within different communities around the country. And in their plan it was exposed that they detailed ways in which they want to turn Blacks and Latinos against gays, against lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgendered (LGBT) folks in order to win the traditional marriage fight and to defeat marriage equality. Specifically they said, the strategic goal of this project is to drive a wedge between gays and Blacks, "two key Democratic constituencies." It says, "Find, equip, energize and connect African American spokespeople for marriage; develop a media campaign around their objections to marriage as a civil right; provoke the gay marriage base into responding by denouncing these spokesmen and women as bigots."

TSN: Do you think that there was a strategy like this around the California marriage law that became a famous standoff – I mean the media portrayed it as African American people against gay marriage in California. Do you think something like this happened there too?

KE: Yes this is definitely what happened with Proposition 8, it's happened here in Oregon before and this is a wedge issue – a key strategy that is used time and time

do, is to divide people on these key issues.

TSN: Why is this wrong and what is the most important thing for people to know about it?

KE: It's wrong on a few different levels. It makes the assumption, as I said, that there

saying is where my heart and head should be, or do I listen to what the LGBT folks are saying in support of this issue that's important to me?

TSN: So within your community of activists and advocates are doing, how can



are no queer people of color, so they're dividing communities, dividing Blacks and Latinos against gay people – well how can you divide Blacks and Latinos against gay people when Blacks and Latinos ARE gay people? It's as if there are no queer people of color in our communities and we know that's not true. It invisible-izes folks that share that identity that are part of those communities -- that are queer people of color that are Black and LGBT, that are Latino and LGBT, that are Asian and Pacific Islander and LGBT, and all the other queer people of color that we have in our community.

And also it forces people to sometimes choose between their identities – so when they create these wedges, do I support what I hear this scapegoated Black spokesperson

people support your work?

KE: You can contact Basic Rights Oregon at www.basicrights.org, you can call us at 503-222-6151 and get involved. We have been working on education about the freedom to marry within communities throughout Oregon, offering that support and changing hearts and minds every day about these issues. Also we're working in communities of color with queer people of color -- and also straight people of color -- to really highlight the stories and experiences and trials and triumphs of queer people of color in our communities. Within our Racial Justice program we really work hard to raise up those folks and raise up those stories and experiences and build awareness amongst straight people that we all are part of all our communities.

The section about the Black community is entitled 'Not a Civil Rights Project'

again, and actually is used to some success, as we've seen in different ways, by the National Organization for Marriage. It really makes the assumption that you can't be Black and gay, that there are no queer people of color in our communities. And this wedge issue – that's exactly what it is, and exactly what they know it's being used to