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City of San Diego Celebrates Individuals for Dedication to Civil Rights and Justice During Bayard Rustin Awards

THIRD ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY HONORED 10 SAN DIEGANS WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

SAN DIEGO – Mayor Todd Gloria and the City of San Diego Human Relations Commission, in partnership with the San Diego LGBTQ Historic Task Force, last night honored 10 San Diegans who positively impacted their communities through their advocacy and dedication to civil rights and justice with a special awards ceremony at San Diego City Hall.

“The City of San Diego Human Relations Commission is dedicated to amplifying every voice,” said Rev. Gerald Brown, Human Relations Commission Executive Director. “During Black History Month, we celebrate the best of humanity and the realized dreams of leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bayard Rustin, recognizing that our shared humanity unites us through common dreams, struggles and aspirations, deserving of dignity and respect for all. We congratulate all of the honorees.”

The honorees were nominated by previous recipients as well as current Human Relations Commission members in recognition of the values that still embody the legacy of civil rights activist Bayard Rustin. Rustin was a key strategist of the 1963 March on Washington, a champion of nonviolence and a trailblazing advocate for both racial equality and LGBTQ+ rights.

Among the award recipients were San Diego Fire-Rescue (SDFD) Chief Robert Logan II and Executive Director of the University of California San Diego Labor Center Satomi Rash-Zeigler.

Mayor Gloria appointed Chief Logan in June 2024. Logan is a lifelong San Diegan and has over 24 years of experience with SDFD.

“The fire service helped me develop resilience and an understanding of our community’s diverse needs and realities,” said Chief Logan. “I am honored to receive this award today, which is a testament to my commitment to helping others in the face of difficult or lifechanging circumstances.”

Executive director Rash-Zeigler has worked in the labor movement for more than 20 years, championing employment opportunities with family-sustaining wages and expanding skills training opportunities for workers.

"It was a privilege to celebrate alongside fellow advocates and leaders in our community, all dedicated to the values that Bayard Rustin championed," Executive Director Rash-Zeigler said. "I am excited to contribute to this special evening in celebration of our shared commitment to justice and equality."

Other honorees included – in no particular order:

- Advancement Director of Alliance San Diego Miesha Rice.
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) San Diego Branch President Kenya Taylor.
- San Diego Urban Warriors and Community Organizer Daj'ahn Blevins.
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) Pamuela Halliwell.
- Senior Director of Social and Economic Mobility at the University of San Diego's Mulvaney Center Austin Galy.
- San Diego Original Black Panther Member Jeffrey T. Jennings.
- University of San Diego History Professor T.J. Tallie.
- Sigma Gamma Rho Outreach and Recruitment Philo Affiliates Committee Member Anita Hill.

"I am eternally grateful to be receiving this prestigious award for work I believe is my life's purpose and an anchoring connection to the City of San Diego," said Advancement Director Miesha Rice. "I am a reflection of a host of powerful community leaders that have poured into me and given me space to grow in my power and presence."

"We are stronger together," said NAACP San Diego Branch President Kenya Taylor. "Our NAACP San Diego has a 106-year legacy of ensuring the political, educational, social and economic equality of rights of all persons and works to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination. We must unite to build on the greatness of San Diego. It's critical for us to celebrate the great efforts of diversity, equity, and inclusion."

"It is with great honor and appreciation to be nominated for the Bayard Rustin awards," said LMFT Halliwell. "Bayard Rustin stood for so many things that we are still fighting for today. During a time in this country where we are needing a strong leader even more, the steps he walked remain evident and profound, and in his own words, 'We are all one, and if we don't know it, we will learn it the hard way.' Through his words and the line of amazing Black leaders before us, we are motivated, empowered, called on to walk through this dark time with our heads high and to shine the night sky with a billion stars of light, guiding the path for a new way forward. "

"I am deeply honored to be selected as a recipient of the Bayard Rustin Honors for 2025," said Senior Director Galy. "Bayard Rustin was a visionary leader, a Black man who stood at the intersection of the fight for racial equality and LGBTQIA2S+ rights. His courage, intellect, and unwavering commitment to justice shaped the civil rights movement and continue to inspire generations. To be recognized in his name, especially during Black History Month, is profoundly humbling. This award is not just a personal honor but a tribute to the power of advocacy,

community organizing and the ongoing pursuit of justice. I share this recognition with all those who continue his work to create a more just and equitable world. Thank you to the City of San Diego Human Relations Commission and the San Diego GLBTQ Historic Task Force for this incredible honor."

About the City of San Diego Human Relations Commission

The City Human Relations Commission advises the Mayor and City Council on methods to ensure that all city residents have equal access to economic, political and educational opportunities and equal access to service protection and accommodation in all businesses and public agencies. The commission collaborates with community groups to create comprehensive educational programs that address interracial, inter-religious and intercultural understanding and investigates and mediates discrimination complaints about employment, housing and public accommodations.



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