

EVELYN SERRANO
toevelynserrano@gmail.com

August 9, 2020

To: Sunland / Tujunga Neighborhood Council
Re: Application for Community Stakeholder Position on behalf of ABRA Foothills

Dear Members of the Sunland / Tujunga Neighborhood Council,

I want to express my gratitude for the work that you do in our Neighborhood Council. Thank you for your leadership, and for creating a space that allows our fellow neighbors to contribute their voices, time, and action to better our community.

My name is Evelyn Serrano. I am a mother, educator, and artist, and have been a Sunland resident for 11 years. I've included my bio at the end of this letter, for your reference. I hope to contribute my time and skills to support the work taking place in our community. I am submitting this letter as my formal application to become a Stakeholder Group Representative on behalf of ABRA Foothills. Below you will find information about our organization:

ORGANIZATION

ABRA Foothills: Anti-Bigotry Responding with Action

ORGANIZATION'S DESCRIPTION

ABRA is a multicultural organization that is based in the Foothills of Southern California on Tongva land. It was founded by Sunland/Tujunga community members to create forums for dialogue, learning, and action that address bigotry, racism, and white supremacy in our community.

We seek to activate and empower all members of our community to fight against all forms of bigotry. We believe in the power of education to expand minds and in sharing our resources to open up new realms of possibility for our futures. We are firmly committed to defending, supporting, and amplifying the voices of Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color. Our strength is rooted in the diversity of our membership, experiences, and tactics.

In the context of a global movement for Black Lives, anti-poverty, and civil rights, ABRA Foothills leads a local movement for healing and equity. Our work adopts methodologies and strategies that address bigotry and change discriminatory and inequitable structures. We come together to imagine and enact a more inclusive, equitable, just, supportive, anti-racist, and inspiring community.

OUR VISION

We build together an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and caring Sunland/Tujunga.

OUR MISSION

To advance community initiatives that challenge racism and embedded histories of inequality through dialogue, education, advocacy, and collective multigenerational action

OUR GOALS

- We work with our neighbors to build a more inclusive, equitable and caring Sunland/Tujunga
- We support the anti-racism movement for Black lives
- We center the needs, concerns, and goals of BIPOC, the un-house, low-income, under-employed, and other historically under-represented groups to frame collective action and community decision-making
- We redefine, imagine and enact an approach to community care and wellbeing that represents alternatives to policing
- We address the connections between our community's past, present and future
- We engage youth, adults, and elders through arts, collective action, and community initiatives that challenge white privilege, structural racism, and embedded histories of inequality.

OUR SHARED PURPOSE

We believe that in order to build a unified community, it's essential that all voices are heard. By centering our collective work around the needs of BIPOC in the Foothills area, we aim to address systemic injustice, empower marginalized groups, and work towards a future where everyone can benefit from living in a fair and just community.

Activating.

We know there are BIPOC and allies in our community who are no longer content to stand on the sidelines. That's why we are dedicated to providing Foothills residents with the knowledge, tools, and support they need to turn empathy into action. The more every one of us gets involved, the more we can enact positive change.

Educating.

Honoring the diversity in our community means educating ourselves and each other about the issues that are specific to each under-represented group. We are committed to sharing and developing resources that give context to BIPOC issues and help us envision a path forward.

Empowering.

Working on behalf of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color is about more than just encouraging tolerance. It's about finding ways to amplify marginalized voices and ensure that BIPOC are represented in every facet of our community. ABRA is committed to addressing all forms of injustice and creating the conditions for long term success of BIPOC in the Foothills. We employ a diversity of tactics to those ends, consciously evolving our tools through a range of perspectives and expertise.

Inspiring.

We believe in a future where BIPOC have all of the opportunities and resources they need to thrive. By using direct action to enact demonstrable change in our schools, local institutions, city government and beyond, we hope to foster more diversity in our community while inspiring more BIPOC and allies to get involved.

OUR VALUES

- Anti-racism
- Anti-bigotry
- Inclusion
- Equity
- Collective action
- Interconnectedness
- Relationship-building
- Personal responsibility
- Civic engagement
- Honoring the work of the ancestors who devoted their work and lives to the pursuit of freedom, equity and, liberation for those who were and are historically oppressed, under-represented, and under-privileged

OUR APPROACH

- Educational forums
- Outreach
- Intentional, facilitated and inclusive community dialogue
- Listening forums
- Community clean ups
- Peaceful protests and collective action
- Voter Sign Ups
- Peaceful collective action
- Collaboration with our Neighborhood Council, City and County agencies to build an equitable and inclusive Sunland/Tujunga

OUR MEMBERSHIP

ABRA Foothills currently has 135 members. Our educational and civic action events are attended by 50-200 residents each. Leadership meets several times a week, and has at least once-a-week convenings with its membership. In addition, ABRA's Facebook and Instagram forums are essential tools for organizing, reflection, and outreach.

Thank you in advance for reviewing this letter. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need additional information.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Serrano', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Evelyn Serrano
Sunland resident

EVELYN SERRANO - BIO

Evelyn Serrano is an LA-based, Cuban experimental multimedia artist, educator and independent curator working at the intersection of creative placemaking, memory, community engagement, activism, and future thinking.

Serrano received her MFA in Studio Art and Integrated Media from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), her Masters in Education from Alliant international University, and her BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). Her work has been exhibited and performed nationally and internationally such as the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, Riverside Museum of Art, the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, Centro Cultural Español Miami, the Ludwig Foundation in La Habana, CUNY Center Arts Gallery, San Jose Biennial, Fábrica de Arte Cubano, and Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), in addition to many non-conventional art spaces.

She also serves as Co-Artistic Director of Nuestro Lugar : North Shore, the first large-scale resident-designed, culture-driven, community development project in a rural community on the Salton Sea, in partnership with Kounkuey Design Initiative and Mutuo Architecture. She founded Nomad Lab, an award-winning non-profit arts organization that worked with Newhall and Canyon Country residents and city policy-makers to develop art-centered initiatives and inclusive spaces for community organizing, capacity building, learning, asset mapping, and grassroots change through the arts.

She has had the privilege of collaborating with visual and performing artists, writers, policy makers, educators, community organizers, students, non profits, and diverse communities both nationally and internationally. Her curatorial projects have been featured in Miami, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Montevideo, Tel Aviv, Tijuana, and La Habana.

She has taught at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) since 2006, and has lectured and led workshops at the New World School of the Arts in Miami, the CEART in Mexicali, the Center for the Arts in Eagle Rock, and the University of Texas in Dallas. She is the Director of Arts Integration and Visual Arts Specialist at Los Feliz Charter School for the Arts, an arts integrated school in Glassell Park, and is an Arts for LA Advocacy Fellow in Los Angeles. She is the lead artist of El Acercamiento/The Approach, a transnational art project with Cuban and U.S. artists that investigates the past, present and possible futures of Cuba-U.S. relations.

Her work has been recognized and supported by Art Place America, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Surdna Foundation, and the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations, among others.



Cindy Cleghorn <stnc.secretary2019@gmail.com>

ABRA Letter

Evelyn Serrano <toevelynserrano@gmail.com>

Tue, Aug 25, 2020 at 11:02 AM

To: Cindy Cleghorn <stnc.secretary2019@gmail.com>, Liliana Sanchez <stnc.president2019@gmail.com>

Cc: Eric Santiestevan <esantiestevan@gmail.com>

Dear Cindy and Liliana,

Below please find the letter from Eric Santiestevan, one of the leaders and founders of ABRA. Please let us know if you need anything else. Eric is copied in this thread.

Regards,

Evelyn Serrano
she/her/they/them

Begin forwarded message:

From: Eric Santiestevan <esantiestevan@gmail.com>**Subject:** Re: STNC Representative Seat Application**Date:** August 25, 2020 at 10:32:50 AM PDT**To:** Evelyn Serrano <toevelynserrano@gmail.com>

August 24, 2020

To whom it may concern,

This letter confirms that Evelyn Serrano is ABRA Foothills' representative for the stakeholder position of our Sunland Tujunga Neighborhood Council.

ABRA is a coalition of allies, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and Black community members who are working together to elevate Sunland-Tujunga beyond its history and current levels of bigotry. Not only do we attend actions, but we do community outreach, cleanup, education, as well as build bridges with our local minorities. We have sponsored a neighborhood education zoom with Lázaro Arvizu and Mike Callahan about the Tujunga Foothills from both an indigenous history and recent history perspective. We are currently working with other civil rights groups to attend other events in Los Angeles and plan more cleanups, beautification, food justice, and minority justice in Sunland-Tujunga.

ABRA leadership communicates via social media and Zoom, and also has Zoom and group discussions with the entirety of ABRA.

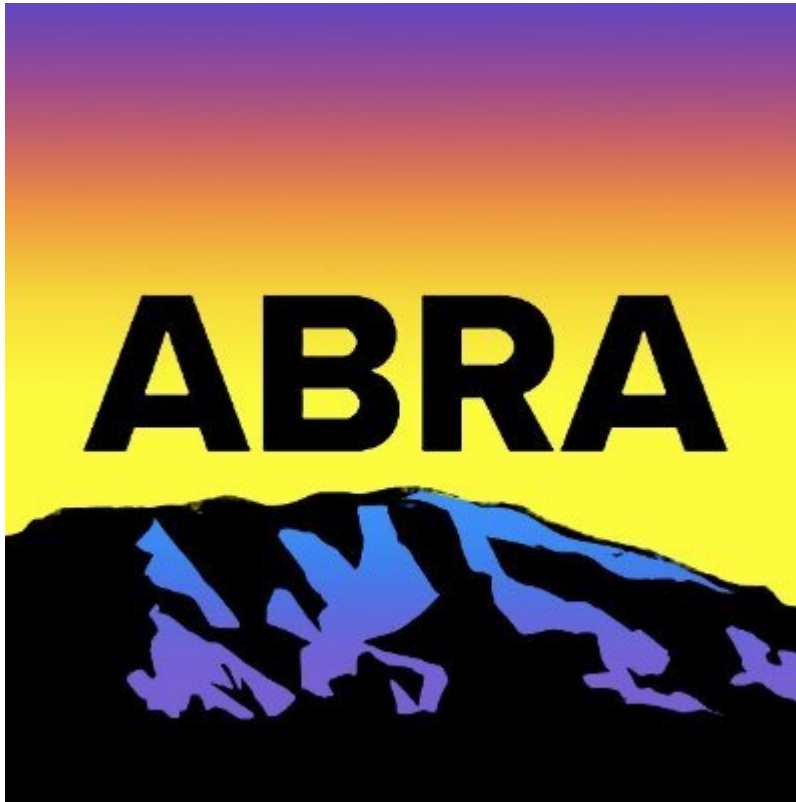
ABRA events and meetings are listed on our social media platforms:

<https://twitter.com/abrafoothills>https://www.instagram.com/abra_foothills/<https://www.facebook.com/ABRAfoothills>

Please do not hesitate to contact me if additional information is needed.

Regards,

Eric Santiestevan



From: Cindy Cleghorn <stnc.secretary2019@gmail.com>
Subject: STNC Representative Seat Application
Date: August 24, 2020 at 1:50:00 PM PDT
To: toevelynserrano@gmail.com
Cc: Liliana Sanchez <stnc.president2019@gmail.com>

Hello Evelyn,

Thank you for sending your statement for a Stakeholder Group Representative seat on the board of the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council.

There will be an Executive Committee Meeting this Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. Applicants wishing to hear more about the requirements to serve on the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council are welcome to join us on the Zoom meeting.

Please confirm the Stakeholder Group you will be representing as I want to be sure I have it worded correctly for the meeting agenda:

Evelyn Serrano representing ABRA Foothills: Anti-Bigotry

Responding with Action.

For documentation, we'll need to confirm your eligibility to run for the seat. This is described in the Bylaws, Attachment B. (Attached is a copy of the STNC Bylaws) Because we are only meeting virtually at this time if you could send documentation in advance it would be greatly appreciated. Documentation can be government issued ID such as driver's license or California ID. Also, when and where are the meetings held for the organization ? Please provide the organization's letter stating that you are their representative.

Here's the info from Attachment B that we need to confirm.

Stakeholder Group Representatives shall be elected at large. These Representatives shall be elected from the pool of stakeholders representing non-profits, educational, faith-based, service, youth, and special-interest organizations located or meeting regularly within the Sunland-Tujunga Neighborhood Council boundaries. No organization may have more than one stakeholder representative. All Group Representatives must participate on at least one committee.

Thank you,

--Cindy Cleghorn
STNC Secretary
818-429-6699

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Eric Santiestevan

Studio Manager @ Tangent Recording
www.tangentrecording.com
<https://www.facebook.com/tangentrecording/>

Composer's Assistant @ Paul Buckley Music
www.paulbuckleymusic.com

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esantiestevan@gmail.com