



From Tragedy To Triumph

How the tragedy of gun violence sparked
a movement in Lompoc.

by, **Lillian Street**

There was a day in the not too distant past when residents could brag about the low crime rates in Lompoc. In the past decade, crime rates have risen to meet or exceed national averages. In 2018, there were 7 homicides. The following year, that number rose by thirty-five percent according to City-data.com. Among those fallen victims of gun and gang violence was Marlon Brumfield. Those close to him knew him as a legend in the making. Like so many others, there was a hole left in our community from his absence. Thanks to the swift organization and partnerships built in the community, Yasmin Dawson-Salim was able to gather what seemed to be all of Lompoc for a vigil in his honor, thus sealing his legendary fate.

The outpouring of love was seen and felt by all those in attendance and even some who waited on Ocean Avenue as traffic was interrupted by the large crowd. It was this action of togetherness that struck a

powerful chord with Ms. Yasmin and this became the catalyst that launched many great acts of kindness and community engagement to follow. Ms. Yasmin teamed up with Cozetta Blow and spent many days and nights on the phone planning for this successful vigil. Both were committed to keeping the fire alive. Although it was she and Ms. Yasmin that created the name C4, it was by teaming up with community leaders, the mayor, and the interfaith clergy members, that Ms. Yasmin was unknowingly sowing the seeds of what would bring Collective Cultures Creating Change, or C4 Lompoc to life.



Hundreds gather in honor of Marlon Brumfield

The momentum of the moment gained traction for months to follow. Among the events that brought the community together was a community safety meeting at the Dick Dewees center and an informational forum to discuss the beneficial sales tax increase. There was also a barbecue that successfully raised money to build a memorial to the victims of gun violence from 2018 to the present

day. All the while, Ms. Dawson continued to share her vision and plans for developing a group that promotes non-violence, community education, and working together for the common welfare of our city. With key players in the community and anyone interested in change, she knew this vision could not fail.

Since the vigil held for Marlon, clergy and community members have been participating in prayer walks to begin the healing process for those neighborhoods most affected by gun violence. We all continue to hope for a more peaceful day. Though crime and violence continue to plague our town, we look forward to a new day as we embark on the triumphant path of love, community, and peace.

2020 Stronger Than Ever, Together



vigil for George Floyd at Lompoc Civic Center Plaza

by, [Lillian Street](#)

The seeds planted in 2019, began to sprout in 2020. The state-sanctioned murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor proved to be true catalysts for change. Worldwide, people took to the streets in protest and outrage. Right here in Lompoc, protests were held for an entire week. The largest gathering and

demonstration was held on Tuesday, June 2nd, 2020. The leaders of what would become known as BLOCK (Black and Latinx Offering Community and Knowledge) organized the largest demonstration Lompoc has seen in at least two decades. The gathering was praised for its notably peaceful turnout. Though some boarded up their businesses, there were no incidents of property damage or violence. Those who were present can attest to the powerful energy of the day and the events that followed.

Mid-way through the week of protests the NAACP held a Social Justice Solidarity rally in honor of the life of George Floyd. Dozens gathered at the Coast Hills parking lot to listen to speakers offer words of encouragement and love. The week ended with a die-in demonstration wherein all who were able to lay down on the ground with their hands behind their backs chanting methodically “I can’t breathe.” Audible sobbing came from different parts of the crowd as they mourned and empathized as one.

Being that joy is a form of resistance, Lompoc continued to resist social injustices together throughout the rest of the year. Following protest week, was a time for the celebration of black lives. Lompoc celebrated Juneteenth as well as pride month for the first time in an official capacity. Other events that continued to strengthen our solidarity and commitment to change were voting rights education, Halloween tabling, and civic engagement education presented by Dr. Moore.

2020 was a year that brought a lot of pain. Our hearts were broken time and again despite having to be socially distant, our

community came together, stronger than ever!

A New Direction



by, **Cozy Blow**

C4 Lompoc is committed to:

- ★ Have a consistent presence at the Lompoc City council meetings.

(We would like members of C4 to attend as representatives of C4 and report monthly on matters that impact our mission and vision.)

- ★ The 2021 launch of our “Anti-Violence Campaign” to support and create opportunities to address and reduce violence in our community.
- ★ Support community projects that embrace the creation of an all-inclusive Lompoc Valley.
- ★ Highlight agencies in our community to create a motto of “Lompoc Agencies First and Taking Care of Home” embracing community collaboration.
- ★ The support, development, and implementation of programs that will benefit our entire community.

One such program is the CAHOOTS Lompoc Project (CLP).

What is **CAHOOTS**?

Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets is a program we are looking to implement in Lompoc to help those most vulnerable. Since 1989, CAHOOTS has provided 24/7 unarmed mobile crisis intervention in Eugene, and in Springfield Oregon.

They are dispatched through the 911 police-fire-ambulance communications center. Each CAHOOTS team consists of two paid staff: a medic (either a nurse or an EMT) & a crisis worker (who has several years of experience in the mental health field). They work out of a large van, which is well equipped for the services they provide.

CAHOOTS provides immediate stabilization in situations of psychological crises, & medical problems requiring first aid. They also provide on-site assessment, referrals & transportation.

This frees up the police to respond to calls where there is a crime in progress or violence involved

Source:
https://whitebirdclinic.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/11x8.5_trifold_brochure_CAHOOTS.pdf

There will be more to come about this special and exciting project soon! If you would like to be involved, please reach out to C4Lompoc@gmail.com for more information.



Good Reads

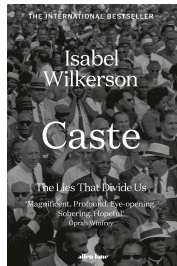


...Food for the Soul

by, **Angelina Bonner**

[Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents \(2020\)](#)

Author: Isabel Wilkerson

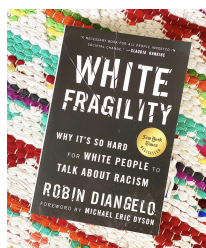


"As we go about our daily lives, Caste is the wordless usher in a darkened theater, flashlight cast down in the aisles, guiding us to our assigned seats for a performance. The hierarchy

of Caste is not about feelings or morality. It is about power - which groups have it and which do not." In this brilliant book, Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings.

[White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism \(2018\)](#)

Author: Robin DiAngelo, PhD



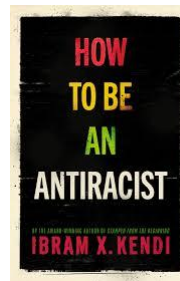
Have you ever wondered why it is hard to talk about racism with/as a white person? White Fragility explores the concept of white defensiveness and tackles the reality of how

“color blindness” or white people viewing themselves as “color neutrals” only serves to further inequality and white supremacy. The beauty of White Fragility is that it gives white people the language to address the

issues that make whiteness problematic. This work aspires to broaden hearts and minds in hopes of opening discussion. DiAngelo asserts that until white people have reckoned with the question of “what does it mean to be white,” they “continue to enact policies and practices — intentionally or not — that hurt and limit” Black lives.

[How to Be an Antiracist \(2019\)](#)

Author: Ibram X. Kendi



The myth of a post-racial America is what Kendi dissects as he helps break down racism in our society. This book is a gift in the way that it addresses racism so clearly and introduces us to the transformative concept

of antiracism. In the introduction Kendi illuminates the forceful truth that “the basic struggle we’re all in, the struggle to be fully human and to see that others are fully human.” He explains how in a society where so few people embrace racism inequality persists racist divisions still thrive. Kendi offers not only an education but shares his personal experience and a vision for an antiracist path forward.

Community Spotlight



Are you looking to promote your organization’s very special event? Why

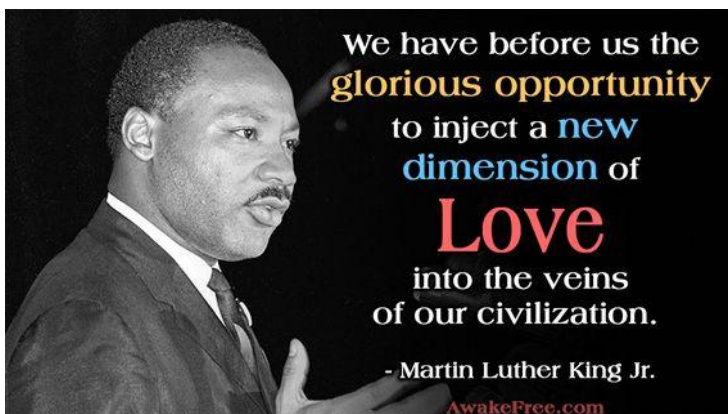
not promote it here in the quarterly Community Spotlight? Articles and images must be submitted to C4 by email for review the month prior to the release of the quarterly newsletter in January, April, July, and October to be considered for publication. Representatives of organizations can make general announcements for upcoming events by email or at a designated time during general meetings. We encourage any submissions for Community Spotlight to details of the upcoming special events or season of events with 150 words or less and a photo.

Please submit your articles or announcements to C4Lompoc@gmail.com



by, [Yasmin Dawson-Salim](#)

Since becoming the 2020 recipient of the Valley of the Flower's Peace Prize, I have been inspired to give more of myself in an effort to highlight the importance of collaboration for change. Since I began this journey in 2019, it has been my desire to create equity, regain safety, and promote peace for all people in the Lompoc community, and the surrounding areas. Winning the Peace Prize was not only an honor, but it also confirmed the importance of the development of C4 Lompoc which has created space to meet and engage in a collective, honest dialogue about the good, bad, and ugly within our community. Most importantly it provided space to create positive solutions for change. As we move into 2021, I am encouraged by the amazing community members who have banded together to commit to the development of programs and enrichment activities to address the present needs and cries for change. **Stronger Than Ever, Together!**



Looking Toward The
Future

Meet the Leadership Team



**Yasmin Dawson-Salim,
Founder/President**

Yasmin Dawson-Salim came to Lompoc with her family in June of 1989. Here she raised 5 children, 2 nephews, and a friend of the family. All of which graduated from Lompoc High school and went on to college. Ms. Dawson is a passionate woman of color born of African American and Japanese descent. Yasmin has established a career as a hairstylist in the Lompoc community for the past 30 years. Yasmin is a proud member of the Muslim community (Islamic Center of Lompoc), where she participates in feeding those in need throughout our community. She has given her time to volunteering for the NAACP, North County Rape Crisis and Child Protection Center, and Democratic

Club. This past year, she assisted on several local campaigns leading up to the 2020 election. Yasmin has been called upon numerous times to participate in civic engagement activities where she speaks alongside dignitaries for change.

Perhaps more widely known as the recipient of the Lompoc Valley of Flowers Peace Prize, 2020, her passion for activism and being a positive influence in the Lompoc community continues to inspire others. Yasmin enjoys being a link that connects community, collaboration, and positive change.



Cozetta Blow, Cofounder/Advisor

Cozetta Blow, better known in the Lompoc community as Cozy, moved to Lompoc with her family when she was 7 years old. She got married here over 30 years ago and raised her four children in a place that she refers to as a 'little town with a big heart.' Cozy contributes her and her children's diversity and love for all people, to the experiences they had growing up in Lompoc.

Cozy served the Lompoc community in many ways for over 20 years. She used her social service skill to volunteer with agencies such as the Salvation Army, Domestic Violence Solutions, as a representative on the SB County Drug and Alcohol Board, Lompoc Youth Football League, PTA, and PTSA, and helped on community projects wherever needed. As a Christian woman of color, you could always count on her to be a part of the annual MLK Day celebration, where she may be singing the national anthem, reciting poetry, or sharing her collection of multicultural children's books.

Her previous experience working for Domestic Violence Solutions, the North County Rape Crisis and Child Protection Center, and the Lompoc Police Department as their Victim Advocate, gave her experience working with law enforcement, community agencies, political officials, and victims from all walks of life. Her work at VAFB afforded her the opportunity to gain an understanding and increased respect for those who serve our country and for their families who serve beside them. Her internship and work with Good Samaritan Services gave her a new insight into addiction and homelessness and a burning desire to meet the most vulnerable populations in our community with compassion, grace, and acceptance in a way that honors and focuses on the person, and not the past.

Although she relocated to Arizona in the summer of 2018, she kept tabs on the community she loves. The increase in violent crimes and the murder of Marlon Brumfield stirred up a sadness that she knew needed to be followed up with action. Cozy was moved to call home and support the creation of a path toward change.

When she came home for Marlon's march to City Hall, her words to Lompoc were

"We Can Do Better. We Are Better." This remains her belief for Lompoc today.



Lillian L. Street, Vice President

Lillian came to Lompoc when she was 11 years old and feels that this is the town that raised me. Lillian has devoted much of her time volunteering with youth in different capacities over the years. Professionally, she has had experience as a Program Coordinator for adults with developmental disabilities and provided specialized care at a home for individuals with high levels of need. In her current role as the civil investigator with the Public Defender's Office, Lillian assesses conservatorships. In that capacity, she has become familiar with the lack of housing options, especially for those dealing with mental illness and other disabilities or diseases. This dire need in our community pushes Lillian to find new ways of being of service to those without shelter.

It was during the wake of the murder of Philando Castille that she first began community organizing. She realized after helping to put on a peace march that Lompoc was full of energetic and loving

people. She was inspired to envision what it might look like if all of those loving people brought their energy to one cause. In the past year, she put her organizing efforts into a week-long protest for Black Lives Matter ending with a die-in demonstration at the week's end. Lillian then focused her efforts on bringing together the talented and influential people she met from the various events.

For the future of Lompoc, Lillian wants more than anything, to see every person taking pride in Lompoc and raise our collective morale. Lillian believes that C4 is going to be a big part of making that a reality for her son, her family, and her neighbors. When we all work together for a common goal and common good, this town will be more beautiful than it ever has been. It will be vibrant and once again full of life, and joy, and its residents will prosper.

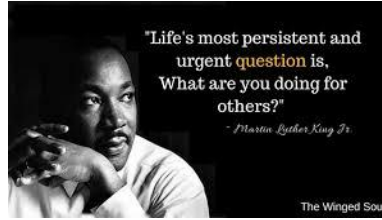


**Angelina Bonner,
Administrative Coordinator**

Angelina moved to the Vandenberg Air Force Base community as a devoted mother and wife, with her husband and high school sweetheart Jeff, an active duty member of the United States Space Force in 2018. She is currently finishing up her Bachelor's degree in Social Work at Eastern Kentucky University and plans to attend graduate school in the fall. Angelina takes pride in raising her three teenagers, who inspired her into a life of advocacy and civic engagement. Angelina has a true passion for social justice and seeks to be a part of programs that create sustainable change. Angelina has shown great passion and commitment to Santa Barbara County, volunteering her time with Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ-Santa Maria), NAACP Santa Maria Branch, Lompoc Prison Task Force, as well as the CAHOOTS in Lompoc Project. Her time and talents are appreciated by all. Her dedication, passion, and skills make her the perfect match for the C4 leadership team.

"We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community." Cesar Chavez

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a part of this powerful movement, please contact us at C4Lompoc@gmail.com



Vision:

Collective Cultures Creating Change (C4) strives to be a resource for Lompoc organizations and individuals to come together to create and sustain a community free from violence, that respects the value of all its members regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or economic status.

We will always be seeking peaceful solutions to sustainable change that hails a motto of respect, love, kindness, second chances, and faith in the people of the Lompoc, Vandenberg Village, Missions Hills, and the Vandenberg Air Force base communities. Intentionally challenging injustices, that promote racism, discrimination, oppression, hate, violence, crime, and division of the community.

Mission:

C4 is a coalition that identifies resources needed in order to connect individuals with organizations; ensuring that all members have equal opportunities to flourish as productive members of society.

