



A big change at the Oakland Peace Center

from [your OPC staff](#): Alexandra, Angela, Clidell, Malaika and Sandhya

What we're up to

The Oakland Peace Center was founded nine years ago as a collective of nonprofits working to create peace and equity, and we are still exploring and reimagining how to create peace. Starting January 1, our staff will be moving to a horizontal structure, with no formal "executive director" position. The Movement for Black Lives describes themselves as a "leader-full movement," and in the same vein, the OPC staff are bringing both leadership and willingness to serve, for the sake of our partners, the community and the building. It also brings us into deeper alignment with our organizational value of partnership and collaboration.

What led us this way

- In December 2019, the [Sustainable Economies Law Center](#) did some work with us around cooperative governance models, and in the process they introduced us to horizontal staff structures.
- Several of our partner organizations have moved in this direction for a number of reasons--efficiency, empowerment, cultivating a culture of collaboration.
- Our staff read the book "[Reinventing Organizations](#)," which opened us up to companies all over the world who model shared leadership; we began to learn from them.
- We developed a process in conversation with our board and consultation from [Kevin John Fong](#) who helped run an organization based on this model for over a decade.



How this will be different for you

- You might be interacting with more of the [OPC staff](#) than before.
 - Interested in volunteering around the building or have questions about the space? Talk to Clidell.
 - If you want more information about the book group or funding our upcoming building rehab, that's Angela.
 - Alexandra will be your go-to person around operations or the building transition.
 - Sandhya will still be here, focusing on re-launching the OPC Peace Fellowship and taking the collaboration among and resourcing of our partner organizations to the next level.
 - The [OPC board](#) plans to engage more deeply with partners and community, too!
- De-centering old leadership is part of honoring everyone's gifts. That will be a change, and hopefully a good one.



What will stay the same

- Our priorities will remain the same:
 - Cultivating collaboration among nonprofits to increase efficiency and reduce burnout and to resist the culture that creates competition between nonprofits.
 - Supporting Oakland youth of color in developing the skills to serve in Oakland-based nonprofits
 - Preserving a historic gem of a building so that it is available to the whole community, providing affordable space and providing a community hub in the midst of displacement



What we're excited about

- Everyone on staff will function from their best gifts
- We can lean into our collaboration values more deeply
- Some of our partners are already doing this, so we're looking forward to learning together



What we're curious about

- We will be evaluating this experiment throughout the year to ensure we are best serving our community.
- We know we'll be learning much deeper and clearer and more consistent communication; we look forward to seeing what we learn about ourselves and each other in that process.
- We're curious about what this model can make possible, and what limitations it creates. We're looking forward to learning with and from organizations further down this road and also from folks starting the journey at the same time as us.



Where we could use your support

- We'd love to hear from you if you have experience with this model.
- We'd love for you to reach out to the whole staff and get to know us, even if your primary reference point for the OPC prior til now was Sandhya.
- We'd love your continued support emotionally, financially and in terms of volunteering. We'll manage this transition best if our community is with us on the journey. <3



Thank you for all the ways you contribute to the culture of the Oakland Peace Center. We'll stay in communication with you, and we look forward to all the ways we'll continue to build community with you in 2021 and beyond.