

Los Angeles County Acknowledges Care First South Pasadena and the City's Sundown Resolution as Progress—and More Needs to Be Done to Undo Racist Policies

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Human Relations Commission recently honored [Care First South Pasadena](#)—a local community group focused on public safety, social justice and equity—for its pioneering work that led to the City of South Pasadena's [Sundown Town Resolution](#).

At the county's annual John Anson Ford Human Relations Awards on Jan. 17, Fifth District Supervisor Kathryn Barger presented the award to Care First founders Ella Hushagen, Helen Tran and Bill Kelly.

“Care First South Pasadena shone a light on local discriminatory practices and policies that excluded people of color from buying homes and barred their children’s access to community programs,” said Supervisor Barger. “City of South Pasadena leaders then took action[.]”

As a result of advocacy from Care First and many other South Pasadena community groups, in February 2022 South Pasadena's City Council was among the first in California to formally acknowledge and condemn its past as a Sundown Town, and commit to a variety of activities to promote inclusion and equity.

“The most significant provision of South Pasadena's sundown town resolution is not its apology for racial exclusion in the past—though important and long overdue—but the City's commitment to evaluate policies and programs with the goal of redressing the effects of discrimination in our community,” said Care First founder and member, Ella Hushagen. “Care First continues to work closely with our City's leaders to carry out this directive through policing practices, housing policy, and community services.”

For decades, many cities were known as “Sundown Towns” because of their practice of excluding members of non-white racial and ethnic groups from living in or even being inside the city limits after sundown. This was done through social and cultural means, and through government action, including police profiling and enhanced enforcement. In its Sundown Town Resolution, the City of South Pasadena cited numerous examples, including a 1941 campaign aided by the city to restrict non-whites from purchasing homes and a 1955 Recreation Department rule “barring Negroes” from a city-run public swimming pool.

The Commission also recognized Former Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Pro Bono ASL, Esther Lim, CIELO – Comunidades Indigenas en Liderazgo, Build Plus Community Marketplace, Khymer Girls in Action, and Samo Youth for their tremendous contributions to human relations across the County.

Care First was founded in 2020 by a diverse group of South Pasadena residents. They came together after the murder of George Floyd and amid the pandemic with a goal of working

together with city government and other community groups toward a more just and inclusive environment in South Pasadena.