

SPLC REPORT

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FIGHTING HATE

Militia movement resurgent, infused with racism

New SPLC report details growth of far-right antigovernment groups

A new SPLC report has found the antigovernment militia movement is surging across the country as fears of a black man in the White House, changing

demographics and conspiracy theories spread by mainstream figures have helped revive a movement that has been dormant for almost a decade.

"The militia movement is clearly growing again, said Mark Potok, director of the SPLC's Intelligence Project. "At the height of the movement in the

1990s, 168 people were murdered in the bombing of Oklahoma City's federal building. We may not be at that point yet, but as one law enforcement official told us, the only thing missing is a spark."

The Second Wave: Return of the Militias cites the following evidence:

■ One law enforcement agency has found 50 new militia training groups — including one composed of current and former police officers and soldiers.

■ The convening of so-called citizens' "courts" and "grand juries" — a popular method of

harassing enemies of the movement — is on the rise. Several citizens' grand juries have issued indictments against President Obama for treason and fraud.

■ "Sovereign citizens" are reappearing in large numbers. Most "sovereigns" subscribe to an ideology that claims whites have a higher citizenship status than others and do not have to pay taxes or obey most other laws. They often engage in "paper terrorism," such as filing bogus property liens against enemies — another growing practice.

■ The introduction of states' rights resolutions in the legislatures of about three dozen states reflects growing antigovernment sentiment.

A key difference between today and the 1990s is that the federal government is now headed by a black man. That fact, coupled with high levels of non-white immigration, has helped infuse the militia movement with a strong element of racial

animus, which was not the primary motivation in the past.

■ Another factor in the rise is the proliferation of cable TV hosts willing to use their platforms to spread and legitimize antigovernment propaganda, such as the conspiracy theory about a secret network of U.S. concentration camps and the unsubstantiated claim that Obama was actually born in Kenya, not Hawaii, and that his presidency is therefore not legitimate.

Accompanying the SPLC report is a list of 75 plots, conspiracies and racist rampages since the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City — a key moment for the movement.

SPLC issued prophetic warning

Fifteen years ago, SPLC founder Morris Dees wrote then-Attorney General Janet Reno to warn about extremists in the militia movement, saying that the

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DAN MCCOMB/AP IMAGES/THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

One law enforcement agency found 50 new militia training groups, including one composed of current and former police officers and soldiers. An official says the only missing ingredient for violence is a spark.

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SEEKING JUSTICE

'Jena Six' teen gets second chance, a new start with SPLC board member

When SPLC board member Alan Howard represented one of the teens known as the Jena Six in a civil lawsuit, the lawyer ended up providing more than legal help to one of the young men embroiled in the case that raised questions about race and justice in America.

He gave him a second chance at a successful life.

Howard represented Jesse Ray "Jody" Beard in a civil suit stemming from the Jena Six criminal case. But he also became his legal guardian in a remarkable effort to give the teen a fresh start away from his small hometown of Jena, La.

"It was one thing to save him from this immediate predicament and it's another to give him the opportunities outside of Jena," Howard said. "He's just a tremendous, tremendous kid. And he's on his way."

Howard has enrolled Beard in a prestigious boarding school in Connecticut, provided him

with an internship at a prominent law firm and taken him into his home in Bedford, N.Y.

Beard, 18, was one of six black teens accused of beating up a white classmate at Jena High School in 2006. The incident occurred during a period of racial tension after nooses were hung in a tree on the school campus.

The case drew national attention because of the severity of the charges — attempted murder — initially lodged against the teens by a white prosecutor. Thousands of demonstrators marched in Jena in September 2007 to protest the treatment of the teens.

Youth overcomes challenges

Howard knew his client would face challenges after the Jena Six case was resolved. The other teens accused in the case had opportunities to leave the small town of about 3,000 people along with the notoriety of being one of the Jena Six.

CONTRIBUTED



Former Jena Six defendant Jesse Ray Beard takes a break from football practice at his Connecticut school to pose with Alan Howard's wife, Patti, and their 11-year-old son, Tommy.

They had a chance for a new beginning. Beard did not.

"Clearly the deck was stacked against him in Jena," Howard said.

Even when Beard had an opportunity to get his life back on

track, the justice system in Jena wasn't supportive. A chance for the teen to attend school in Philadelphia was quashed by a judge due to an unrelated

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SPLC REPORT

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The Southern Poverty Law Center is dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of our society. Using litigation, education, and other forms of advocacy, the Center works toward the day when the ideals of equal justice and equal opportunity will be a reality. The Center also sponsors the Civil Rights Memorial, which celebrates the memory of individuals who died during the Civil Rights Movement, and the Civil Rights Memorial Center.

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A MESSAGE FROM CENTER PRESIDENT RICHARD COHEN

Right-wing rage, rhetoric creates toxic environment

Anti-Obama rhetoric is all the rage. Almost every day, new conspiracy theories and outrageous charges about the president emerge from the radical right: *He's a new Hitler. He's a communist who wants to indoctrinate your children. He hates white people. He's trying to kill your grandmother with his health care plan. He's not even American, for goodness sake.*

In recent weeks, we've seen a conservative columnist suggesting a military coup, a member of Congress saying Obama is an "enemy of humanity" and lots of other nonsense. This all-out assault by the right has reached the point of absurdity, and it's creating a toxic environment that some fear will lead to political violence.

Climate reminiscent of 1990s

This is all eerily reminiscent of the 1990s, when Bill Clinton's presidency spawned a cottage industry of propagandists who conjured all sorts of nefarious deeds out of thin air. Clinton was even accused of arranging the murder of Vincent Foster, the deputy White House counsel who committed suicide just six months into his first term. It didn't matter that there was no evidence to support the allegation. Conspiracy theories, like urban myths, have a life of their own.

At the time, there also arose a powerful militia, or "patriot," movement consisting mostly of white, rural men armed to the teeth and steeped in paranoid conspiracy theories, inchoate rage against the government and irrational fears about a coming collapse of society. The movement reached its peak with the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995.

Today, we're seeing the militias gaining strength once again. You may have seen media accounts of our recent report on this phenomenon, *The Second Wave: Return of the Militias* (see story, page 1).

While the similarities with the 1990s are striking, there are also key differences that make today's climate even more volatile.

For one thing, fringe ideas and false propaganda are now much easier to propagate, thanks to the more advanced state of the internet and a hyper-competitive, 24-hour cable news industry that thrives on political conflict, no matter how contrived or silly.

But the main difference is that the federal government, demonized by the hard right since the Reagan era, is now

headed by a black man. After Obama's election, there was a brief moment when talk of a "post-racial" America was in vogue. That idea has been thoroughly shattered.

Conservative commentators fume with indignation over suggestions that racism is playing a role in the anti-Obama hate movement. But their protests ring hollow.



Richard Cohen

Of course, it would be much too simple, and wrong, to say that all or even most of the opposition to Obama is based on racism. Our country is going through major structural changes, economically, culturally and politically — and

these changes are causing deep anxiety among Americans of all political stripes.

But let's be honest. Simple policy or ideological disagreements cannot explain the bizarre, disturbing behavior we're seeing from the far right. Many of the so-called "tea parties" and town hall meetings of the summer were punctuated by ugly racist signs, symbols and rhetoric. And the media heroes of the conservative media — the screaming heads of cable TV and hate radio — are fanning

the flames of racial animus. Glenn Beck, for example, called Obama, whose mother was white, a racist who "has a deep-seated hatred of white people or the white culture." Rush Limbaugh capitalized on a news story about a white kid getting attacked on a school bus by saying, "[I]n Obama's America, the white kids now get beat up with the black kids cheering, 'Yay, right on, right on, right on.'" He went on to call for segregated school buses, later insisting he was using sarcasm. I still don't get the joke.

Demagoguery is dangerous sign

Political dissent is a good thing for our democracy. But the thuggery, demagoguery, intimidation and racism we're seeing are dangerous signs of a certain segment of our society that is seething with rage and apparently unable to accept the governing authority of our new president. This rage is being ginned up and exploited both by opposing politicians and by corporate interests that have a huge financial stake in defeating Obama's health care and regulatory agendas.

The last time the country saw this kind of political climate, 168 innocent people lost their lives in Oklahoma City. It shouldn't come as any surprise if we see more such acts of domestic terrorism.

MAILBOX

I just received [the Teaching Tolerance teaching kit] *A Place at the Table* in fine shape. I am sending a check to the SPLC to express my gratitude for all the hard work you put forth for the cause. I teach in the heart of California's Central Valley, and my kids just love all your materials.

M. S.
Ripon, California

Thank you Richard Cohen and everyone at the SPLC for all that you do to fight the intense evil of hate and its resurgence in our society. Rest assured, we remain dedicated to our support of the amazing work you all do and will do whatever we can to keep up the good fight on our end. I will forward your e-newsletter to everyone I know.

B. K.
New York City

At 85, you probably can guess that I've been there, done that and had that done to me, so as a former Marine from WW II and an HONOR flight person, I've had it all. But I read Morris Dees' first book a long time ago and ever since I've wanted to be apart of what you are doing

to foster the demise of "hate." Congratulations to you and your organization for the wonderful job you do. More organizations and people like you are needed in this nation and the world.

J. J.
Elmore, Alabama

I am from south Georgia. I thank Morris Dees and all others that do the work of the SPLC. You are all heroes for what you do. Unfortunately, due in part to the political climate here and elsewhere, race relations are getting worse. I have spent my life as a white male in the deep South trying to fight negative stereotypes and hatred by simply telling people they are wrong and explaining how ignorant and un-Christian it is to think like they do. I get frustrated because things are getting worse after a period in the '70s and '80s where it seemed race relations were slowly improving. It can be disheartening in this climate, but I won't give up because of inspiration I get from organizations such as yours. Please keep up the good work.

C. B.
Waycross, Georgia

Thank you for your great work as it uncovers and fights the despicable conduct of the racist American organizations such as the KKK. Your courage and perseverance are admired. Financial support is forthcoming ASAP, despite the economic situation.

R. C.
North Port, Florida

In the wake of the horrific event at the Holocaust Museum, I have decided to increase my donation to a monthly donation. For many years I have appreciated the dedication and courage of your organization, and it is needed more than ever. I teach history at a community college and introduce my students to your organization on a regular basis. Thank you for everything, stay safe and know that we appreciate you.

N. S.
Clawson, Michigan

Thanks to all at the SPLC for informing us of the latest on your monitoring of some in our military who are participating in racist groups. I have contacted all my congressional

representatives, as you suggested. Your work is central to keeping all of us aware of how fragile our peace and constitutional rights are if we are not vigilant. We are on a limited income but will once again send what we can to add to others' small funds to keep you all at work for the rest of us.

C. G. W.
Tulsa, Oklahoma

I am moved to join this organization after seeing the hate group map. What a shock to see the state where I live covered in pins.

S. S.
Sicklerville, New Jersey

I have only one thing to say to you: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you a million times for the wonderful work you do. I shudder to think of how much more hate there would be in this country without the SPLC.

R. B.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Contributing to the SPLC was one of the best things I've done. You are awesome.

D. S.
Lisbon, New Hampshire

FIGHTING HATE

Phoenix mayor seeks SPLC expertise

In August, Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon invited Heidi Beirich, the Intelligence Project's director of research and special projects, to travel to Arizona to discuss hate and anti-immigrant groups active in his state.

Arizona has been a hotbed of extremism in the past several years. The state has had one of the most active racist skin-head scenes in the country, a movement that has brought considerable violence to the Phoenix area. In the past few years, Arizona also has seen an explosion in the number of anti-immigrant groups, some of which conduct border vigilante activities, such as rounding up undocumented immigrants at gunpoint.

SPLC invitation highlights concerns

Mayor Gordon has spoken out forcefully against hate groups and anti-immigrant vigilantes, and his invitation to the SPLC was intended to highlight his concerns. Beirich traveled to Phoenix on Aug. 12 and participated in several events sponsored by the mayor's office, including a press-only briefing on the hate movement in the *United States* and a visit with the editorial board of *The Arizona*

Republic, where Beirich called on the newspaper to properly identify extremists interviewed in their articles.

Beirich also participated in a town hall meeting on hate crimes that featured victims

Mahon were arrested in Illinois and charged in the mail bombing.

Like many of this summer's town hall meetings, the event featured heavy security and was met by angry protesters. Inside the hall, a camera crew sent by



Heidi Beirich, the Intelligence Project's director of research and special projects, discusses the state of hate and the anti-immigrant movement at a special presentation organized by the mayor of Phoenix.

of such violence, including Don Logan, the former director of Scottsdale's Office of Diversity and Dialogue. Logan was seriously injured in 2004, along with two co-workers, when a package addressed to him exploded as he opened it. In June, twin white supremacist brothers Daniel and Dennis

an antigovernment extremist with close ties to the 1990s Viper Militia and militia member Ernest Hancock interviewed Beirich. Hancock gained widespread notoriety the following week when he and a friend, who was sporting an AR-15 assault rifle, protested a Phoenix town hall held by President Obama.

Militia movement resurgent, says report

Continued from page 1

"mixture of armed groups and those who hate" was "a recipe for disaster." Six months later, Oklahoma City's federal building was bombed. It was the deadliest attack ever by domestic U.S.

terrorists, carried out by men steeped in the rhetoric and conspiracy theories of the militias.

"We're again entering some dangerous territory, where violence is a real concern," said Potok, who briefed Senate staffers

on the issue in September. "But this is not just a law enforcement issue. Americans need to reject the politicians and pundits who aid and abet this movement by pandering to its paranoia and conspiratorial worldview."

THEY SAID IT

"What ever happened to the good old word 'wetback'? What was wrong with that?"

— Austin, Tex., KLBJ-AM radio host Don Pryor, in July 14 comments that resulted in his suspension and apology

"Maybe the people who work for a living didn't want to swim with a bunch of ghetto monkey faces."

— Anonymous comment about 60 mostly black children with advance reservations being turned away from a private Philadelphia pool that was posted July 15 on Domelights.com, a message board run by and for Philadelphia police officers that was later suspended

"This has been a country built basically by white folks."

— MSNBC political commentator Pat Buchanan on the July 16 edition of MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show"

"If I was the officer he verbally assaulted like a banana-eating jungle monkey, I would have sprayed him in the face with [pepper spray]."

— Boston police officer Justin Barrett, who was later suspended, in a July 27 mass e-mail about black Harvard University professor Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s arrest in his own home by a white officer after a neighbor reported a possible break-in there

"[President Obama] has exposed himself over and over and over again as a guy who has a deep-seated hatred of white people or the white culture."

— FOX News host Glenn Beck on the July 28 edition of "Fox & Friends," attacking Obama's criticism of the arresting officer in the Gates case

"I'm sure it's just one of Michelle Obama's ancestors."

— Rusty DePass, former South Carolina State Election Commission chairman and ex-chairman of the Richland County Republican Party, in a June 12 Facebook comment about a gorilla's escape from a local zoo

INTELLIGENCE BRIEFS

Young boys beat immigrant

LYNN, Mass. — Six boys, age 11 to 14, have been charged with severely beating a Guatemalan immigrant with bricks, bottles and rocks as he slept near railroad tracks here.

Police said the boys targeted Damian Merida, 30, because of his ethnicity and said they were looking into the "possibility that the attack was not the first perpetrated by these youths."

The boys, whose names were not disclosed because they are minors, pleaded not delinquent in early September to charges of civil rights violations, attempted murder and assault. The attack occurred in July.

The brutal attack reflects a disturbing trend across America and follows a similar case in Pennsylvania in which six high school students beat to death Luis Ramirez, a Mexican immigrant who was a 25-year-old father of two.

Law enforcement targets anti-black gangs

LOS ANGELES — Law enforcement agencies here recently staged a large-scale raid aimed at weakening a violent street gang that regularly targets blacks.

About 1,300 local, state and federal officers took part in a sweep in September that climaxed a yearlong investigation and led to the arrest of more than 45 people connected to the Avenues gang. A federal indictment named 88 members or associates of the gang who were wanted on charges that included murder, drug dealing, witness intimidation and money laundering.

The Avenues is a largely Hispanic gang controlled by the Mexican Mafia from within the California prison system. The indictment said the group tries to terrorize blacks who venture into its territory. "Neighborhoods controlled by the Avenues gang are frequently 'tagged' with racist threats directed against African-Americans that are intended to intimidate African-Americans and prevent African-Americans from living in the neighborhood," the indictment said.

In 2006, the Southern Poverty Law Center's *Intelligence Report* documented how the Avenues and other Hispanic street gangs in Los Angeles were waging campaigns of terror against blacks.

'Patriot' leaders organize in Alaska

A key figure of the 1990s anti-government "Patriot" movement who largely dropped from public view in 2002 has

resurfaced in Alaska, where he's recruiting for his newly formed Alaska Militia.

Norm Olson, who founded the Michigan Militia in 1994, held an organizational meeting in September at a community center in Nikiski, a small town about 170 miles from Anchorage. Olson's message: "Something very evil this way comes."

"We're looking at catastrophe just a couple months away — economic collapse, food shortages around the world, prices in stores are gonna go skyrocketing with this inflation," Olson told the roughly 20 attendees, according to *The Redoubt Reporter*, a Kenai Peninsula newspaper.

Presiding over the meeting alongside Olson was Michigan Militia co-founder Ray Southwell. In the 1990s, Olson and Southwell together made the Michigan Militia one of the first major anti-government Patriot groups in the country and helped transform their former home state into a hotbed of Patriot activity. Olson drew widespread attention to his group when he revealed that Oklahoma City bombing conspirator Terry Nichols had attended a Michigan Militia meeting not long before the terrorist attack.

FAIR president defends racist founder

Despite John Tanton's long, documented history of racism, Dan Stein, the president of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), called the founder of his organization a "Renaissance man" of wide-ranging "intellect" in a recent *Washington Post* article.

Tanton started FAIR in 1979 and is still a member of its board of directors. But since the full extent of Tanton's racist views have been exposed in recent years, Stein hasn't talked about the founder's ideas much.

But Stein told the *Post* that attacks on Tanton "are out of context and simply do not reflect the true character of the man." Over the decades, Tanton has repeatedly described contemporary immigrants as inferior. He has questioned the "educability" of Latinos and written that "for European-American society and culture to persist requires a European-American majority."

Based on an investigation of Tanton's views and those of his organization, the Southern Poverty Law Center began listing FAIR as a hate group in 2007.



W. R., an SPLC client who was held in the Harrison County Juvenile Detention Center this spring, is back home with his mother on the Mississippi coast.

SEEKING JUSTICE

SPLC suit leads to major reforms in Mississippi juvenile detention center

Filthy, bug-infested cells.

Children sleeping on thin mats on the floor.

Assaults by guards.

Confinement to a cell for 23 hours a day.

These details were recounted by dozens of children held at the Harrison County Juvenile Detention Center in Biloxi, Miss. It spurred an SPLC lawsuit that now promises to end these conditions.

The SPLC has reached an agreement with Harrison County to ensure children and teens held at the detention center are protected from abuse and neglect.

Settlement ensures improvements

The settlement, which still must be approved by a federal judge, ensures that youths at the Harrison County Juvenile Detention Center in Biloxi are not locked in their cells all day without reason, forced to sleep on the floor or housed in overcrowded conditions. The agreement also requires a suicide prevention policy and adequate physical and mental health care.

Harrison County and an independent contractor that operates the facility will work closely with SPLC attorneys and experts to ensure compliance with the agreement and to protect the well-being of the county's detained children. Harrison County, the defendant in the case, did not admit to liability under the agreement.

Most of the youths held at the facility have not been found guilty of any crime and are awaiting court hearings.

"This agreement demonstrates Harrison County's strong commitment to protecting its detained youth," said Sheila A. Bedi, SPLC's regional juvenile justice attorney. "We look forward to further collaboration with the county and hope

we can work together to develop alternatives to secure detention and identify other reforms that will help the county comply with this settlement."

The lawsuit is part of the SPLC's wider effort to reform a juvenile justice system that relies too heavily in putting children and teens behind bars even for minor, nonviolent offenses.

The agreement, approved by the county's board of supervisors, restricts the use of cell confinement. It also provides guidelines for the use of restraints and force and enhances suicide prevention policies and practices. No more than two youths will share a two-person cell, and no youth will be allowed to sleep on the floor. Officials also agreed to a specific staff-to-youth ratio to ensure appropriate supervision.

The SPLC will continue to monitor conditions at the detention center, which will submit quarterly reports to the Harrison County Board of Supervisors for the next three years, outlining its compliance with the agreement.

"This agreement will make a tremendous difference for Harrison County's children and families," said Vanessa Carroll, a staff attorney for SPLC's Mississippi Youth Justice Project and counsel for the children. "The county has committed to meeting the needs of detained youths and to reducing the unnecessary detention of those who are non-violent."

The SPLC filed the federal lawsuit on behalf of children and teens held at the facility and Mississippi Protection and Advocacy Systems, a nonprofit organization with a federal mandate to protect the rights of people with disabilities. The detention center has been operated by a private corporation, the Mississippi Security Police, for more than nine years at an annual cost of \$1.6 million.

TEACHING TOLERANCE

New online initiative helps improve learning in diverse classrooms

The statistics are dismaying. Eighty-eight percent of African-American 8th-graders read below grade level, compared to 62 percent of their white counterparts.

On average, African-American and Hispanic 12th-grade students read at approximately the same level as white 8th-graders.

These findings by the National Assessment of Education Progress are a stark reminder of how the nation's schools are not meeting the needs of diverse students, who now comprise more than 40 percent of the U.S. school population.

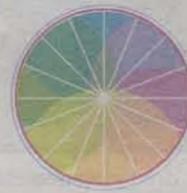
Responding to this challenge, the SPLC's Teaching Tolerance program has recently introduced a set of online tools to help educators improve learning in diverse classrooms and close the gap.

The Teaching Diverse Students Initiative (TDSI) helps educators identify and address teacher perceptions and practices that may inhibit the success of students of color in the classroom. It also helps educators understand how race and ethnicity should — and should not — inform their teaching practices. The research-based tools of TDSI can be found at www.tolerance.org/tdsi.

"Improving the academic achievement of students of color is one of the most significant challenges facing educators

today," said Lecia Brooks, director of the SPLC's Teaching Tolerance program. "These tools offer concrete steps that can help educators create a classroom environment where everyone has the opportunity to succeed."

A recent survey highlighted the challenges faced by educators. While 76 percent of teachers said teaching a diverse student body was part of their training, only 39 percent said the training helped them "a lot" in



TDSI

the TEACHING DIVERSE STUDENTS INITIATIVE
A Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center

the classroom, the 2007 survey by Public Agenda found.

Teaching Tolerance created TDSI in partnership with the National Education Association, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, and an esteemed national advisory board of scholars working under the leadership of Willis Hawley, professor of education and public policy at the University of Maryland. The co-director of the project is Jacqueline Jordan Irvine, Charles Howard Candler Professor of Urban Education at Emory University.

Among the scholars contributing video commentary were advisory board members Sonia Nieto, Robert Slavin, Gloria Ladson-Billings and Jeannie Oakes.

TDSI features five tools that help educators improve the quality of classroom instruction:

■ "Understanding the Influence of Race" invites educators to explore their own beliefs relating to race.

■ "The Common Beliefs Survey" identifies beliefs about teaching and learning that may have negative consequences for students of color.

■ The "Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Primer" introduces an approach to teaching that fosters classroom learning by taking into account values, experiences and perspectives related to race and ethnicity.

■ "Case-Based Course Modules" offer interactive problem-solving activities relating to literacy instruction but with lessons teachers can use in a variety of school subjects.

■ "The School Survey" identifies conditions at school that support effective teaching and learning of racially and ethnically diverse students.

"TDSI is unique in its focus on how best to facilitate the learning of racially and ethnically diverse students," Hawley said. "It will help educators correct misunderstandings about racial and cultural differences, change unproductive practices and make responsive use of the experiences and learning resources students bring with them to school."

The project will continue to incorporate new evidence and promising practices based on the experiences of educators.

SPLC urges Congress to investigate rise in extremism in the military

Faced with growing evidence of racial extremists infiltrating the U.S. military, the SPLC has urged Congress to launch an investigation to ensure the armed forces are not inadvertently training future domestic terrorists.

In a letter to committee chairmen with oversight over homeland security and the armed services, the SPLC said it recently found dozens of personal profiles on a neo-Nazi website where individuals listed "military" as their occupation — the latest evidence of extremist infiltration gathered by the SPLC. It also cites FBI and Department of Homeland Security reports supporting the SPLC's concerns.

"Evidence continues to mount that current Pentagon

policies are inadequate to prevent racial extremists from joining and serving in the armed forces," SPLC founder Morris Dees wrote in the July 10 letter. He added, "Because the presence of extremists in the armed forces is a serious threat to the safety of the American public, we believe Congressional action is warranted."

SPLC briefs Senate staffers

The letter was sent to the chairmen of the House and Senate committees on Homeland Security and Armed Services. The SPLC previously raised its concerns with Pentagon officials after publishing a report in 2006, but no apparent action was taken.

As a result of the letter, the SPLC was invited to brief Senate

staff members on the issue. That briefing was held in Washington in September.

For more than two decades, the SPLC has presented evidence of extremists in the military. In recent months, SPLC investigators found approximately 40 personal profiles that listed "military" as an occupation on an extremist Internet forum.

In 2008, the FBI released an unclassified report that supported the SPLC's earlier findings. The Department of Homeland Security issued a report in April expressing concerns that right-wing extremists currently pose the most significant threat of domestic terrorism and that they may attempt to exploit the combat training and experience of returning veterans.

FIGHTING HATE

N.Y. county is microcosm of anti-immigrant violence

On a fall night last year, Marcelo Lucero, an Ecuadorian immigrant, was attacked and stabbed to death in Suffolk County, N.Y. — the tragic victim of an attack police say was carried out by a gang of teenagers who called themselves the Caucasian Crew and targeted Latinos for sport.

County, N.Y. — describes numerous hate crimes against Latinos in the community and an environment in which many Latinos are reluctant to report attacks. SPLC researchers spent months interviewing Latino immigrants, local religious leaders and small business owners for the report, which includes a 10-year time-

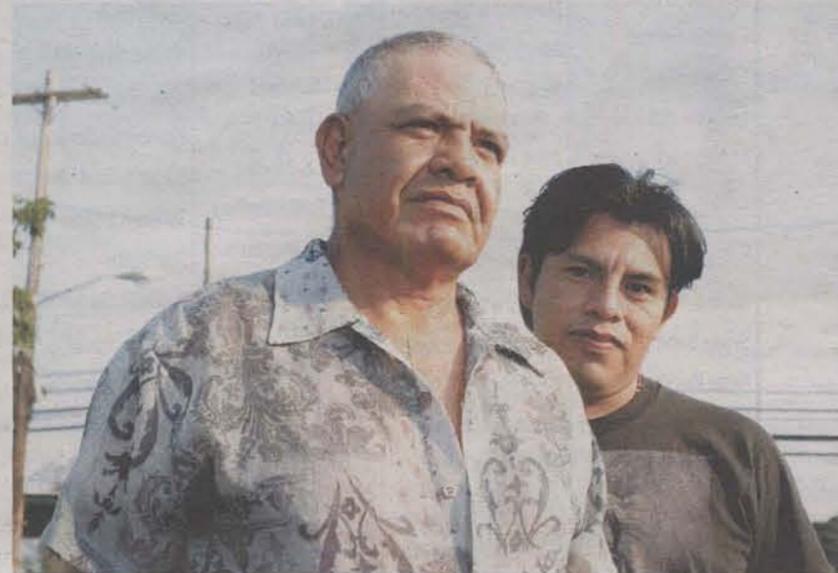
Latino immigrants, and the police have appeared indifferent to their plight," said Mark Potok, director of the SPLC Intelligence Project. "We should not be surprised that Latinos are regularly targeted for violence and harassment."

The report includes numerous first-hand accounts of immigrants being punched and kicked by random attackers, beaten with baseball bats or robbed at knife-point. They say they are regularly taunted, spat upon and pelted with apples, full soda cans, beer bottles and other projectiles.

The anti-immigrant rhetoric in Suffolk County dates back at least a decade to the founding of SACHEM Quality of Life (SQL), a militant anti-immigrant group that spread bogus data claiming Latino immigrants were responsible for sexual assaults, burglaries and other serious crimes. The group stoked anti-immigrant sentiment, repeatedly referring to Latino immigrants as "terrorists" and labeling anyone advocating immigrant rights as traitors.

Local politicians also have fueled the fire. One county legislator said that if he saw an influx of Latino day laborers in his town, "we'll be out with baseball bats." Another said that if Latino

Continued on page 8



Javier Monroy (left) and Carlos Morales both report being badly beaten by nativist thugs. Both men went to a hospital with serious injuries. No one has been arrested in either of the attacks.

A new report by the Southern Poverty Law Center documents how this murder was not an isolated incident but rather an example of how Latinos in that community are routinely the target of violent attacks, harassment and abuse driven by a virulent anti-immigrant climate fostered by community leaders and law enforcement practices.

The report — *Climate of Fear: Latino Immigrants in Suffolk*

line of harassment and violence in the county.

The SPLC began its investigation following the Nov. 8, 2008, murder of Lucero in the Suffolk town of Patchogue. The Ecuadorian immigrant was the target of a brutal attack some of the accused teens described as "beaner-jumping."

"For 10 years, political leaders and anti-immigration activists in Suffolk County have demonized

SEEKING JUSTICE

Mary Bauer is new SPLC legal director

A lawyer who has dedicated her career to defending the powerless and led the Southern Poverty Law Center to national prominence as a defender of immigrant rights has been named the SPLC's new legal director.

Mary Bauer, who has directed the SPLC's Immigrant Justice Project since its inception in 2004, will guide the organization's legal advocacy, which includes impact litigation in state and federal courts as well as public policy advocacy. Bauer became legal director on Aug. 1.

"I am honored by this opportunity," Bauer said. "I look forward to continuing the SPLC's long tradition of fighting for the most vulnerable people in our society."

During her tenure at the SPLC, Bauer has directed groundbreaking lawsuits aimed at enforcing the rights of immigrants, foreign guestworkers and migrant farmworkers.

"Mary is an incredibly talented advocate who is committed to protecting the civil rights of those who have no other champions," said SPLC President Richard Cohen. "We're delighted that she's taking the reins of our legal staff."

Before joining the SPLC, Bauer was the legal director of the Virginia Justice Center for Farm and Immigrant Workers, the legal director of the Virginia

ACLU and an attorney for a legal services program. She graduated from the College of William and Mary and earned her law degree from the University of Virginia in 1990.

Bauer is the author of two SPLC reports that gained national attention — *Close to Slavery: Guestworker Programs in the United States* and *Under Siege: Life for Low-Income Latinos in the South*. She also has testified before Congress on issues involving the exploitation of migrant workers.

Bauer replaces Rhonda Brownstein, the SPLC's legal director since 2001, who has moved to Philadelphia.

Under Brownstein's leadership, the SPLC's legal staff experienced remarkable growth as its mission grew to include juvenile justice, education reform and immigrant rights issues. Its work expanded from the use of litigation to advance these issues to the use of public policy advocacy, community organizing and public education.

The SPLC also grew from a staff of five attorneys and two paralegals in 2001 to more than 25 attorneys and a staff of paralegals, policy specialists and community organizers. Its presence also grew from one office in Montgomery, Ala., to a presence in five Deep South states.



Mary Bauer

VALERIE DOWNES

TEACHING TOLERANCE

SPLC creates teacher's guide for HBO documentary film

When high school students in Charleston, Miss., attended their first racially integrated prom in 2008, director-producer Paul Saltzman was there with cameras to capture the historic crossing of social boundaries for the HBO documentary, "Prom Night in Mississippi."

When the documentary was broadcast nationwide as a part of HBO's summer documentary series, the Southern Poverty Law Center, in partnership with HBO and Saltzman, offered a six-lesson teacher's guide for use with the 90-minute documentary. The lessons provide activities to help students explore the film's themes of tradition, change, love, fear, judgment and opportunity. The guide can be found at <http://www.tolerance.org/kit/prom-night-mississippi>.

"We are extremely proud of this opportunity to help teachers highlight the important lessons of this documentary," said Lecia Brooks, director of the SPLC's Teaching Tolerance program. "The film bears witness to the courageous acts undertaken by young people to resist long-held racist notions in their community."

'Prom Night' to air in October
HBO2 will rebroadcast the documentary throughout the month of October, providing an opportunity for the teacher's guide to be used in classrooms in advance of Mix It Up at Lunch Day on Nov. 10. Sponsored by the SPLC, Mix It Up encourages students to step

out of their usual cliques and cross social boundaries by sitting with someone new in the school cafeteria.

Charleston High School's first integrated prom was held after the school accepted actor Morgan Freeman's offer to pay for it.

Freeman, a Charleston resident, had one condition — that both black and white students be allowed to attend. Parents in the town had traditionally organized and sponsored segregated proms. Charleston High School is about 70 percent black and 30 percent white.

Interviews and video diaries were used to chronicle the event, which was met with resistance by some white parents who prohibited their children from attending and organized a separate "whites only" prom.

"Prom Night in Mississippi" is an official selection of the 2009 Sundance Film Festival. It marks the feature directing debut of Saltzman, a two-time Emmy-winning TV and film producer-director with 300 productions to his credit.



Morris Dees (from left) poses with Charleston, Mississippi, high school seniors Chasidy Buckley and Jessica Shivers and filmmaker Paul Saltzman at a New York City screening of the documentary "Prom Night in Mississippi" in August.

MICHAEL LOCCISANO

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MBJ09105RTR8

Newlyweds honor SPLC with wedding donation

Kristen Kirkland, a native of Montgomery, Ala., recently began married life with her new husband, William Sherman, by providing a gift to the Southern Poverty Law Center.

"We chose to make a donation rather than spend money on wedding favors because we felt it would be more meaningful

having the most impact and success at fighting racism and standing up for the victims of racism is based right in Montgomery.

"It still amazes me that there is an organization facing some of the most evil people in this world and stopping them from spreading hate and hurting innocent victims," she said. "Billy and I want to do all that we can to spread the word about the SPLC, and for people to know that by supporting the organization, they are helping to stop racism."

While the work of the SPLC is "one of the things about Montgomery that makes me the most proud," her husband's support of the SPLC comes from a personal loss — his uncle was murdered by the Ku Klux Klan during a rally in 1980.

"He saw firsthand the aftermath and pain resulting from this type of violence," she said.

The couple says they enjoy living in New York City because of its diversity, and that is reflected in their philanthropic goal.

"We support organizations and projects about which we are passionate — and tolerance, diversity and just treatment of all people is passion that we share," she said.

Kristen's brother, Jordan, was an SPLC intern this summer for the Intelligence Project and Teaching Tolerance, and her parents are also supporters of the organization.



Kristen Kirkland and William Sherman

for our guests to walk away with information about an amazing organization," Kristen said.

The couple held their March wedding in New York on the set of "In the Heights," the Broadway show for which William won the 2008 Tony Award for Best New Musical. They were dating when the show began its workshop stages, and it has been a part of their lives for more than three years.

Because Kristen is from Montgomery, she understands the negative assumptions some may have about the South. She wanted her friends and new family to know that "the organization

Scroll of Remembrance

The Southern Poverty Law Center pays tribute to the memory of deceased supporters who included the Center in their wills or other planned gifts. The Center gratefully acknowledges their bequests, received from August 1, 2008, through August 31, 2009.

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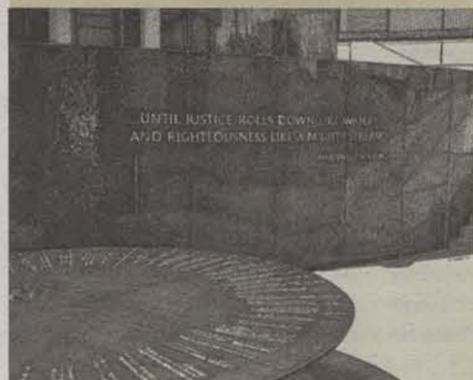
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SEEKING JUSTICE

Recent SPLC victories uphold rights of exploited immigrants

Immigrant workers seeking payment for their work in the Hurricane Katrina recovery effort are finally being paid the wages they're owed.

A migrant farmworker whose life savings was confiscated during a traffic stop is getting his money back.

And a forestry company accused of cheating immigrant workers out of their pay has been given a stern warning from a federal judge and held in contempt for a third time in an SPLC lawsuit.

These three cases represent the latest successes achieved by the SPLC Immigrant Justice Project, an initiative dedicated to ending discrimination against immigrants.

"Our success in these cases sends a strong message that immigrants have rights and cannot be abused and exploited with impunity," said Mary Bauer, SPLC legal director.

Katrina cleanup workers recoup unpaid wages

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, immigrant workers arrived in New Orleans to repair the storm-damaged Audubon Pointe apartment complex.

They were promised wages of at least \$500 a week and an apartment at the complex but were forced to work for months without pay and endure squalid living conditions. Their complaints were often met with threats of eviction and deportation.

In July, the SPLC reached a settlement in a lawsuit filed on their behalf. The company will pay \$170,000 to cover unpaid wages and other compensation for claims that included involuntary servitude. The money is being divided among 39 workers who repaired apartments for Audubon Communities Management following Katrina's devastation of New Orleans in 2005.

"If it hadn't been for (the SPLC), we would never have been able to resolve this case,"

said Audubon Pointe worker E.R., whose name has been withheld to protect his identity. "I am so grateful, and all the other workers are, too."

Life savings returned to racial profiling victim

After a season of harvesting beans in Florida, Victor Marquez was traveling on Interstate 10 to Mexico last year to start construction of a house. He was carrying almost \$20,000 — his legitimately earned savings, along with those of a brother, who also worked as a migrant farmworker in Florida.

While driving through Loxley, Ala., a police officer stopped the truck in which Marquez was a passenger "for failure to maintain a marked lane." The officer claimed there were reasons to believe the cash was related to illegal drug activity. The money was confiscated even though Marquez was not arrested or charged with any crime, and no evidence of illegal activity was produced from the May 2008 traffic stop.

Under state and federal forfeiture laws passed in the 1980s to combat the illegal drug trade, law enforcement agencies are allowed to keep most of the money in such cases. These laws have resulted in numerous charges of racial profiling and unfair seizures over the years.

"It's an insult that they say this is drug money," said Marquez, a legal permanent resident. "My brothers and I worked hard in the fields to earn it."

Prosecutors drop case after SPLC intervenes

Prosecutors decided to drop the case after the SPLC, representing Marquez, demanded

police records that would show the extent of such racial profiling in the county. A circuit judge then ordered that the money be returned to Marquez.

Judge warns forestry company in SPLC case

A judge has reprimanded the defendant in an SPLC case for allowing a company labor recruiter to intimidate workers interested in joining the 2006 class action.

It was the third time Superior Forestry Service Inc. of Arkansas has been held in contempt in the case involving more than 2,000 migrant workers who were recruited from Mexico and Central America to plant pine seedlings.

The latest contempt order came after a company labor recruiter showed up at a meeting in Mexico between plaintiff lawyers and workers interested in the lawsuit, in violation of a court order.

U.S. District Judge William J. Haynes Jr. warned the company in a July 28 decision that future misconduct will be met

with the "ultimate sanction" of default judgment — a ruling against the company. He also sanctioned the company by barring it from presenting evidence to dispute the workers' claims for damages.

The workers entered the country legally under H-2B guestworker visas to work for Superior, only to be cheated out of their pay.

Superior has previously been held in contempt for failing to properly notify field supervisors of court orders, in effect allowing them to threaten guestworkers who might join the lawsuit. The company was also held in contempt for failing to immediately instruct employees about the provisions of a court order.



JOSE LUIS CARDENAS
Victor Marquez



Alan Howard (from left) and Jesse Ray Beard chat with SPLC President Richard Cohen on a visit to the SPLC office.

'Jena Six' teen gets second chance

Continued from page 1

Beard previously had pleaded guilty. Howard had the difficult task of telling the teen he wouldn't be going to school in Philadelphia.

"I promised to get him out of Jena," he said.

Ultimately, the judge was removed from the case, and Beard was allowed to leave Jena.

Howard was determined to make good on his promise. With the support of Beard's mother, he became the teen's legal guardian. He enrolled Beard in Canterbury School, a Connecticut prep academy. The tuition is being split between Howard and Beard's mother.

Beard has worked as an intern at Howard's New York law firm, Dewey & LeBoeuf. And he's become part of the Howard family.

"He refers to my other kids as his brothers and sister," Howard said. "And we're like an extra set of parents to him."

David Utter, an SPLC attorney who represented Beard in the criminal case, can attest to the parental role Howard has taken in the teen's life.

"Alan stepped in and provided Jody with the same opportunities he provides to his own children, opportunities that should be available to all young people," he said.

Community offers warm reception

Howard said Beard has received a warm reception since arriving in the Northeast. He's well liked at the law firm where he has worked. He even got into the routine of commuting into New York City.

"He and I would take the train to work every morning and home every night," Howard said.

At Canterbury, the coursework has been rigorous and challenging, Howard said, but Beard is sticking to his goal of getting into college. He has joined the football team, and he's playing so well at running back and linebacker that he's being scouted by Division I colleges. He also plays on Canterbury's varsity basketball and baseball teams.

Beard said the move from Jena provided him with a sense of relief.

"I felt like people were watching me all the time," he said. "I was just trying to stay out of trouble, so nobody could say anything."

Legal case is over

This past June, Beard was able to finally put the Jena Six case behind him. He and four other members of the Jena Six pleaded no contest to misdemeanor simple battery charges. Beard, Carwin Jones, Robert Bailey Jr., Bryant Purvis and Theo Shaw were facing aggravated second-degree battery charges after the initial attempted murder charges were reduced.

The youths faced no jail time under the plea agreement but did receive unsupervised probation for seven days. They each paid court costs and all but Shaw were assessed a \$500 fine. A confidential agreement was reached to pay restitution to the victim, Justin Barker, through the settlement of a civil suit filed on his behalf.

The SPLC represented Beard and helped coordinate the overall defense strategy for the youths.

Earlier, the sixth teen — Mychal Bell — pleaded guilty to second-degree battery as a juvenile. The school board settled a lawsuit filed on behalf of Barker. No details were released, but the September settlement closed the last outstanding Jena Six case.

All of the members of the Jena Six have enrolled or plan to enroll in college. Several are interested in college athletics and are either on a team or pursuing a spot on a team.

Meanwhile, the role Howard has taken in Beard's life hasn't gone unnoticed. CNN and *The American Lawyer* magazine have produced stories about the remarkable relationship.

But Howard said the real story is about opportunity and education. Teens should have opportunities to change their lives for the better within their hometowns, he said. They shouldn't have to pin their hopes on finding that chance elsewhere.

"The idea is to bring those opportunities and level of education to the local communities," Howard said.

SPLC documents violence against Latinos

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workers were to gather in a local neighborhood, "I would load my gun and start shooting, period." A third publicly warned undocumented residents that they "better beware." County Executive Steve Levy, the highest-ranking official in Suffolk and a regular immigrant-basher, called a group of immigrant advocates a den of "Communists" and "anarchists."

The report also found that Latino immigrants in the county distrust police and see no point in reporting hate crimes. Others said they have been racially profiled. The result is a Latino community that feels terrorized and targeted.

"We live with the fear that if we leave our houses, something will happen," Luis, a Mexican who migrated to Suffolk County, told SPLC researchers.

The release of the report in September garnered attention from *The New York Times* and numerous New York television newscasters and newspapers.

A local anti-bias task force plans to poll junior and senior high school students to determine if they have experienced bias or discrimination at school. The results will be used to develop programs to improve school conditions.