



# richmond today

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## building a diverse, inclusive environment



By Jeanne McKindley

I moved from Houston, Texas to Richmond in the summer of 1968. It was a tumultuous time – just two months after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and at the peak of the Black Panther tensions in Oakland. My husband had already moved to Richmond to find work. In search of my own job, I went to the State of California Employment Agency and they sent me to Chevron Chemical, even though the company hadn't accepted any of its prior candidates.

The agency representative said: "We'll give you a try." So I went and interviewed. And the Chevron Chemical management team said: "Let's give her a try." I'm still here at Chevron Richmond after 50 years, so I guess we can say that it worked out well!

One of my proudest accomplishments was bringing Chevron's annual Black History Awareness Celebration to Richmond 20 years ago. Personally, I've become much more accepting of things because I've been exposed to different people and backgrounds. I've learned so much from my associates, and then I've taken what I've learned to my family and church. Some people never have the opportunity to learn, because they're in silos. At Chevron, we're not in silos anymore.

Jeanne McKindley is senior management assistant/organizational capability coordinator at the Richmond Technology Center.

## crear un medio ambiente diverso e inclusivo

Por Jeanne McKindley

Me mudé de Houston, Texas a Richmond el verano de 1968. Era una época tumultuosa: solo dos meses después del asesinato de Martin Luther King Jr. y las tensiones de la Pantera Negra en Oakland estaban en pleno apogeo. Mi esposo ya se había mudado a Richmond para buscar trabajo. Y yo, en busca de trabajo, fui a la Agencia de empleo del estado de California y me enviaron a la planta Química de Chevron, aunque la empresa no había aceptado a ninguno de sus candidatos anteriores.

El representante de la agencia dijo: "Haremos un intento con usted". Entonces fui a una entrevista. Y el equipo administrativo de la planta Química de Chevron dijo: "Intentémoslo". Después de 50 años, sigo trabajando en Chevron Richmond. ¡Creo que podemos decir que sí funcionó!

Uno de mis logros del que más me enorgullezco fue llevar la Celebración anual de conciencia de la historia afroamericana de Chevron a Richmond hace 20 años. En lo personal, con el tiempo me he vuelto más tolerante porque he estado expuesta a diferentes personas con diferentes antecedentes. He aprendido mucho de mis compañeros y luego he transmitido esos conocimientos a mi familia y a mi iglesia. Algunas personas nunca tienen la oportunidad de aprender porque tienen una mentalidad de aislamiento. En Chevron ya no tenemos esa mentalidad.

Jeanne McKindley es asistente administrativa principal/coordinadora de capacidades organizacionales en el Centro de Tecnología de Richmond.



Each February, we commemorate Black History Month to honor the accomplishments of African-Americans in every aspect of our society.

The Richmond we share is living and evolving every day. Ordinary people are doing extraordinary things. We would like to recognize how far we've come, while respecting how far we have to go. In honor of Black History Month, we want to share the story of four of our non-profit community partners as they reflect on what this month means to them.

### Community Housing Development Corporation (CHDC)

By Don Gilmore

CHDC was founded in 1990 by local leaders in North Richmond who were working to eliminate blight and improve housing opportunities and create better economic conditions. It emerged from a housing committee of the North Richmond Neighborhood House, along with a handful of local black churches including Davis Chapel and Sojourner Truth. Over the years we've built housing for first-time homeowners, seniors and people with special needs. Our efforts have provided an affordable place to live for 1,500 low to moderate income people in Richmond and the Bay Area. We also helped a lot of families hold onto their homes during the subprime mortgage crisis. For me, I was brought up in a household that was very active in civil rights. I remember being a little kid marching for fair housing. So you could say what I do is in my blood. I worked in the private sector but really wanted to make a difference. I got with like-minded folks. Richmond was very active and had a lot of energy to address the inequities that are going on. CHDC became a vehicle for addressing those issues. There are still challenges but we call out those issues when we see them and continue to work hard every day to help people.

Don Gilmore is the Executive Director of the Community Housing Development Corporation. Take advantage of CHDC's programs by visiting [www.communithdc.org](http://www.communithdc.org) or calling 510-412-9290.

**"History has shown us that courage can be contagious and hope can take on a life of its own."**

—Michelle Obama, Former First Lady

### richmond police activities league (RPAL)

By Larry Lewis

We take great pride in not only celebrating "Black History Month," but also promoting programs that save the lives of young African-American men and women who live in Richmond. One of the things we really try to do is engage young people in a way that helps them to understand police work. But we also try to get police officers to be more understanding of Richmond youth. We do some of everything that kids want to do. If kids come to us with an idea, we try to make it happen. We are making strides and finding new ways to reach kids, like through our STEM-related programs. We have a coding class called "A Beautiful Mind" that is dominated by African-American girls which is very exciting to see. This year we are looking to start a robotics team geared toward African-American boys. Those are things that kids really want to do and they're gaining valuable skills that help them succeed in school. There are just so many more opportunities for young people today – particularly African-Americans. But we also need to encourage more African-Americans teachers and professors. Young people need to see that all people can achieve academic success.

Larry Lewis is the Executive Director for the Richmond Police Activities League. To get involved with RPAL, come visit the office at 2200 Macdonald Avenue or call 510-621-1221. Hours are 1-9 pm, Monday-Friday.



### contra costa college

By Dr. Katrina VanderWoude

Here at Contra Costa College we foster an environment that celebrates all cultures throughout the year – not just a particular month or holiday. We are a true multicultural campus located in a multicultural community. As an African-American educator you are an automatic role model for young people and others who may not have experienced someone who looks like them in a leadership role. That has the potential for great impact on lives. I look for opportunities to have a positive outcome on every situation. I see a lot of richness and diversity here at the College and in our surrounding communities. I remember one of my former graduate school professors commenting that as educators we are often like ushers in a movie theater. I have never forgotten that analogy. I look at it as having the ability to bringing folks into the theater who haven't previously had a ticket. That's one of the great roles that community colleges like ours play. We provide opportunities for people who wouldn't otherwise have a chance to go to college. We live in a state that is working to make education as affordable as possible. Our Promise program, geared toward first-time, full-time students, provides an opportunity for the first year of free college. Furthering partnering with the Richmond Promise offers students from Richmond the chance to go to college. These are great examples of how a community college in partnership with its community can make such a difference. I speak on behalf of all who serve at our college when I say that Contra Costa College is fully committed to doing everything we can to help students succeed and fulfill their dreams.

Dr. VanderWoude is the President of Contra Costa College. Learn more about the College's programs by visiting [www.contracostacollege.edu](http://www.contracostacollege.edu).

### greater richmond interfaith program (GRIP)

By Kathleen Sullivan

Reflecting on African-American History Month and with my position working to serve the poor and homeless, makes me think we are returning to a time similar to what we faced in the 1950s and 1960s when we saw an increase in the percentage of our population that lives in poverty. That is especially true here in California as we have the largest percentage of homeless in the country. It's also a place of tremendous wealth which creates further displacement and unfortunately impacts the poor – particularly African-American families. GRIP was founded by congregations across West County. Faith Leaders were part of the original War on Poverty. And now I am working to re-engage the faith community again to help support families and seniors who are living on the streets. The work that GRIP is doing is some of the most valuable work that can be done on the planet. And that is taking care of the "least of these" is what really matters. People can make a difference by recommitting to servicing the community. We also need people to recognize that the picture of who is homeless has changed. All people need a reasonable place to live.

Kathleen Sullivan is the Executive Director of GRIP. Visit [www.gripcares.org](http://www.gripcares.org) to find out how to help GRIP.



### spotlight on 'queen' jeanne mckindley's 50 years of service

This month's cover story author, Jeanne McKindley, has a unique place at Chevron as the company's only active employee with 50 years of service. Jeanne was one of the first African-American women hired by Chevron Chemical - Ortho Division.

Currently the senior management assistant/ organizational capability coordinator in RTC's Site Services unit, she began her career in the steno pool. There she received handwritten documents to type ("brilliant scientists with atrocious handwriting," recalled Jeanne) and audio tapes to transcribe. She also served as the backup for the receptionist, switchboard and telex operator.

She has thrived in a number of integral positions at Chevron Chemical Field Stations, Research and Development, Chevron Environmental Health Center (which became Health, Environment, Safety, or HES), Integrated Lab Technologies and RTC Site Services.

Additionally, she's been an active leader in the ETC Diversity Council and Richmond chapters of the Black Employee Network (BEN) and Women's Employee Network (WEN). As a WEN leader, Jeanne is proud of the partnerships she forged with the executive women's group to facilitate career development discussions, with other employee networks to hold annual charity events and with San Ramon's WEN and Global Diversity to help develop a Bay Area Men Advocating Real Change (MARC) program in 2017.

Last March, Jeanne was recognized at Richmond's International Women's Day event for her career accomplishments and commitment to diversity and inclusion. Lucia Watson, the Richmond Refinery's Operational Excellence Assurance team lead, was instrumental in getting her friend acknowledged. She began working with Jeanne at the Environmental Health Center years ago.

"Jeanne is the epitome of Chevron Way Values: she takes her job very seriously and she does it very well," Watson said. "She's living her life, and she looks like the queen that she is. Queen Jeanne, as we affectionately call her, has her stuff together. You look at her, and you just know that."



**"Jeanne is the epitome of Chevron Way Values: she takes her job very seriously and she does it very well."**

# it takes a village to build a community

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of the Chevron Richmond Black History Awareness Celebration. The event was started by a small group of employees who wanted to share Black culture and Heritage at work in Richmond. In 2006, the Chevron Black Employee Network created a scholarship program named in honor of a long-time Chevron chemist, Dr. William King. More than 50 scholarships have been awarded since the program started (Read more on the back page of the newsletter). In honor of the 20th anniversary, we want to recognize and thank the men and women of the Chevron Black Employee Network and the countless others for their contributions to making Chevron and Richmond a diverse and inclusive community.





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## community corner

# preparing students for the challenges of tomorrow

Few factors are more important to the future success of communities than having a well-educated population that is prepared to meet the challenges of tomorrow. Chevron supports scholarships for local students to help them achieve their educational goals through the Richmond Promise and our own employee networks in Richmond.

**the richmond promise** The Richmond Promise is a community-wide college success initiative that was established in 2014 by the Richmond City Council by setting aside \$35 million from a \$90 million community benefits agreement with the Chevron Richmond Refinery. Learn more at [www.richmondpromise.org](http://www.richmondpromise.org) and apply by March 23.

**somos employee network scholarship** The Somos Network is a group of employees who are committed to supporting the success of the Latin American and Hispanic workforce at all levels of Chevron. The organization emphasizes growth of Somos members' career development, mentoring and community engagement. The Chevron Somos Diversity Network will award \$1,000 scholarships to qualifying High School Seniors. Access the application and apply by March 8: <https://richmond.chevron.com/community/education/scholarships>.

**black employee network scholarship** Since 2004 the Chevron Richmond Black Employee Network (BEN) has awarded scholarships to deserving high school students from the West Contra Costa Unified School District. The scholarship is given in honor of Dr. William F. King, a distinguished African-American Chemical Engineer and 27-year Chevron employee. The 2018 scholarship deadline closed in January. Visit [www.richmond.chevron.com](http://www.richmond.chevron.com) next fall for more information.