

PERALTA COMMUNITY COLEGE DISTRICT
RESOLUTION NO. 13/14-20
IN SUPPORT OF THE TRIAL OF THE CENTURY
EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Peralta Colleges is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in the communities we serve by helping students to attain knowledge, master skills, and develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society; and

WHEREAS, the Huey P. Newton trial has historic, social and political importance to the Peralta Community, and Alameda County in that Huey P. Newton is a prominent figure in the Black Panther Movement which originated with students at Merritt College, the Newton trial was the first major trial after a pioneering local judge declared a prosecutor's use of race as a basis for peremptory challenges in juror selection unconstitutional – eighteen years before the United States Supreme Court did so, and the Newton Trial may well have been the first high profile criminal trial with an African-American jury foreman in the 1960's; and

WHEREAS, the Newton Trial is arguably the trial of the century for its political importance, as well as the fact that it focused on systemic racial bias in the judicial system and became the paradigm for such challenges nationwide; and

WHEREAS, the Peralta Community College District has been invited to participate in the Trial of the Century Project and engage Peralta students and the wider Bay area Community in a discussion regarding the historical and political significance of the Huey P. Newton trial wherein leading local attorneys and legal historians Howard Moore, (counsel in the Angela Davis trial), Doron Weinberg, (one of the top criminal defense lawyers in the state and former partner of a member of the legal defense team on the Huey P. Newton trial) and John Burris (prominent Oakland attorney and media commentator on the O.J. Simpson trial) are prepared to debate the legal, political and media arguments on why each of these trials should be considered the "Trial of the Century". Nationally recognized trial lawyer Jim Brosnahan will moderate the debate and lead a discussion comparing other historically and politically significant trials of the 20th century; and

WHEREAS, a VIP reception where alcohol will be served will be held at the Laney Bistro before the Trial of The Century Debate to raise funds in support of Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth formed in 2005 to collaborate with schools, community juvenile justice and research partners to interrupt the tragic cycles of youth violence and incarceration. Its Executive Director Fania Davis is the younger sister of Angela Davis www.rjoyoakland.org. The work of the Laney Culinary program will be acknowledged at the reception; and

WHEREAS, The VIP reception will also raise funds for "The Real Trial of the 20th Century" nonprofit documentary film project of Arc of Justice Productions, Inc.

based on Oakland resident Judge Lise Pearlman's award-winning 2012 book, *The Sky's The Limit:*

People v. Newton, The REAL Trial of the 20th Century? www.filmmakerscollab.org. The film revisits Alameda County in 1968 when the court, prosecutor and pioneering diverse jury led by an African-American foreman provided a fair trial to black revolutionary Huey Newton with lessons that reverberate today; and

WHEREAS, the Peralta Community College District desires to participate in the Trial of the Century Project by presenting an academic seminar by award winning author Lise Pearlman on the Huey P. Newton trial specifically for Peralta students at Merritt College; and co-sponsoring the debate on the Trial of the Century on October 9th at the Laney College Odell Johnson Performing Arts Theater as a community education event in collaboration with Laney College, Alameda County Democratic Lawyers Club, Equal Justice Society, Women Lawyers of Alameda County and the wider Bay Area legal and business community.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Peralta Community College District approves and supports the sponsorship of the Trial of the Century Project and encourages students, staff and the public to participate in the academic seminar for Peralta Students and the Trial of the Century Debate on October 9th, 2013.

Passed and adopted this ____ day of September by a unanimous vote of the Board, unless the meeting minutes reflect otherwise.

José M. Ortiz, Chancellor
Secretary, Board of Trustees
PERALTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DISTRICT