



## *Siyabonana* Interview with Karin Stanford

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...because Black Studies is a pariah department. We are the department that must be watched. We are the department that when students march about an issue, or they march or they start advocating for social justice, their names are on a list.

And, I definitely have a reputation, I wouldn't say of challenging the university. But, advocating for Black Studies, for Black students, for Black faculty and staff. That is my reputation. I'm very proud of it.

~ Karin Stanford

### Introduction

As a Los Angeles native, Karin Stanford has dedicated her life and career to the discipline of Black Studies through her unwavering commitment to social and political activism and community engagement. Formally trained as a Black political scientist, Stanford earned her master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Southern California (USC) and her PhD in Political Science from Howard University, a HBCU in Washington, D.C., under the mentorship of Ron Walters. In 2003,

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*Siyabonana: The Journal of Africana Studies*, Volume 1, Number 1, Winter 2023

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Stanford found a home at California State University, Northridge (CSUN), a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), in Northridge, California, approximately twenty miles north of Los Angeles. In addition to being a professor and former chair of the Department of Africana Studies at CSUN, she was also the associate dean of the College of Humanities. Her activism spans across decades and includes involvement in Black organizations such as: the Rainbow Push Coalition; the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS); the National Conference of Black Political Scientists (NCOBPS); the Congressional Black Caucus; the Coalition Against Black Exploitation; and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). She has published countless books and articles including: *Beyond the Boundaries: Reverend Jesse Jackson in International Affairs* (1997); *Breaking the Silence: Inspirational Stories of Black Cancer Survivors* (2005); *If We Must Die: American Voices on War and Peace* (2008); *African Americans in Los Angeles* (2010); *Black Power Encyclopedia: From 'Black is Beautiful' to Urban Uprisings* with Akinyele Umoja and Jasmin A. Young (2018); and *Higher Learning: Hip Hop in the Ivory Tower* (2019). As part of her research on Black Los Angeles, Stanford recently created, in conjunction with the Tom and Ethel Bradley Center, "The Black Power Hour," where she conducts oral histories with Civil Rights and Black Power activists from Los Angeles including Bernard Arafat, Kumasi, Watani Stiner, Ron Wilkins, and more. The interview questions were written by Aimee Glocke, ([aimee.glocke@csun.edu](mailto:aimee.glocke@csun.edu)), associate professor of Africana Studies at California State University, Northridge; asked via Zoom on December 16, 2022; and transcribed afterwards.

**Glocke:** *I just wanted to thank you so much for taking the time out of your incredibly busy schedule to meet with me as a representative of the journal, Siyabonana. We definitely wanted to interview you. We know that you are on our Council of Elders, which we appreciate. But, let's start with the first question which is: What is your academic background? What disciplines are you formally trained in? And, where were you trained?*

**Stanford:** I am trained in Political Science at Howard University focusing on African American Politics and International Relations. Those were my two primary fields. And, my minor field was Comparative Politics with a focus on Africa. I took these

wonderful classes like African Leadership, Black Leadership, and Electoral Politics. Development courses also; you name it.

**Glocke:** *So, you can teach more courses on Africa in our department.*

**Stanford:** Wouldn't it be great? Where are the opportunities? We're just too busy doing the basics.

**Glocke:** *When did you first become involved with Black Studies/Africana Studies? What made you choose to dedicate your personal life and your academic career to the discipline?*

**Stanford:** Let me just go back to my personal life in terms of when I knew that Black people, the Black experience, was important to me in my early attempt to, sort of, understand, I wouldn't just say the disparities. But, just why the culture seemed to be so different. I come from an activist family, first of all. And, one of my early experiences with politics was when I saw all of these people lined up outside of my grandmother's door. I saw all these little desks, etc., and voting booths that she literally; her home was being used as a polling place. I remember crawling under people's legs and crawling under the voting booths and playing. It wasn't until I got older that I began to understand how important it was that my grandmother allowed her home to be used in that way because this was the 1960s.

And, of course, I grew up as a child of the First AME [African Methodist Episcopal] church, which is a very, very political church here in Los Angeles. One of our first relatives, who came from Mississippi, she was a major activist in 1912 at the First AME. So, that's my family background. Unlike some of my other siblings, I took to it, and I began to read in high school. I remember reading one of my first books; it was called *Justice Denied*. And, I went, oh my God. It helped me formulate sort of an idea. Oh, you know what? Not just that. I read *Justice Denied*, and then I started going to the Aquarius Bookstore, which was the only Black bookstore [in Los Angeles]. That's when I began to meet all of these activists. Maulana Karenga [from the US Organization], that was the first time I saw him.

So, it just happened organically for me. Then, I was a student at USC [the University of Southern California] getting a master's in Public Administration emphasizing Africa. Of course, I became very involved in the Anti-Apartheid Movement. And, that's when I learned about Ronald Walters, a professor at Howard University, and all the great work he was doing: academic work and activism around Apartheid in South Africa. So, I left USC. I graduated, and instead of pursuing a PhD there, and I was being heavily recruited to do so, I just packed up my bags and went to Howard. That's where it really began for me. Ron Walters, even though we studied the discipline of Political Science, he always made it clear that he was only training activist scholars. And, that Black Studies is just as important, the discipline, as Political Science. Now, at Howard University, there was no Black Studies department. I think there was sort of an African American Studies program. There was a huge debate about whether or not African American Studies needed to be a department. And, when I left, it still had not become a department. But, we were in close contact with, I can't remember his name. He's so wonderful. But, anyway, the guy who was chairing the program.

**Glocke:** *Is it correct that you did a postdoc at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill?*

*What took you from Howard to UNC, Chapel Hill?*

**Stanford:** Yes, I did. So, so amazing. God, you know. Now, you're making me go back down memory lane. I blame everything on Ron Walters. He's such a great mentor, advisor, and dissertation chair. He said, listen, you've got to apply for a postdoc. We rarely get our students applying for them, and even getting accepted. So, you must do it. And, I did. I was accepted, which was amazing to me, and it was a two-year postdoctoral fellowship. What was beautiful is that I met Perry Hall, Sandy Darity, and all of these wonderful Black scholars. I connected with them in Black Studies, even though I was in the Department of Political Science. They nurtured me, and they mentored me. So, of course, I learned about NCBS [National Council for Black Studies] not just through Perry Hall because as a graduate student, I'd met Charles Jones and other political scientists who were immersed in Black Studies as a field. So, I was always around Black Studies scholars in terms of the discipline, as well

as being around political scientists. At that point, I started merging the two. I was a member of the National Conference of Black Political Scientists (NCOBPS), as well as NCBS.

**Glocke:** *From UNC, Chapel Hill, you came to CSUN [California State University, Northridge].*

**Stanford:** No. My first academic position was at the University of Georgia in Athens. I was a professor there. And, believe it or not, I was the first Black female ever hired for a tenure track position in Political Science at UGA. What's really interesting is that when I went on the job market, I got like four out of five offers. Don't start me talking about that fifth one. But, what was interesting is that there were so few Black people in mainstream Political Science departments. I knew there was an issue there because when I was at Howard, I was one of the few Black women in the PhD program in Political Science. I didn't know it was so male centered until I got to Howard. And, then when I went on to academia, professional in academia, it was just primarily Black males and a sprinkling of Black females in departments, if that. Oftentimes, there were none, especially in International Relations. There were none of us.

**Glocke:** *Then, from UGA, is that then when you came to CSUN?*

**Stanford:** Yeah. So, from Georgia, I went and worked for the Rainbow Push Coalition. I was a Congressional Black Caucus fellow for a while. I loved D.C.; I lived in D.C., and I moved there twice. Then, I came back to Los Angeles and pursued a position at CSUN.

**Glocke:** *How long have you taught at CSUN? I know that you've been a professor and an administrator. What kinds of administrative positions have you held? And, what courses do you traditionally teach?*

**Stanford:** This is my nineteenth year; my nineteenth year at Cal State University, Northridge.

**Glocke:** *What positions have you held while you've been at CSUN?*

**Stanford:** Various departmental positions. But, I served as department chair for three years, and then associate dean.

**Glocke:** *What courses do you traditionally teach at CSUN?*

**Stanford:** I teach the Political Science courses. I teach African American Politics; American Political Institutions: A Black Perspective. At the graduate level, I've taught Public Policy. I've taught Black Women in Contemporary Times; The Politics of Hip Hop; Field Research; and more.

**Glocke:** *And you just created a new course, right?*

**Stanford:** Yeah, on Black Los Angeles.

**Glocke:** *The other one?*

**Stanford:** Oh, Diversity in Public Policy. Something that is sorely needed. It's amazing that CSUN has all these wonderful programs in Public Administration and Public Policy. There's like a master's level, two BAs, and not one course on diversity. It's a huge issue for me because getting the respect as a Black person in Public Policy is very difficult at CSUN, for sure.

**Glocke:** *We know that CSUN is a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). What have been your experiences teaching at CSUN as a HSI? Are there any benefits, any challenges that you feel are present teaching at a HSI?*

**Stanford:** You know, I would just say my experience is that CSUN is so diverse. So, not only am I teaching Chicano students, but I'm teaching students from Central America, from various countries. We talk a lot about the Diaspora. Many of which are very, very familiar with race issues in their home countries. So, it provides some diversity of conversation and international conversation. In my classes, many of the local students have not traveled to those parts of the world. So, they don't understand

until they take one of our classes on the African Diaspora that Black people are having similar experiences around the globe. And, so my students from other spaces, they help bring those conversations into the classroom. There's allyship with professors in other Ethnic Studies departments. So, that's been great for us.

I think the only challenge. It's not so much a challenge, it's just the reality of not having the numbers. Not being as visible on campus because there's so few African American students. So, one of the benefits is that we've got students from various spaces who love taking our classes and who want to learn about the Black experience; about Black politics; about the discipline of Black Studies. But, on the other hand, it's hard to teach without having the students who have had those experiences in the classroom with them. So, you know, just trying very, very desperately to mentor and support the Black students is difficult at CSUN because, oftentimes, the resources are not oriented toward Black students because their numbers are so small.

**Glocke:** *You earned your PhD from Howard University. What are your experiences at Howard as an HBCU? Benefits? Challenges? A similar question, but just with HBCUs.*

**Stanford:** You know, for me, I have to admit, because I was at Howard at the PhD level, it was a very, very professional, a very scholarly environment. It was probably the first time in my entire life, coming from California, that I was immersed, outside of church, in a majority Black environment where people embraced Black culture. There was no need to prove the importance of the discipline and what we were studying. So, this idea of just being totally immersed in a Black environment with people who were absolutely invested in the field was extremely important. It was also a benefit because it was an international program. As you know, I was a student of international relations. I met colleagues from all over the world. They were in my classes. One of the challenges, of course, is that there were so few women in the department for me. But, other than that, I can't say. It was just such a great experience outside of the sexism. My learning about feminism and the importance of feminism is because there were so few women in the program. Other than that, I think that was probably my primary challenge. So, being at an HBCU was totally beneficial.

**Glocke:** *Is Black Studies at HBCUs and HSIs given the attention it deserves? Most often when we're talking about Black Studies, we focus on PWIs. Just wondering what your thoughts are about the attention that Black Studies is given at HBCUs and HSIs. Then, maybe what are some solutions to ensuring these voices are being heard?*

**Stanford:** Let me just say that it's much better now than it was because, again, there was a time when HBCUs did not believe there was a need to study the discipline itself. So, there's this view that Black Studies is integrated into all courses, but that's not really true. It's an aspect of Black Studies. But, when you're talking disciplinary, oftentimes, students don't get the discipline. They don't get information and knowledge of the seminal thinkers; the creators of Black Studies departments. I would say that the goal for Black Studies at HBCUs is to really become much more institutionalized and gain the kind of resources that other departments receive: fellowships, scholarships, faculty lines. So, that is the challenge at HBCUs, PWIs, and HSIs. You know, Blackness is still marginalized in the United States. And, so it's marginalized at universities, too.

**Glocke:** *You talked a little bit about this. But, you said throughout your academic career, you've been involved in several organizations. The Congressional Black Caucus was one that you were involved in?*

**Stanford:** I was a fellow.

**Glocke:** *The Congressional Black Caucus, NCBS, and NCOBPS. What are your contributions? Leadership positions? What have you done in some of these national organizations?*

**Stanford:** Oh, my God. I never even think about that. I don't know what contributions. With NCBS, what do I do? I'm on the Program Review Committee. I serve in committee capacities, primarily. At NCBS, I'm sure there's more. But, I just can't really think about it. It just happens, you know. You just kind of get in where you fit in.

**Glocke:** *You also hosted the NCBS conference in Los Angeles.*



**Stanford:** Oh, that is absolutely true. Yeah. I go to NCBS to party (laughs). So, you get in where you fit in; where you see that there's a need. I try to help fill that need. I do serve on the board of the journal, *The International Journal of Africana Studies*. I have been on the editorial board since I joined. And, that's all reviewing papers and offering opportunities to mentor younger scholars. I do a lot of that. Oh gosh. Then, of course, program review; that's sort of my staple committee. I think I served on the community engagement committee a few times as well.

**Glocke:** *And, you also said you're also involved with a Black Political Science organization as well?*

**Stanford:** NCOBPS. Well, NCBS, serving on the board. I'm so sorry, I'm a member of the Board of Directors at NCBS. I haven't been as involved within NCOBPS. I attend the conferences periodically, but I'm not involved at the board level. I'm involved as a member. I also served at the Rainbow Push Coalition as the: what was my title? I had so many. I was like the VP of something. I started off as a research associate, and then I became the director of the Public Policy Bureau of the Rainbow Push Coalition. I served in that capacity for about three years. And, then I served as the vice president of programs for the Citizenship Education Fund, which is the nonprofit wing of the Rainbow Push Coalition. In that position, I oversaw nine of our offices.

**Glocke:** *So, you definitely see the importance of contributing on a national level and even international level to Black Studies, Black Political Science organizations, etc.*

**Stanford:** Yeah, absolutely. And, I can say that one of the reasons why I became a Congressional Black Caucus fellow was to immerse myself in mainstream politics, which is not something that I was used to. Although my family was much more electorally focused and community engagement focused, I was much more on the periphery working with organizations like the Coalition Against Black Exploitation. I became a member of the SWAPO [South West Africa People's Organization] Support Committee to help free Namibia. Again, I was an activist during the Anti-

Apartheid era working with nonprofits. But, the Congressional Black Caucus really helped me see how government worked from the inside out. That gave me a very, very different perspective on how you get things done. I am absolutely committed to the idea that when we are able to prosper and make real change, to defeat various forms of discrimination, race, sex, class, gender, sexual orientation, is when we are in conversations with government officials. So, you need external and internal tools. The social movement push is extremely important to gain the attention of elected officials who can then begin to pass laws and find other ways to provide support. I think that the social movements have to then support those officials who support them. That's what I learned working with the Rainbow Push Coalition and becoming a fellow on Capitol Hill.

**Glocke:** *As an activist and community organizer, do you think that present day Black Studies has moved away from the tradition of activism? Or, do you think activism is still very central to the discipline? You are a huge community activist, so where do you think we are right now?*

**Stanford:** I've heard it said, even in some of the literature, there is some discussion about the lack of focus on community engagement. I don't think that criticism is warranted on an individual basis. I think that institutions make it difficult. There's no credit for work at the community level; there's credit for work at the university level. Oftentimes, community engagement doesn't mean in your community or in marginalized communities. And, I think the commitment that Black Studies scholars have is to do that kind of work. But, the pursuit of tenure. Sometimes, the very heavy teaching loads and the heavy-duty service load for scholars in Black Studies makes it difficult to do the kind of work that we'd like to do in the community. And, so I truly believe that we must find ways to, how can I say, push the universities to provide more professional support for community work. I'm a huge advocate of teaching classes in the community, and the professors should get credit for that as if they're on campus. Because that's a way of recruiting students into Black Studies programs. I mean, there's so many things that can be done. But, the profession has not moved in that direction because the profession itself is captured by university directives. And, if Black Studies scholars are not tenured, then, of course, that inhibits the

institutionalization that is needed. They must get tenured. So, tenure requirements should allow for support for community engagement. And, currently, they don't. The university would like to see it, of course, and you get extra kudos for that. But, in the end, it's not really required in order to get tenure.

**Glocke:** *And, it's not going to give you tenure.*

**Stanford:** No, it will not give you tenure.

**Glocke:** *You've published numerous books and articles. Do you want to talk a little about your research? What's been your emphasis? How is the activist tradition also present in your research and your publications?*

**Stanford:** Well, it's interesting. I say one of the benefits of going to CSUN is that even though there are stringent publication requirements, it's not so much that you've got to stay focused on a particular area like you have to at a research institution. So, your field is African American Politics, International Relations. We want you to publish in that field. We want you to publish in journals that specialize in that field, and here are the specific journals. That wasn't the requirement at CSUN. So, I just kind of wrote what I wanted to. I write. I enjoy research. I enjoy writing. I enjoy working with students. So, I have been able to publish in sooooo many areas of interest, and still receive credit for that at CSUN. Although I walked in the door doing International Relations, like I did the book *If We Must Die: African American Voices on War and Peace*.

I'm also very much interested in health as a cancer survivor. I did a book on Black cancer survivors. I'm very much interested in Hip Hop primarily because my students were interested in Hip Hop. And, then I felt like we needed to add some scholarship to the question of teaching Hip Hop. So, it's not just how do you go and teach students something about the history of Hip Hop. But, how do you make it more of a field of study? And, so for me, if there's need, I'm going to try to fill it if I'm interested, of course. My focus right now is on Black Los Angeles because, again, there's just so little academic material on Black Los Angeles. What's been published has been really recent. And, so in terms of social movements, which is one of my

research areas as well, I have been trying to document the Civil Rights and Black Power Movement in the Los Angeles area.

**Glocke:** *That comes with the "Black Power Hour" that you have been doing.*

**Stanford:** Oh, my gosh. Yeah. So, I had to go in search of these activists in order to discover what the history was. And, so I've been conducting oral histories with the Tom and Ethel Bradley Center of Black political activists in Los Angeles. Now, I have an opportunity to write about that as well.

**Glocke:** *Recently, you have received death threats at CSUN within the last few years. What happened? You did make national news since it was published in several newspapers. What occurred? Is this a reality for Black Studies faculty in general? For some people, it's surprising to hear this is going on in Southern California. How can we protect the safety of Black Studies faculty?*

**Stanford:** So, I have one class, in particular, that I teach online, and it is heavily oriented toward quizzes. Students sometimes will take photos of the quiz questions. And, in particular, in this one instance, because there's also the issue of white supremacist plants in our classes where students actually come into our classes to disrupt, or to challenge, any perspective on race that is social justice oriented. Oh, my God. So, anyway, what happened in that case was that a student took photos of two of my questions which they perceived as anti-Trump and pro-Hillary Clinton. It occurred during that election period. And, put those questions online. All the people who disagreed with those questions decided they would contact me and threaten my life. I got emails and calls. The university got emails and calls. I think that if the university had stood up and supported me, as one of the provosts said to me from another university. I don't know why the university just didn't stand and pick up the mic and say 'Hey, we support our professors.' Instead, at Northridge, they did not. They literally, at every level, from the chair to the president, felt like I had created this problem, and that my questions were biased.

They said it internally that they refused to support me. They did not even contact the police on my behalf, nor on the behalf of my students. I had to walk away

from campus primarily because I was getting death threats. And, this was occurring in the midst of all of these school shootings. I felt that it would be dangerous for me to go to teach students with an understanding that I was being threatened physically and violently, which also put them in harm's way. I said that to the university on several occasions. They did not want to hear me. They held meetings without me; several meetings without me in the room. And, I literally had to walk away from my job. They fought me tooth and nail not to give me my sick leave back. I mean, it was just one of the most traumatizing experiences of my life.

And, I was traumatized. The white supremacists and the death threats are always difficult. "We're gonna blow you out of a cannon," statements like that. But, it was the lack of support from my colleagues. A lot of the lack of support came from Black Studies scholars. And, not just Black Studies scholars, but Black people. Black staff. The students were amazing. But, I think that the university does this sort of divide and conquer thing with Black people. It's sort of like are you a good Black person, or are you the bad Black person who challenges the university? And, I definitely have a reputation, I wouldn't say of challenging the university. But, advocating for Black Studies, for Black students, for Black faculty, and staff. That is my reputation. I'm very proud of it. But, when that happened to me, most of the faculty in my department, not all, as you know, since you were right there with me one hundred percent. They just stood back and watched.

Senior staff at the university stood back and watched. And, when I would walk on campus when I came back, I was like a pariah. And, it reminds me so much of, I have to think of the terminology. The bystander sort of phenomenon where people see horrible things happening to others. They don't want to get involved as if they don't believe it can happen to them, too. Or, they see the person who is being traumatized as the problem because they just want you to shut up and sit down and accept the pain. You know, I always quote Malcolm X. He always says: Hey, just because you pull the knife out. You put the knife in and you pull it halfway out, and now you want me to go sit down? Well, it still hurts. And, so what was the most painful for me was the lack of support from the university, my colleagues. Now, I had some colleagues who were reaching out to me. Douglas [Carranza] in Central American [and Transborder] Studies. He was like I had to let people know. I want to reach out. I had individual colleagues emailing me saying I'm not so sure why this university's

behaving this way. Why are they doing this? And, I was like because I am not one of the good Blacks.

And, so that's what happened. Eventually, I had to file a lawsuit to get my sick time back because I walked away to protect my students. My daughter wanted a mother, too. And, my university did nothing. Then, in order to get my sick time back, I had to sign a form saying that I wouldn't sue the university. But, I needed my sick time back because I had to use most of it to avoid going into class. And, then after, the police chief apologized to me because they didn't know that the university, the administration, was not even communicating with them about how to protect the students. I had to do all that work on my own. Then, eventually, I was able to get an officer to come and sit outside the class until things sort of quelled. But, remember again, it's not so much that I was being threatened, that was a part of it. I was in an atmosphere of school shootings that were occurring on a weekly basis. Why wouldn't we believe it could happen at CSUN? And, we were already experiencing students, white supremacist students, coming into our classes and disrupting. And, we still experience that today.

**Glocke:** *Yup, I understand.*

**Stanford:** I know you understand. That's why I'm so, don't start me. I always say you and the other faculty member. I just don't know how you guys did it because you have to be traumatized.

**Glocke:** *When they wrote the N word on the back of my car, I got an email from administration saying 'Oh, that's so sad for you.'*

**Stanford:** Well, that's the same thing. That's the same experience I had with most of the administrators, especially the Black ones. All skin folk ain't kin folk.

And, so I think that one of the ways that we can create a better environment, a safer environment, is for us, as a community of people, to demand that the university take these issues of safety very seriously. And, it wasn't. As I was going through this process, the chancellor's office, they didn't want to talk to me. Nobody wanted to talk to me. I found out that there was very little written about safety and faculty at that time

period. Even though there's no real conversation with me about it. But, I understand that most of the action that's being taken now is being taken because of what happened. And, not just at our university, but at other universities.

Melina Abdullah [Professor of Pan African Studies at California State, Los Angeles] was getting death threats all the time. And, so the university took it very seriously. The dean's office took it very seriously. They monitored her mail. They let her know when people were calling. You know, I had to ask questions: what's going on? And, then I'd find out that somebody was calling and hanging up and cursing me. Listen, we even had some faculty who were extremely problematic, and they took a crowbar to my door. I begged for a panic button because I had several people coming in and just screaming and saying crazy stuff. Still don't have it. I have pictures of things that were done to my office. The university, still to this day, did nothing. Then, unfortunately, so when this happened to a professor at Cal [California] State [University], Dominguez Hills, I talked to some folks. They said the provost immediately said we support our faculty, and here are all the things we're doing to protect our people. And, then it was over. But, Northridge handled it very differently.

**Glocke:** *And, has never handled it well.*

**Stanford:** Never handled it well because Black Studies is a pariah department. We are the department that must be watched. We are the department that when students march about an issue, or they march or they start advocating for social justice, their names are on a list. That's what happens at CSUN. Don't start me. Oh, you going to make me write my safety article.

**Glocke:** *Unfortunately, in the times that we are in, as we move forward, these death threats are not going to end anytime soon. And, the universities are not protecting Black Studies faculty.*

**Stanford:** Nope.

**Glocke:** *This is going to be continuous. You know, AB 1460 is fantastic and phenomenal. But, now it's bringing all students into our departments, and some*

*students don't want to be there. So, I can even foresee in the future, potentially more death threats to faculty because students are there that don't want to be there.*

**Stanford:** It's really unfortunate that we still succumb to the divide and conquer tactics. I see it happening, and I just go, my gosh. No, you can't pat me on the head like a little puppy and say sit down. No, I'm not that person. I wasn't raised in a family and in an environment where that was even acceptable. So, no. But, we do have faculty who, they look forward. Well, I won't say they look forward to it. But, they actually hope to benefit from the problems of other faculty so that they can be seen as the good one. So, let me just say no. I'm not one of the good ones. If it means that I have to give up our rights, and quit advocating for social justice, I'm not one of the good ones. Call me the bad one. I am the bad one, damn it. And, I know how to get in a room, and do public policy and institutional politics. But, I just cannot tolerate injustice. I cannot tolerate the sexual harassment of students. I cannot tolerate it. That's why I have to retire early because I just can't stand it. The injustice of it all. It's like how do you fight for injustice everywhere except for in your own house and environment? No, I'm going to fight for it right here too.

**Glocke:** *What do you think is the future of Black Studies, particularly what do you think is the future of Black Studies at HSIs, like us at CSUN, or even HBCUs, like Howard? Where do you feel the future of Black Studies is headed in general, and then is there a different future for Black Studies at HSIs and HBCUs?*

**Stanford:** I think the future of Black Studies is bright; brighter than it has been. And, I think it's brighter because there's more awareness of the need for Black Studies as a discipline. There's much more awareness. It's more accepted.

Black Studies departments don't have all the resources needed, but there's more resources than before. And, I think that social media has really helped generate more enthusiasm for Black Studies. More activism in the country means more support for Black Studies. So, I think it's brighter than it has been. This generation of young people is going to advocate, online and offline, for more resources, and they're going to be harder to ignore.



So, I'm not pessimistic about the future. At an HBCU and an HSI, I guess it's a question. That's a hard one for me to answer. I think it's a question of each university and the support that they have for the discipline. Again, I think because it's more accepted, students are more likely to take Black Studies classes. Majoring in Black Studies may be difficult, but double majoring is certainly something that we'll probably see more of. I know that at CSUN, I have students of various races minoring in Black Studies more so than before. It's like a very new era for me after twenty years. I see a major change in student orientation toward Black Studies. But, I think if the universities value Black Studies, then the students will come. And, then, of course, the activists, external to the university, have to engage the university. We have to engage them in order to advocate for the resources we need.

**Glocke:** *What advice do you offer to the next generation of Black Studies scholars and activists, especially, since you're close to retirement? Although we're going to try to keep you at CSUN for as long as humanly possible. What is your advice for the next generation of Black Studies scholars? Some of the elders are retiring, and we're sort of stepping into those moments. What is your advice for us? How do we take Black Studies into the future?*

**Stanford:** Two issues. One, first of all, each one teach one; mentoring is key. Mentoring junior faculty is extremely important. Mentoring young people to understand the significance of the degree; the significance of Black Studies, all forms of it. Shepherding them through the process of applying to graduate schools, applying for jobs. That's what I had. I had support every step of the way. So, mentoring is extremely important. And, advocacy for resources that promote community engagement and that give faculty opportunities to, first of all, hire activists. Ron Walters said to me, I'm sorry. But, if you're not an activist scholar, I can't work with you. I can't work with you. I just can't because that's who I'm training.

And, so, I think that when we take a position like that, then we also help to provide the resources so that faculty and students can be successful. I think that advocating for more resources. Obviously, the usual are the faculty lines, and more opportunities to diversify your teaching; more student assistants; more support; time

off; sabbaticals, all that's important. But, what we have not been able to do is to get the university to support community engagement with university resources. So, if I were to do it again. When I was chair, I tried to do it. I don't remember what happened, but I wanted faculty to teach in the community. The faculty who wanted to. I wanted us to develop a space where we could meet with students during the week after school from high schools. And, that should be supported by the university because again, it's an opportunity to recruit young people, too. When I was chair, we had schools, secondary schools, calling us and saying, listen, we want our students to come to Northridge. Who can come to campus? There are no resources for that.

And, you're so overworked. Sometimes, you don't have the capacity to go. Also, you're mentoring your students. You're teaching; you're engaging in service; and you're trying to write. If you're not giving any credit to go to those schools and mentor other young people, you can't. It's just too difficult. So, it's really about mentoring and advocating for resources for community engagement.

**Glocke:** *Is there anything else that you want to add to it that we might not have talked about?*

**Stanford:** I'm excited. I just became the principal investigator of the LA City Reparations Project. CSUN is the academic partner, and I am the primary principal investigator because of the research that I've done on Black Los Angeles. So, I'm excited about that opportunity and to work with other faculty at CSUN who are also interested in Los Angeles based research.

**Glocke:** *You're amazing. Thank you so much for your time, and all of your contributions to the discipline of Black Studies.*

**Stanford:** Thank you for giving me this opportunity. Gosh, you made me think.