

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **THE “PEACE TRAIN” COMING TO BERKELEY’S CIVIC CENTER PARK**

On May 13 Downtown Berkeley welcomes the voices of over 100 kids and adults joining in peaceful song

(Berkeley, CA) –On Saturday, May 13th, at 1:30 The Peace Train Children’s Choir will arrive at the Peace Wall steps in Downtown Berkeley’s Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park to sing songs about peace, social justice and racial harmony. Also, Councilperson Kate Harrison will speak prior to the Peace Train performance. This Peace Train project will include over 100 diverse youth and adults from Oakland, Richmond, Berkeley and Sacramento, touring the East Bay on BART stopping to sing in schools and public places along the way.

The Peace Train is being organized by Alisa Peres, a Berkeley neighbor and teacher in Oakland schools, who was inspired by the original Peace Train in South Africa. According to Peres, “I saw the film “When Voice’s Meet” about the Peace Train in South Africa, and thought what a wonderful idea to bring to the east bay to promote peace, social justice and racial harmony in these troubled times. “

The Downtown Berkeley Association is also supporting the Peace Train program as part of their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summer of Love program. According to John Caner, CEO of Downtown Berkeley Association, “We are delighted to support Alisa on this wonderful heartfelt concept. And particularly with all the civil unrest in Berkeley we are delighted to support a program that promotes youth, peace, social justice, and racial harmony.

According to Councilmember Kate Harrison, “When I heard about the Peace Train, from Alisa, a Berkeley neighbor and teacher, I thought what an amazing initiative. We need to support the youth engagement, social equity, and cultural diversity of such wonderful programs, that make Berkeley and the East Bay such a great community.”

Modeled on the success of The Peace Train 2016 USA Tour which united youth from all over the USA for a tour on the East Coast, the goal of The Peace Train in the Bay Area is to project a vision of unity and a quest for social justice. The participants, organizers of this vocal project are committed to using this tour of united voices as a way of working towards equality regardless of race, religion, class, gender, identity and nationality through song.

The Peace Train east bay tour will start at 10:30am with a concert at Riverside School, San Pablo CA before traveling by BART to Berkeley.

*“The Peace Train had enormous success uniting youth at the ending of Apartheid in South Africa. This is a 25-year-old project with a track record for doing the impossible and giving youth hope and love in their hearts. Those who ride on The Peace Train are impacted forever in positive ways! An award-winning documentary called "When Voices Meet" has documented the success of The Peace Train Project. In fact, the reason the project has been invited to come to California is because the documentary was seen by a teacher in Oakland who is spearheading The Peace Train Bay Area!”*

#### **About the Downtown Berkeley Association**

Downtown Berkeley Association is a nonprofit membership organization and the Owner’s Association for Downtown Berkeley’s Property-Based Business Improvement District (PBID), representing 187 property owners and approximately 680 of their merchant and business tenants in a 24-block area of Downtown Berkeley. Visit [downtownberkeley.com](http://downtownberkeley.com) for more information, or follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

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