

Civic Activity Record of Dennis V. Allen  
and the  
San Diego Race Relations Society

- 1920: Successfully appealed to Mayor Louis J. Wilde of San Diego to appoint the first colored men as members of the San Diego Fire Department.
- 1924: Successfully appealed to Police Chief Keno Wilson, to remove obnoxious signs posted in public places objecting to the presence and service to colored people.
- 1925: In an extensive conference with Governor Abelardo Rodriquez, of the Northern District of Baja, California, Mexico, successfully appealed for the removal of racial-discriminatory signs in public places in Tijuana, Mexico.
- 1927: Successful in appeal to County Supervisors for the admittance of colored nurses for nurse's training and subsequent appointment as nurses at the San Diego County Hospital.
- 1928: Successful in request to accept colored children at the San Diego Children's Home.
- 1932: In an appeal to Hon. Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of State, requesting official action against the Mexican Immigration law, prohibiting entry of American colored citizens into Mexico, excepting those provided with passports, Secretary Stimson immediately appealed to the Mexican Government to cancel the order; and his request was forthwith granted.
- 1933: Ward O. Nelson (white) shot and killed Wade O. Davis (colored) to show the "boys" how they treat Negroes in Texas. This crime was committed in cold blood in front of a café operated by a colored man. A coroner's jury exonerated Nelson in this murder. Mr. Allen promptly appealed to District Attorney Thomas Whelan, who had Nelson re-arrested. He was tried before a superior court, convicted for murder, and sentenced to San Quentin Penitentiary.

- 1935: On September 10, 1935, Mr. Allen appeared before the San Diego City Council requesting the adoption of an Ordinance prohibiting the display of racial-discriminatory signs in public places of San Diego. Following this appeal, the City Council adopted such an Ordinance.
- 1935: In conference with representatives of our three daily newspapers requesting the capitalization of the word "Negro," the request was promptly granted.
- 1935: Appealed to Governor Frank Merriam against the barbarous treatment and even murder of Filipinos employed in agricultural fields at Salinas, California. The Governor personally investigated and brought to an abrupt stop this crime imposed upon Filipinos.
- 1940: Successful in an appeal to Major Reuben H. Fleet, President of the Consolidated Aircraft Company, for the employment of colored people. This appeal lasted eighteen months before employment was gained.
- 1942: Mrs. Marjorie Woolfolk, a typist-clerk in the office of Mr. Peterson, Personnel Director of San Diego County, was advised by Mr. Peterson that her services were to be terminated, even stating her work was satisfactory and registering no complaint against her, Mr. Allen and his committee called for, and was granted, a hearing before the County Civil Commission, which over-ruled Mr. Peterson's order, and Mrs. Woolfolk was retained in her position.
- 1943: A Mrs. Malinda Glinsmore (Colored) and patient at the San Diego County Hospital was subjected to ill-treatment by a nurse who objected to the bed of Mrs. Glinsmore situated beside that of Caucasian women. The nurse removed Mrs. Glinsmore and her bed behind a door in the hospital ward. This exclusion was reported to the San Diego Race Relations Society, which brought the case before Superintendent Adams, who promptly fired the nurse.

- 1943: Called to the Otay, California, School District for investigation of insults and abuses heaped upon colored children. A meeting was held at this school house which resulted in the abuses and insults brought to a stop.
- 1945: Prevented the removal of several colored women employed at the San Diego County Hospital. No reason was given for the attempted discharges of the colored women who had been notified they were to be released.
- 1945: Brought to the public's attention brutality imposed upon colored and Mexican citizens by certain members of the San Diego Police Department.
- 1945: Parents of two colored girls complained to the San Diego Race Relations Society that their daughters had been excluded from exercises in physical culture at a La Jolla, California, School. The private owner of a tennis court where exercises were held objected to the presence of the colored girls on her court, and the teacher of the class excluded the two colored girls from training. This rank exclusion was promptly stopped when this Society's president personally complained to the principal of the school.
- 1945: A book was in use at the Chula Vista High School where the word "nigger" was freely used. This book was removed from the school library on complaint by the San Diego Race Relations Society.
- 1946: Blocked efforts of the Golden Hill Improvement Association to prohibit others than persons of the Caucasian race renting, leasing, to sale, or occupying any homes or buildings located on what was called "Golden Hill."
- 1947: On complaint by this Society, the City Board of Education removed from the library of Dana High School a book of which colored Americans were grossly misrepresented in its pages.

- 1947: In the notable case of The Golden Hill Improvement Association-cs-Marshal Lewis and Harry Dickens, the Association of Golden Hill, by its attorneys, contended the defendants in this case had violated covenants signed by property owners of this District in which was stipulated, "This property shall never at any time be rented, leased, or occupied by any other than a person or persons of the Caucasian race." The San Diego Race Relations Society supported the defendants in this case, and after several weeks of hearing and consideration Judge Turrentine handed down a decision that racial restrictive property covenants were in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment of our Constitution and are therefore unlawful.
- 1951: Again appeared before the San Diego County Grand Jury in protest against false arrests and police brutality imposed upon colored and Mexican citizens by San Diego policemen.
- 1951: A party of several colored citizens were denied food service at Newberry's Department Store of El Centro, California. Objections were plainly stated to the colored party that the store policy was not to serve colored at the food restaurant. The party complained to the San Diego Race Relations Society, which had our attorney Bertram Brown go to El Centro where suit was filed. Following a hearing, a judgment of \$600.00 was won by the defendants.
- 1952: On appeal from citizens of the Chollas Valley District of San Diego, the Society protested to the city council, city manager, city engineer, public works department for relief to the people of this District by installing flood sewers and other necessary protection as safeguards against such storms and waters which at that time caused many of them to vacate their homes. Now the improvements requested are being worked on and sewer under construction.

1951: On pleas to the County Supervisors of San Diego County, the supervisors adopted an Ordinance prohibiting racial-discriminatory signs in public places in San Diego County.

1951: Appeared before the City Board of Education protesting against racial-discrimination in the cosmetology classes of our vocational training school, where colored models were not permitted for colored trainees to work on. This practice was promptly brought to a stop.

More than six thousand colored citizens have been given employment on recommendation of this Society, which is continually called upon to supply all kinds of colored help including white collar positions.

The first State Race Relations Commission appointed in America was on request of the San Diego Race Relations Society to Governor Frank Merriam in 1938. Dennis V. Allen, president of the San Diego Race Relations Society, was appointed its Chairman.

