

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Tucson Celebration Committee
P.O. Box 18668
Tucson, AZ 85731

February 21, 2019

David Eppihimer via Email
Chairman
Pima County Republican Party
1740 E Fort Lowell Rd. Ste. 140
Tucson, AZ 85719

Dear Mr. Eppihimer:

I am in receipt of the two emails that you sent to me regarding the 33rd Annual Drum Major Awards. We put great efforts in selecting the best individuals or organizations that exemplify the volunteerism that Dr. King spoke and lived his life as an example.

I am however regretful that the acceptance speech of Ms. Stanley was offensive to you and the members of your organization that were present. It was such a problem created by your reaction that it had been the topic of discussion at the recent Juneteenth Committee meeting, your Pima County Republican Party Board meeting, plus a conversation with other individuals within the City.

I did not find the comments of Ms. Stanley offensive. They were heartfelt and direct. I did not find her comments, racist. Ms. Stanley is of the belief African Americans should be responsible for planning African American Celebrations without the need for outside assistance from Whites or any other group. The Drum Major Awards has always been planned by the committee of African Americans even though the award has been given to White, Hispanic, Jewish and Asian individuals or organizations. In 2017 the organization Coalition de Derechos Humanos was awarded the Drum Major Award. The point is Black Organization can be inclusive in their planning without the guidance of non – black individuals. I believe that was the basis of Ms. Stnnley comments as she gave an example of Hispanic organization, Jewish organization, and African organization that plans their events without the inclusion of other individuals that are not of their race or culture.

The issue that you raised and the comments of “racism displayed” has become the topic of conversation throughout the City. It would have been more beneficial had you stopped me on Saturday before leaving the luncheon. We could have had this discussion with Ms. Stanley and clarified any missed interpretation of her statements that existed.

I asked others who were in attendance about their take on Ms. Stanley comments, and I received nothing in their responses to what they heard that would be offensive to any group. No one confirmed that she said “white people are not welcome at Juneteenth,” but that does not mean it

not your understanding of her comments. If Ms. Parker was of the same understanding as you were. Then I am disappointed that she did not speak up as well.

You also stated in your text the purpose of your attendance **“we just wanted your group to know that the Pima GOP supports the Black community and includes people of all colors and creeds. We have formed an outreach committee and thought that our efforts would be understood and perhaps appreciated.”** I must say this statement all by itself speaks volumes to the problem. A could be interpreted as condescending. Your statement could be viewed as a much bigger problem than what you might have interpreted what Ms. Stanley might have communicated.

I hope you, and Pima GOP will reconsider your position on supporting the Juneteenth Program. Should you wish to do so, I would be willing to meet with you and your outreach committee to discuss this further. It is important that any meeting that we have include Ms. Stanley

Yours Truly

Clarence Boykins
(520) 401 3959
MLK Committee

Cc: Valery Stanley via email
Ophelia Parker via email