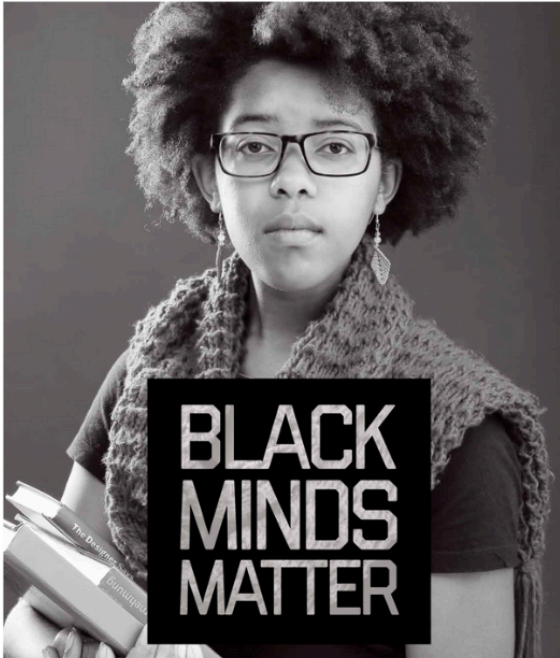




SUPREME COURT STRIKES DOWN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: CONTINUING THE FIGHT FOR COLLEGE ACCESS



We are devastated and deeply saddened by the Supreme Court Decision handed down on **June 29, 2023**, abruptly striking down Affirmative Action in higher education admissions. This heartbreaking ruling undermines the progress Black and Brown people have painstakingly made over the years. **This country continues to show its hand, and we will not stand idle in this moment of movement!**

More than a decade ago, **Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement** and **BLU Educational Foundation** partnered to work in one school district aimed at improving and transforming the educational outcomes of the students in that district. Supported by the **James Irvine Foundation's Families Improving Education Initiative** and later by the **Black Equity Initiative**, we embarked on a relentless battle to tackle the many structural, systematic barriers preventing college access to mostly Black and Brown students.

Together, we organized to successfully:

- Increase access to college preparatory classes in both middle and high school.
- Push for online systems to help parents and students track college course completion.
- Push for greater access to advanced placement courses and dual enrollment opportunities.
- Urge school districts to contract with external college advisement organizations to counter racial bias in academic counseling and provide supplemental support to high school academic counselors trying to serve hundreds of students.

"We knew then that college access was not simply about student capability or desire, but about the structural barriers that created unfairness from the start."

Our recent win in rejecting a proposal to change the admissions criteria for access to California State University illuminated what is possible when we organize. However, we also discovered several persistent structural inequities that affirmed why a change would do more harm than good

We, now more than ever, recognize the need for our communities to be educated, equipped, and empowered to challenge the systemic inequities that continue to hinder our advancement. COPE remains in the fight to build the people power needed to effectively revitalize the communities in which we live, work, and worship. Be on the lookout for more educational justice newsletters or, to work with us directly **to continue fighting for student success and college access, contact our parent organizer, Devona Robertson, through phone (909) 965-0810 or email Droberson@copesite.org!**

