



East Bay Meditation Center Newsletter

March 10 | 2023

Did you know that ...?

- [The Spirit of Harriet Tubman: Awakening from the Underground](#), a new book by beloved teacher and EBMC co-founder Spring Washam, is being launched at a special benefit for EBMC on March 11, 2023?
- EBMC graduated our first group of Dharma teachers in a beautiful ceremony?
- EBMC Sangha member Hooman Anvar is part of the Iranian peoples' fight for freedom in Arizona?
- Mindfulness practice is a big part of Sangha member Justin Woodward's work mentoring Black video game developers?
- The Bodhisattva Vows and Precepts are alive and well at EBMC?
- And more! Check out exciting March 2023 news from EBMC and tell us what you think through "contact us" at www.eastbaymeditation.org



Celebrate Love & Freedom! March 11

You are invited on a spiritual journey with beloved teacher and EBMC co-founder Spring Washam to celebrate the launch of her new book, *The Spirit of Harriet Tubman: Awakening from the Underground*.

This very special gathering is on **March 11, 2023**

from **1:00-4:00 pm**
at the East Bay Church of Religious
Science,
4130 Telegraph Avenue,
in Oakland.

All proceeds will benefit
[East Bay Meditation Center](#).

To register, go to
<https://conta.cc/3lgDR3P>



EBMC "State of the Center Report"



In alignment with our commitment to transparency, we're happy to give you a more in-depth look at EBMC's news about our board (Leadership Sangha or LSangha), finances, programming, and much more in our ongoing series, the "State of the Center Reports."



For the March 10, 2023 State of the Center Report,
click [HERE](#).

For a pdf of the **State of the Center Report** with no colored or patterned background, please email admin@eastbaymeditation.org

People of EBMC:

Justin Woodward & Black Game Devs – “Practicing mindfulness is like going to the gym for the soul”

What does mindfulness meditation and a Buddhist-based approach have to do with video games and empowering Black communities? We interviewed Justin Woodward, who is a graduate of the 8th cohort of EBMC’s yearlong Practice in Transformative Action program of secular mindfulness training for justice activists, and founder of Black Voices in Gaming. Founded three years ago, [Black Voices in Gaming](#) is a Black-led, Oakland-based 501c3 that produces digital streaming events, an accelerator program and an opportunity fund for Black game developers.

To read this unique interview, click [HERE](#).



Justin Woodward



*Black Voices in Gaming
representing their games at
Day of the Devs,
Nov. 2022*

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Aspiring EBMC Bodhisattvas Joyfully Receive Vows and Precepts

by Mushim Ikeda, EBMC teacher



*May I be a protector to those without
protection...*

– Shantideva, *Guide to the Way of the
Bodhisattva*, trans. Stephen Batchelor

On December 18, 2022, 13 people renewed their Bodhisattva Vows and Precepts through EBMC, and 23 people received the Bodhisattva Vows and Precepts for the first time, along with a Buddhist name.

Around 200 people total have received Bodhisattva Vows and Precepts through EBMC since we first began to offer them in December 2012.

Attached is a photo of those who came in person to our physical site on December 18. Many more joined us on Zoom on that day. This ceremony is usually very happy and joyful, and this was no exception. As usual, everyone who received or renewed their Vows received a beautiful printed certificate from EBMC, designed by volunteer designer Eliza Anshim Wee of [Dogmo Studios](#).

Something compelling about the Path of the Bodhisattva is that the worse conditions get, the more bodhichitta or bodhisattva energy is generated. Thus, last fall's group of aspiring Bodhisattvas were

totally inspired, and have formed spiritual friendships and are self-organizing to go on with their study and practice of some of the key sutras. Some of them have done a lot of volunteer service for EBMC, and all are carrying forth the spirit of our Agreements for Multicultural Interactions, gift economics and dana based practices, and much more into their various worlds.



EBMC Graduates First Spiritual Teacher & Leadership Program Cohort

by Ramona Lisa Ortiz-Smith, MBA

Spiritual Teacher and Leadership Graduates and
Co-Guiding Teachers, EBMC 02/05/2023 [photo: Louisa McCullough]

These graduates are now “authorized to teach and guide the Buddha/Dharma/Sangha and mindfulness meditation as established in the core elements of the EBMC ecosystem.” This notable community accomplishment culminated in a hybrid ceremonial event at EBMC with most graduates and all teachers attending in-person and over 150 guests and a few graduates sharing in the festivities online.

Co-guiding teachers, Amana Brembry Johnson, Carol Cano, JD Doyle and Noliwe Alexander, all graduates of the Spirit Rock Retreat Teacher Training, established the EBMC Spiritual Teacher and Leadership training in an effort to effectuate the tremendous need for diversity, inclusivity and awareness amongst teachers and leaders who practice and integrate the teachings of the Buddha and mindfulness in today’s Dharma community at EBMC and beyond.

The program included 6 multi-day retreats, 15 daylongs, hours of individual and group study, personal and group practice, mentorship training, guided leadership development and hands-on teacher training opportunities. A diverse group of guest teachers also shared their wisdom during the training, including EBMC Founding Teachers Larry Yang and Mushim Patricia Ikeda, along with Ayya Anandabodhi, Ann Gleig, Jan Willis, Konda Mason, Myokei Caine Barrett and Thanissara, to name a few.

Here is what a few graduates have to say:

“I feel a lot of gratitude and joy.” Jessy Zapanta (he/she).

“I am looking forward to continuing to deepen my practice with this inspiration...and knowledge I have gained.” Kabir Hypolite (he/him/they).

“This has been one of the most diverse learning groups I have ever been a part of...there’s been a magic, a beautiful synergy.” Ramón Honea (he/they).

As Noliwe Alexander said, “Change is imminent. I can feel it. Touch it. Smell it. It’s here.”
Congratulations, STL sangha! WE DID IT!

Iranian People’s Fight for Freedom

by Hooman Anvar, EBMC Sangha member

On January 19, 2023 on this U.S. soil, the Arizona Democratically elected Representatives proudly echoed the freedom call of the Iranian people, where we stood in testimony in the gallery, and members in the Chamber stood in solidarity on the Floor.

"Zan Zendgi Azadi!" & "Woman Life Freedom!" were echoed on the House floor at the Arizona State Capitol by a bi-partisan coalition. An official proclamation was declared by the Arizona House of Representatives.

I'm humbled to have had the opportunity to be co-author of this Proclamation and to carry the voices of Iranians seeking self-determination and freedom. This was a group effort, the result of four months of organizing by a whole host of people and the graciousness of our elected officials.

To see the full text of the official Proclamation on the Arizona State Legislature's website:

<https://www.azleg.gov/press/house/56LEG/1R/230119COOKIRAN.pdf>

Hooman Anvar is an Arizona based practitioner and has been a volunteer at EBMC since the beginning of the pandemic.



Hooman (right) and Arizona House of Representatives Rep. Laura Terech (left) holding the Iran Proclamation, Jan. 19, 2023. Photo by A. Afkami

See what's happening on our social media sites:



EBMC's Mission Statement



Founded to provide a welcoming environment for people of color, members of the LGBTQI community, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented communities, the East Bay Meditation Center welcomes everyone seeking to end suffering and cultivate happiness. Our mission is to foster liberation, personal and interpersonal healing, social action, and inclusive community building. We offer mindfulness practices and teachings on wisdom and compassion from Buddhist and other spiritual traditions. Rooted in our commitment to diversity, we operate with transparent democratic governance, generosity-based economics, and environmental sustainability.

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