

The People's University for Palestine at Yanaguana

By The People's University, pufp.yanaguana@gmail.com

Israel's genocidal assault on Gaza would not be possible without massive support from the US. This support has many forms and locations—equally, there are many forms and locations of resistance, in the US at large, and in San Antonio. A particularly visible location of resistance has been our colleges and universities.

US institutions of higher learning play a key role in maintaining Israeli apartheid and settler colonial genocide. They give material support in the form of investments; institutional support in the form of overseas programs and educational exchanges; and ideological support in the form of arguments in defense of Israel, excusing and obscuring Israeli war crimes.

We can judge how significant our colleges and universities are to Israel by the hysterical and vicious repression of student activism, the blatant violations of free speech in the desperate attempt to prevent students from advocating for Palestinian liberation in the face of Israeli genocide and educate, the intentional destruction of all the universities in Gaza.

San Antonio is no exception. Our institutions of higher learning have become sites of struggle as public universities try to muzzle student activism with Governor Abbott's **Executive Order 44**, that orders an investigation of pro-Palestine organizing, cynically and falsely equating criticism of Israel with antisemitism, and forbidding slogans such as "*from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free*".

When Palestine is under attack, what do we do?—Stand up, fight back!

And that is what we are doing.

We are thrilled to announce *The People's University for Palestine at Yanaguana*. If our existing colleges and universities are not prepared to resist genocide then we will create our own site of resistance where we can combine the projects of education and liberation in a way that truly embodies the spirit of free speech—speech in the service of freedom.



Poet Naomi Shihab Nye and cultural activist, Karla Aguilar are among the many people involved with the People's University for Palestine in Yanaguana.

The People's University will be holding 5 sessions where we invite the public to come learn together, teach together, and do the difficult and joyful work necessary for our collective liberation. Palestine is a symbol for all of our struggles,

but it is also a concrete place and we will learn more about its rich history and culture. We will also explore ways in which our own liberation and our own presence in Yanaguana implicates us in the Palestinian fight for liberation.

Our first session was *Speaking of Palestine*, a workshop where we learned about Palestinian history up to the present, and shared tools to help us advocate for Palestine in our communities. It

took place online and a recording is available (see information at the bottom). Our subsequent sessions will be in person and will be held across San Antonio, in publicly-accessible places including community spaces and universities. We shall share materials in advance (no homework required, though!) and we shall have an online hub for continuing the conversations and learning outside of meeting times.

Our September session will focus on *Indigeneity and Settler Colonialism* and will be held on **Saturday, Sept. 14 from 1-3pm in San Pedro Springs Park**. We will discuss Palestine and how Israel's genocidal assault targets indigenous knowledge and land claims, and we shall situate this in relation to local Indigenous struggles to preserve land, culture, and knowledge traditions through practices that honor the land.

In October, we will discuss *militarism, incarceration, and capitalism* and the role they play in our liberation struggles in Palestine as well as at home. In November, we will discuss *the role of religion*, and reflect on the destructive role that our local Christian Zionist institutions play at home and in Palestine. In December, we shall *showcase and celebrate Palestinian culture* with a celebration and fundraiser to conclude our semester's curriculum.

Please join us! Information will be posted on the *San Antonio for Justice in Palestine's* instagram: [@sajp1948](https://www.instagram.com/sajp1948)

Or you can join our mailing list by writing to: pufp.yanaguana@gmail.com

