



September 1st, 2021

This is Miguel Jose Bravo Jr, aka Mike Bravo.

This statement is to address the anonymous, unsigned statement, and social media libel titled as "[SAVEVENICE GROUP DISMISSES MIGUEL FOR ADMITTED IMPROPRIETY](#)" being distributed by a lady named [Lydia Ponce](#). While there are many points I can refute and details that accompany them I will do my best to keep this succinct.

My name is Mike Bravo. I'm the leader, creator, and intellectual property owner of the brand and game-changing social justice movement in Venice, CA known as Save Venice. All Save Venice associated branding, print, digital creations, websites, social media channels, graphic design, and all general assets and correspondence tools an organization would need to function and be effective, were created and maintained by me since April 2014. I have also been the lead organizer of every single "Save Venice" event since April 2014. The campaign to [save the First Baptist Church of Venice](#) (FBCV), which is just one of many endeavors utilizing the Save Venice brand, began in August of 2017 in what is now considered a 4 year fight. (Happy Anniversary 🎉-👊👊👊-🎉)

There have been many beautiful, valuable, and intermittent contributors to Save Venice and FBCV events over the years. However, I am the only person from what the public perceives to be the "Save Venice organization", that has had a consistent organizing presence, title, role, and responsibilities under that name and brand since 2014.

The brand and likeness of "Save Venice" is inextricably tied to my likeness as well as to my well documented work, branding, and 21 years of Indigenous activism in Los Angeles. This can all be



September 1st, 2021

corroborated by referencing my many other successful digital design works, literatures, and cutting-edge community organizing projects like the [Four Corners Spirit Run](#), [Sixth Sun Ridaz](#) and the [Westside Chicano Moratorium](#), just to name a few.

It should be noted that there has never been an entity or non-profit named Save Venice. At best it is a moniker associated with a fluctuating array of supporters that utilized my branding and intellectual property for various social justice endeavors. That being stated, no person has any authority or standing to declare me dismissed from the social justice brand, intellectual property, and movement I created, organized, and facilitated for over 7 years.

I wholeheartedly deny the slanderous claims made by unnamed persons and distributed by Lydia Ponce that allege impropriety, theft, and other false and intentionally malicious claims and inferences.

These allegations center around GoFundMe donations accrued and utilized for community development from approximately August 2018 to January 2021. The GoFundMe was obtained in my name and did not belong to any group or other persons. The total of donations received over the course of these 2 ½ years eventually totaled \$9,103 (after GoFundMe fees).

The goal of the GoFundMe was to "benefit the legal defense to Save the FBCV" of which I was pro-se petitioner for over 5 hearings. It was also declared that "by supporting this fund you will be a part of history when we claim victory in saving this rich historied African-American community landmark." Since then our small group of advocates and supporters, some more



September 1st, 2021

consistent than others, and of which I was the driving and facilitating force, have successfully secured Los Angeles Historical Designation status for the historic African-American properties known as the First Baptist Church at E.L. Holmes Square in Venice, CA 90291. Mission accomplished.

All donations from the GoFundMe campaign obtained in my name only, that had accrued over the course of the 2 ½ years the GoFundMe existed, were used in good faith, spent with my best judgment, and with no personal gain for the ongoing process of community development centered in the needs of the historic Black and Brown (Indigenous) communities of Venice, CA.

Despite having 2 ½ years of meetings to address any concern of any topics relating to money, none ever arose. Eventually, nearing 3 years of the GoFundMe's existence, meetings finally took place in July 2021 to address some concerns about the donations.

During the final meeting I had with, presumably the people behind the libelous statement, I made comments under duress in an attempt to diffuse confusing, increasingly criminalizing narratives, and the legally implicating language being pushed on me. I was wholeheartedly attempting to deescalate the sudden and unusual language and mistreatment. These statements were made after I was blind-sided and put into a precarious position due to a breakdown of communication and increasingly aggressive acts by a few individuals at the meeting.

Since then I have been continuously harassed, personally attacked, and threatened online and in person, including with gang violence. Addressing their alleged "police investigation", there is none. At best the unnamed and unsigned people behind the malicious libel filed a police report which anyone can do. I



September 1st, 2021

can file a report of theft saying Batman stole my Rolls Royce if I wanted to. Even if they possibly did file a report, it won't be going anywhere because there is no embezzlement, no impropriety, no theft, or whatever other malicious labels and claims these anonymous persons and group are making.

**In summary,** I deny any and all allegations of impropriety made by anonymous individuals and their unsigned statements. I will also not be bullied or intimidated in any form or fashion and plan to take all appropriate defensive and restitutional measures afforded to me to protect my reputation, likeness, and work.

I have developed and built the brand that has been instrumental in providing visualization for the Save Venice movement and raised funds and donations from said GoFundMe campaign as an independent person to provide and maintain the necessary services and resources required for such a community development undertaking. I have not received compensation or personal gain from any of these endeavors.

Despite the malicious attempts to neutralize this important work I will continue to thrive at creating and advancing on the cutting-edge social justice and Indigenous rights advocacy and movements I am well known and on record for creating and leading the past 20 years. I am also dedicated as ever to advancing on and defending the First Baptist Church of Venice and the Indigenous/Chicanx and Black radical traditions of which I was catalyst in resurrecting in Venice, CA and West Los Angeles.

Thanks for taking time to read this.



September 1st, 2021

Mike Bravo Jr.

Venice, CA

<https://savevenice.ca/>