



Getting to Know Arthur B. Chaney

In October 2020, Community Engagement AmeriCorp VISTA, Leah Beaumont, sat down with Arthur Chaney to interview him for the City of Santa Rosa's Multicultural Roots Project. Below is the summary from that interview.

Arthur B. Chaney is a man who has devoted his life to bettering the lives of others. He grew up in Oakland and although he originally went to school for hotel management, he quickly found his calling in law enforcement. Mr. Chaney attended Santa Rosa Junior College, where he received his Associates of Arts in Administration of Justice. He later attended Sonoma State University, where he received his Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice. He worked as a Child Support Officer in San Francisco, until serving as a Peace Officer in Santa Rosa. Now, the retired officer is President of 100 Black Men of Sonoma County.

His dedication to his work was clear to all witnesses. Mr. Chaney was awarded Police Officer of the Year from both Optimist International and Exchange Club. He also received three Gold Meritorious Awards, from the California Legislation Assembly, State Senate, and the City of Santa Rosa. Mr. Chaney brings a wealth of life experiences to 100 Black Men of Sonoma County.

A national organization that started in New York City, 100 Black Men's mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of children and has over 100 chapters globally. Sonoma County's Chapter was founded in 1990. It is a non-profit community action organization consisting of successful men who are committed to improving the economic and educational conditions for African Americans and others in need. Their particular focus is on the development of youth.

Mr. Chaney is a remarkably wise man with a "team player" philosophy. When asked about his greatest accomplishments as president, his response reflected this philosophy: "I do not have a personal best, because my role, my activities and the accomplishments of the 100 Black Men of Sonoma County, are acquired as one unit. While I am the current President, our accomplishments are the results of our team efforts." The organization is a team of successful men that are sincerely committed to helping the next generation.

The chapter offers several programs, the cornerstones of which are Education and Mentoring. Mentors assist in education, economic empowerment, leadership development, and health and wellness. Mr. Chaney speaks highly of the group of young men they are currently mentoring at Sonoma State University. The organization has adapted to health orders in the pandemic,



continuing programs such as this one, virtually. The organization also provides scholarships to students, which it has been doing since 1996. The goal of the scholarship program is to motivate and acknowledge academic achievement in high school and college for African American youth. Each year, the scholarships range from \$500-\$3,000 per student. The organization also uses donations to provide access to mentoring and training for disadvantaged youth. This provides them access and exposure to educational services, sports, college exploration activities, tours, and scholarships. If a youth is awarded a scholarship, they continue to receive support. Mr. Chaney discussed reviewing students' transcripts to advise their college careers. Although their annual fundraiser had to be canceled due to the pandemic, the organization is continuing to financially support their youth through alternative funding.

The organization is also working to make a difference in Sonoma County as part of the Black Lives Matter Movement. The men are open to having meaningful conversations about racism and social justice. After a recent honest conversation with a group of local men, Arthur says the organization is proud to help people understand racism in America. In addition, they are beginning new partnerships to enhance their mentoring and outreach with youth. With announcements to come, they hope to increase scholarship opportunities to local youth, by expanding their collaborative partnerships with education and business communities. The organization is proud to be a group of successful men devoted to bettering the lives of Sonoma County's next generation.

Mr. Chaney has devoted his life to helping people. As a former Child Support Officer, he preaches to never look down on someone sitting in need. Rather than feeling judgement toward another person, help where help is needed. Unexpected things happen, and you never know when you'll be the person sitting in need. As a person devoted to helping others, it's been difficult for him to accept help from others. In 2017, Arthur and his family lost their home to the Tubbs Fire and had to learn to accept the support of others. He learned a valuable lesson through this challenging time; "never block someone's blessing."

Arthur B. Chaney is a remarkable man, sincerely dedicated to improving the lives of young people with his team at 100 Black Men of Sonoma County. He brings an abundance of life experiences to the organization, offering words of wisdom to anyone that crosses his path.