



For Immediate Release

September 3, 2020

Rightwing Website Falsely Targets Black Portland Community Leader

The publication uses dangerous language to link BLM 'leaders' to a street fight.

Shortly after being featured in prominent local media outlets Portland Monthly, Willamette Week, Portland Mercury, KBOO 90.7, and others in July, Taking Ownership PDX founder and Black community leader Randal Wyatt was falsely targetted by a rightwing website in mid August. Taking Ownership PDX provides grassroots repair services for Black home and business owners in Portland, Oregon.

After a high-profile fight broke out near protests in August, Nationalist Review erroneously linked Wyatt to the story. The fight had gone viral and gained national attention.

In its coverage of the fight, the conservative Nationalist Review linked Wyatt to the event and went so far as to attribute Black Lives Matter protests to Wyatts' leadership.

"Marcus Cooper and Randal Wyatt," it wrote, "are organizers of the protests."

"It is completely unacceptable that a community leader working to improve the lives of Black families in Portland has been falsely linked to this unfortunate event," said community organizer Mac Smiff. "Obviously Randal was not present. This is dangerous and irresponsible."

"As the movement for Black lives continues to grow, and more Americans begin to understand how deeply unjust the criminal justice system is, those seeking to defend that system will do what they can to smear community leaders. The attack on Wyatt is part of a trend we are seeing across the country of politicians, media, and police unions attempting to undermine the movement by holding leaders responsible for the actions of others over whom they have no control," said Sue Udry, executive director, Defending Rights & Dissent.

These dangerous attacks on Wyatt and Taking Ownership PDX are not okay. Wyatt was targeted for doing nothing more than grassroots community organizing for self-improvement for Black elders and families.

Targeting of Black leaders in Portland must be rejected. Fight gentrification, predatory investors, and the racist targeting of Black Portland, now.

###