



Crime Victims Advisory Board

Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Ben “Taco” Owens Board Member

Detours Mentoring Group Inc./So Cal Cease Fire Committee Ben Owens, also known as Taco, is a product of change and reformation of character. As a former gang member turned activist, his involvement with the African American gang culture for over 40 years has forged relationships with rival gang members and often the victims of gang and gun violence.

Owens is currently a supervisor with Advocates for Peace and Urban Unity (APUU) and is contracted with the City of Los Angeles' GRYD (Gang Reduction Youth Development) program. He is also a consultant for many documentaries that illustrate gun violence in the South Los Angeles region.

He is an Ordained Minister and is the Executive Director of Detours Mentoring Group Inc., located in Gardena, CA. He sits on the Executive Board of the Southern California Cease Fire Committee where he collaborates with former and active gang members, victims of crime, clergy, community members and law enforcement to resolve community conflict and gang induced violence in the Greater Los Angeles area. He has trained both Interventionist and Law Enforcement on community collaborative methods and practices since 2007.

In 2013, Owens worked Hospital Based Intervention with CROSSROADS and St. Francis Hospital contracted through the Department of Labor as a Victim and Trauma Recovery Case Manager. He is a Safety Fellow at the Urban Peace Institute (UPI) and travels across the country training and learning from other Interventionists. Prior to his GRYD experience he has worked with the PYE program (Project Youth Embrace) through Prototypes, the Department of Justice, and the Los Angeles County Probation Department. For the past 6 years he has served as a moderator at the Los Angeles Gang Conference. His collaborative efforts have reached more than 21 States and his span of work can be trailed from 1992 until 2023.

