



Susan Wengraf  
Councilmember District 6

CONSENT CALENDAR  
April 23, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Councilmember Wengraf, Mayor Arreguin, and Councilmembers Bartlett and Hahn  
Subject: Co-Sponsor the Screening of "Near Normal Man"

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City of Berkeley become an official co-sponsor of the screening and discussion of "Near Normal Man" on April 29<sup>th</sup> at Berkeley City College

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

BACKGROUND

Ben Stern, who survived two ghettos, nine concentration camps and two death marches, faced Nazi's a second time 30 years later in 1978, when the Nazis planned a march in Skokie, Illinois. Stern sparked a fierce public battle opposing the Nazis and the ACLU, which defended the Nazis' First Amendment rights to free speech. Skokie, a community heavily populated with Holocaust survivors – were urged to "stay home, close the shades and let it pass." Stern refused and instead built a national following with more than 750,000 people of all backgrounds, religions and races who signed petitions to protest the Nazi rally. When the Illinois Supreme Court affirmed their right to march in Skokie, more than 60,000 people pledged to show up and counter-demonstrate. Only then did the Nazis cancel their march.

Now, 40 years later, Ben Stern, living in Berkeley, California, and subject of the award-winning documentary film, "Near Normal Man", will speak out against Hate Speech again and invoke everyone to use their Freedom of Speech better and louder in resistance to growing hatred, rage, violence and mass murders in our country and world. For Stern, who defied the Nazis three times in one lifetime, this conversation with the audience, many who are also immigrants, will offer a compelling reminder of the dangers in our country today.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

N/A

CONTACT PERSON:

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Attachments: Flyer



Near Normal Man, An award-winning, documentary film of a deeply personal story about racism and genocide, surviving, and remaining human

One young man defied the forces that sought to destroy him, then sparked a fierce public battle 30 years later, for justice in America; leading with courage, kindness and hope.

## Film Screening & Real Conversation

**Q & A With  
Ben Stern**

**Holocaust Survivor and Social Justice Activist  
2017 James Joyce Award Winner**

**and**

**Charlene Stern  
Producer/Director**

**Monday, April 29, 2019**

**5:30 pm**

**Berkeley City College Auditorium**

**Refreshments will be provided**

**[www.nearnormalman.org](http://www.nearnormalman.org)**



**Berkeley City College  
2050 Center St. Berkeley, A 94704**

**For questions, please email  
[bcc-campuslife@peralta.edu](mailto:bcc-campuslife@peralta.edu)**