

RELIVING a DREAM



MIKE LUCIA — Staff photos

BLACK PANTHER historian Billy X Jennings holds the first class photo taken at the Youth Institute in 1970 as he prepares Sunday to set up an exhibit on the school, set up by the Black Panther Party, at the Oakland Public Library. The exhibit will feature photographs and artifacts showcasing the party's educational programs.

Black Panthers' school in spotlight

By Kamika Dunlap
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OAKLAND

ONE of the most revolutionary acts by the Black Panther Party was to educate young people of color.

If you want to see how they did it, an exhibit called "Educate to Liberate: The Schools of the Black Panther Party, 1973-1985" is on display starting Monday at the Oakland Library.

"A lot of people know whatever the conservative media and FBI said about the party . . . or recognize the dramatic-looking berets, leather jackets and Negroes with guns," said Ericka Huggins, former co-director of the Oakland Community School. "But they don't know about the party's service to the community, and the school is a shining example of that."

The exhibit, which includes photographs and many other artifacts related to the party's educational programs, runs until April 15 at the Oakland History Room of the library at 125 14th St.

Please see **SCHOOL**, Metro 3



Experience Black Panther history

"Educate to Liberate: The Schools of the Black Panther Party, 1973-1985" runs Monday through April 15 in the Oakland History Room of the Oakland Library, 125 14th Street. Call 510-238-3222 or www.oaklandlibrary.org for information and hours.

MIKE LUCIA — Staff



Exhibit X

The Oakland Library will showcase photographs and artifacts of the Black Panther Party's educational programs.

Metro

Black Panthers' school thrust into spotlight

► SCHOOL, from Metro 1

The East Oakland school was operated by party members and enrolled about 60 students. It grew out of a need to help African-American and other disadvantaged children caught in an unequal public education system that tended to produce better schools in middle-class or affluent neighborhoods than in

poor inner-city areas.

The learning environment promoted revolutionary thought, community service and cultural awareness. The students were instilled with pride and taught lessons of empowerment to push forward in the struggle for civil rights.

"We wanted young people of color to know the true nature of society and the greatness within

themselves," Huggins said. "We were not there to teach children propaganda."

Poets, artists and activists including Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou and Cesar Chavez and James Baldwin were guest teachers and lecturers at the school.

Billy X Jennings, the party's historian, said the alternative education style helped create a

model for many of the charter schools around city today.

The school won a state award from California legislators for its curriculum, he added.

"The school was an oasis in the Oakland community where kids could come and get their GED (General Educational Development certificate), learn Afro dance and get free groceries," Jennings said.