

# JOSEPH COLEY



**JOSEPH COLEY WAS A PIONEERING AFRICAN AMERICAN JOURNALIST AND CIVIC LEADER IN BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA, WHOSE WORK AMPLIFIED THE VOICES OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY. HE CO-FOUNDED THE BAKERSFIELD NEWS OBSERVER, THE ONLY AFRICAN AMERICAN-FOCUSED WEEKLY NEWSPAPER IN KERN COUNTY, TO ENSURE THAT LOCAL STORIES, ACHIEVEMENTS, AND CONCERNS WERE REPRESENTED FAIRLY AND ACCURATELY. GUIDED BY THE PRINCIPLE THAT “EVERYONE’S NEWS IS EQUAL,” COLEY USED THE NEWSPAPER TO COVER EVENTS, SOCIAL ISSUES, AND CIVIC MATTERS FROM A PERSPECTIVE OFTEN OVERLOOKED BY MAINSTREAM MEDIA.**

**THROUGH HIS WORK, COLEY STRENGTHENED COMMUNITY IDENTITY, FOSTERED DIALOGUE, AND HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF REPRESENTATION IN JOURNALISM. THE NEWS OBSERVER BECAME A VITAL PLATFORM FOR CELEBRATING ACCOMPLISHMENTS, ADDRESSING CHALLENGES, AND PROMOTING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT WITHIN BAKERSFIELD’S AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY.**

**JOSEPH COLEY’S DEDICATION TO EQUITABLE STORYTELLING AND COMMUNITY SERVICE CEMENTED HIS LEGACY AS A TRAILBLAZER IN AFRICAN AMERICAN MEDIA. HIS CONTRIBUTIONS NOT ONLY INFORMED AND CONNECTED GENERATIONS BUT ALSO CHAMPIONED EQUITY, JUSTICE, AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT, LEAVING AN ENDURING MARK ON BAKERSFIELD’S CIVIC AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPE.**