

VIEWPOINT

Send comments and letters to:
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FROM THE EDITOR

Let's be accurate, there was no 'violence' after Trump rally



Ilana Lowery

What's your definition of violence?

For the record, Tuesday's protests were not violent – chaotic at times after President Trump's rally – but not violent.

My friend and colleague, David Leibowitz, asked the very question on social media I was thinking after hearing national reports and seeing local media coverage following the events that transpired.

Webster's primary definition of "violence": *The use of physical force so as to injure, abuse, damage, or destroy; b: an instance of violent treatment or procedure.*

By that definition, violence did not erupt in Phoenix. There were no injuries, no vandalism or looting, no destruction of property and just four arrests (one of which was for an individual on an unrelated warrant).

And thankfully, no one was killed.

A handful of agitators, not protesters, created a chaotic scene after the rally when one of them threw a smoke bomb at police. Phoenix PD had a no tolerance policy and they responded appropriately. When the same agitators toppled pedestrian fencing meant to create a safe zone for protesters and began slinging rocks and water bottles at officers, the tear gas, flash bombs and pepper spray were used to manage the crowds.

Yet, a few headlines made it sound like we were in a war zone.

As I read through social media posts Wednesday morning, I wasn't surprised by the discourse. A lot happened, both inside and outside the Phoenix Convention Center. I was disappointed that not more was said about the peaceful protests, the organized demonstrations, or the show of unity we saw along downtown streets throughout the day.

"Every single person made it home safely," said Nicole Stanton, managing partner of law firm Quarles & Brady, which has offices in the heart of downtown Phoenix. She was responding to a post by Stealth-mode co-founder Francine Hardaway, who commented that she was embarrassed by the display. "Ninety-nine percent of it was a peaceful reflection of democracy at work. Why can't we focus on the hours of unity instead of the few moments of bad judgment? I was there. I saw nothing to be ashamed of," Stanton said.

The protesters were standing up for what they believe in. They were well-behaved, despite angry rants at times from the president.

No one should be surprised by how a few overzealous agitators reacted. That's what they were there for – to cause problems, perhaps even incite violence. Given the heated tensions coming into the Phoenix rally, the Phoenix Police Department did an outstanding job keeping the peace.

Connect with Ilana Lowery at ilowery@bizjournals.com or on Twitter at [@PhxBizEditor](https://twitter.com/PhxBizEditor).

► BUSINESS PULSE

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YOU ANSWERED

It depends on the precautions for my personal security 4%

Yes, if it would streamline my worklife 2%

No, it's too invasive 94%

MY VIEW

Generosity, inclusion drive Arizona's startups

At long last, the Arizona startup ecosystem is thriving by many measures. Importantly, this new momentum is attributable to lots of factors, including generosity.

In the summer of 2014, four local entrepreneurs – Jonathan Cottrell, Mario Martinez, Dirk Beth and Stephen Grutzus – started the networking discussions that led to the #yesphx movement, a unifying banner for Arizona's startup ecosystem, community-owned and described as "yours to help lead."

Six months later, Bob LaLoggia, founder/CEO of Appointments Plus, emailed 24 people interested in the ecosystem, proposing to launch a portal for Arizona startups. That email was the catalyst to a much bigger conversation, leading to the establishment of an online community now exceeding 700 members. In 2014, the first PHX Startup Week was held, drawing more than 2,300. This year, the event drew more than 6,000.

Early on, a major theme for StartupAZ became apparent, as stories were told about the experience of Arizona newbies who not only readily were welcomed, but were gladly introduced to the entrepreneurial community. Generosity really is part of our authentic DNA in Phoenix, and we began to build on that quality, with #yesphx trumpeting to the world that Phoenix is "the world's most generous community for entrepreneurs."

Today, the StartupAZ Foundation, founded in 2015 by Martinez and Brandon Clarke, along with founding board members Brad Jannenga and Steve Seleznow in partnership with the Arizona Community Foundation, is a component fund of the ACF. It focuses on inspiring connectivity and generosity among Arizona's most innovative companies. Affiliated with the Global Pledge 1% initiative, it inspires corporate philanthropy and the act of giving back to the local community.



Tom Curzon

Generosity, coupled with our commitment to quality, is leading StartupAZ into its next phase: We believe that as the quality of our companies grow, they will become magnets for talent and capital that will fuel even more growth and success.

The next phase

At a June 25-27 Flagstaff retreat, StartupAZ launched its Founders Collective initiative for the Founders/CEOs of 21 of Arizona's most promising early stage companies.

The retreat was the next phase of StartupAZ's effort to increase the success and growth rate of our region's highest potential startup companies by connecting their leaders in small, confidential peer-to-peer cohorts. The retreat is being followed by monthly peer-to-peer check-ins where members hold themselves accountable with mentorship from seasoned business leaders.

The new Founders Collective is focused on accelerating growth to help the companies reach \$10 million in revenue as quickly as possible. Each company must be working on a mainstream market opportunity with a \$100 million potential, and the founder/CEOs must be open to feedback and committed to participate fully, not only getting, but giving back.

The Founders Collective's cohorts will create hubs of high-performance accountability, attract growth capital and top talent to build great companies that embrace generosity and community engagement. In five years' time, StartupAZ expects to have more than 100 Collective members, representing more than 100 companies.

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